



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Senatus Academicus
Wednesday 12 October 2022 at 2-5 pm
Online meeting
Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

FORMAL MEETING OF SENATE

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

1. **Convener's Communications** Verbal update
 - Update from Timetabling Unit

2. **2.1 Senate Minutes** S 22/23 2 A
 - Minutes of Senate meeting held on 11 August 2022
 - Report of E-Senate held from 14 September – 28 September 2022
To approve

- 2.2 Matters arising** Verbal update
 - Report of Curriculum Transformation Programme costs [[Minutes of 9 February meeting of Senate, Item 4](#)]
 - External examiner concessions associated with industrial action - to be covered under Item 15 – Report of Concessions from APRC [[Minutes of 25 May meeting of Senate, Item 6](#)]

- 2.3 Welcome to new student members**
 - Aditi Jain, Undergraduate representative
 - Amrit Gill, Undergraduate representative
 - Annie Liu, Undergraduate representative
 - Izabella Skowronska, Undergraduate representative
 - Tobias Hansen, Undergraduate representative
 - Yong Guo, Undergraduate representative

3. **Further Information on the Powers of Senate** S 22/23 2 B

To note

4. **Senate Standing Committees – upcoming business** S 22/23 2 C

To note and comment

5. **Senate Standing Committees membership** S 22/23 2 D

To approve

6. **Curriculum Transformation Update** S 22/23 2 E

To note and comment

7. **Draft Resolution – Code of Student Conduct** S 22/23 2 F

To comment

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------------------|
| 8. | Revision to the Sustainable Travel Policy (2021)¹
To comment and endorse | S 22/23 2 G |
| 9. | Senate and its Standing Committees Internal Effectiveness Review 2021/22
To note and comment | S 22/23 2 H |
| 10. | Solidarity with Students in Iran
To discuss and comment | S 22/23 2 I
CLOSED |

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL OR NOTING

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------------------------------------|
| 11. | Senate Exception Committee Terms of Reference and Membership 2022-23
To approve | S 22/23 2 J |
| 12. | Report from the Honorary Degrees Committee
Additional Report from the Honorary Degrees Committee
To approve | S 22/23 2 K
S 22/23 2 KK
CLOSED |
| 13. | Senate Elections 2022/23 – key dates
To note and comment | S 22/23 2 L |
| 14. | Edinburgh University Students’ Association VP Education Priorities 2022-23
To note and comment | S 22/23 2 M |
| 15. | Student Partnership Agreement
To note | S 22/23 2 N |
| 16. | Research Strategy Group update
To note | S 22/23 2 O |
| 17. | Report of Concessions Approved by Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee
To note and comment | S 22/23 2 P |

Members attending the meeting in person are asked to please bring a device to enable them to access Teams for electronic voting, if required.

¹ Legal advice indicates that Senate does not have the power to make binding decisions on this item.

Senate

12 October 2022

Senate Minutes

Description of paper

1. The paper provides the minutes of the Special Meeting of Senate held on 11 August 2022, and a report of electronic business conducted 14 – 28 September 2022.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval.

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. Senate minutes are published on the Senate website: [Senate agendas, papers and minutes](#).
8. Papers related to meetings of Senate Standing Committees have been circulated via email to Senate members.

Author

Senate Secretariat
September 2022

Freedom of Information

Open paper

Senatus Academicus
Thursday 11 August at 2-5pm
Online meeting
Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

Attendees: ADKINS Peter, ANDREANGELI Arianna, BARANY Michael, BLYTHE Richard, BOSE Chandan, BRADFIELD Julian, BRADLEY Laura, BRANIGAN Holly, BROWN Aidan, BURLEY Sarah, CAIRNS John, CALVERT Jane, CONVERY Alan, CRUZ Juan, DESLER Anne, DESVAGES Charlotte, DEVANEY John, DUNSMORE Agata, EARLE Murray, EFERAKORHO Jite, ELLINGHAM Natalia, EWING Suzanne, FRENCH Chris, CONWAY-GEBBIE Hope, GILFILLAN Stuart, GODDARD Benjamin, GOTZ Manuel, GRAHAM Kim, GRATWICK Richard, HAMILTON Lorna, HARMON Colm (Acting Convener), HARRISON Tina, HAY David, HELBING Pia, HELGASON Thorunn, HUNTER Emma, IBIKUNLE Gbenga, INGRAM David, JEFFERY Laura, JENKINS Kirsten, JIWAJI Zueb, JORDAN Crispin, KENNY Meryl, KHATTAR Medhat, KINNEAR George, LAURENSEN Dave, LEWIS Steff, MACCALLUM Sam, MATTHEWS Keith, MEIKSIN Avery, MORAN Carmel, MORLEY Steven, MURRAY Lyndsay, NAVARRO Pau, NORRIS Paul, PRESCOTT Sarah, RICE Ken, ROBERTS Niamh, RYDZEWSKA Ewelina, SCHMID Marion, SCHROERS Bernd, SCHYFTER CAMACHO Pablo, SHAW Jo, SIMPSON Hamish, SMITH Sarah, STRATFORD Tim, SYED Amer, TERRAS Melissa, TOWNSEND Rosemary, TRODD Tamara, TUFAIL-HANIF Uzma, WALSH Patrick, WARRINGTON Stephen, WEIR Christopher, WERESKI Ryan, WILLIAMS Isi, WILLIAMS Mark, WYNNE Ben, YILDIRIM Alper

In attendance: CHALMERS Leigh, DOCHERTY Sinead, EVANS Lucy, HAYES Olivia (Clerk to Senate), WARD Tom

Apologies: ANDREWS Richard, ANWAR Mohammad, BANAS Kasia, BOOTH Tom, BYRNE Lauren, CAQUINEAU Celine, CONNOR Andrew, DANBOLT Jo, DAWSON, Lisa, DIMARTINO Simone, EVENSEN Darrick, FARRINGTON Susan, GRAY Gillian, HOPGOOD James, HOY Jenny, LAMONT-BLACK Simone, LORETTO Wendy, LUGER Ewa, MENZIES John, MORROW Susan, PATON Diana, REYNOLDS Rebecca, RILEY Simon, ROLLE Sabine, SIMM Geoff, STOCK Sarah, THOMSON Alex, TURNER Jon,

Acting Convener, Vice-Principal Professor Colm Harmon opened the meeting and confirmed that Senate had reached quorum. Principal and Chair, Professor Peter Mathieson was unwell and Vice-Principal Harmon convened the special meeting of Senate in his absence. Senate extended its best wishes to Professor Mathieson for a speedy recovery. Members were reminded of the etiquette for Senate meetings conducted online.

1. Senate Minutes

S 22/23 1 A

1.1 To approve:

- Minutes of Senate meeting held on 9 February 2022
- Report of E-Senate held from 27 April – 11 May 2022
- Minutes of Senate meeting held on 25 May 2022

Senate approved the amended minutes of the 9 February and 25 May meetings, and the report of e-Senate held 27 April – 11 May subject to agreeing one amendment to the minutes of the February meeting and two amendments to the minutes of the May meeting.

An amendment to item 6 of the 9 February meeting was moved, seconded, and passed by a majority vote.

As a result of this amendment, Item 6 in the minutes of the 9 February meeting would be amended by replacing:

“There was some objection to the Chair’s decision to take a vote on a contentious issue.”

With

“The Chair acknowledged concerns about his improvisatory approach to chairing, in this instance taking a vote on whether to consider a duly proposed and seconded amendment.”

An amendment to the minutes of the 25 May meeting was moved and seconded and passed by majority vote. The minutes of the 25 May meeting would be amended by inserting the bold text as follows:

*“A hybrid meeting may facilitate quorum. It was emphasised that Senate has been quorate when meeting in a remote format over the past two years. **It was noted that multiple colleagues with disabilities, medical vulnerabilities, and other barriers to attendance requested and were denied the reasonable accommodation of a hybrid or remote meeting.** It was requested that consideration be given to the timing of the meeting to facilitate attendance from colleagues who have caring commitments. It was noted that School commitments, such as School Away Days prevented attendance from some members.”*

Two amendments to the minutes of the 25 May meeting were moved and accepted by the Convener as uncontroversial. Item 17 of the minutes of the 25 May meeting would be amended to remove the struck out text as follows:

“~~A continuation of the previously approved terms of reference would continue in the interim. The Convener proposed that a continuation of the previously approved terms of reference continue until a new set are approved, no objections to this were raised at the time.~~”

Item 28 of the minutes of the 25 May meeting would be amended to remove the struck out text as follows: ~~no objections to this were raised at the time.~~

In relation to item 14.2.3 of the 25 May meeting, the VP Students, Professor Harmon agreed to update Senate on the costs of the Curriculum Transformation Programme at the next Ordinary meeting. In relation to item 16, the Convener of APRC, Dr Norris agreed to update Senate on external examiner concessions associated with the industrial action at the next Ordinary meeting of Senate.

Senate also agreed that an amendment be incorporated in the 25 May minutes to acknowledge the impact of the Student Support model on pre-Honours students. The Acting Convener would liaise with the Senate Clerk to incorporate this point.

2. Revocation of Honorary Degree

For formal noting and approval

S 22/23 1 B
CLOSED

Deputy Secretary Lucy Evans introduced the paper which invited Senate to approve the recommendation from the Honorary Degrees Committee to withdraw an Honorary Degree. The recommendation follows the Honorary Degree Withdrawal Procedure.

While members were generally supportive of the recommendations, the following points were made:

- A concern was raised regarding the revocation of an Honorary Degree in relation to actions undertaken after the award.

- There is limited precedent for the withdrawal of an Honorary Degree and the Honorary Degree Withdrawal Procedure is the only procedure available to inform the Honorary Degrees Committee and Senate.

Senate approved the recommendation to withdraw the Honorary Degree. The Deputy Secretary (Student Experience) indicated that she will arrange for a review of the Honorary Degree Withdrawal Procedure, to present to a future Senate meeting. Senate also suggested that the University should update its processes for awarding Honorary Degrees, in order to indicate that any recipient of an Honorary Degree should uphold the principles and values of the University and that the University has the power to withdraw Honorary Degrees should a recipient not adhere to this.

3. Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees

S 22/23 1 C

For formal noting and approval

Senate noted the major items of committee business from 2021-22. At the request of Senate, each of the Standing Committee Conveners' expanded on the priorities for the next academic year identified in section 6 of the paper, and said that they were happy to answer Senate members' questions about the business of the committees at future Senate meetings and between meetings. Senate members said that the detailed verbal explanation of the work of the Standing Committees and priorities for the year ahead was valuable, and asked that a greater level of detail be included in the reports in future years. Senate approved the plans of Senate Standing Committees for the next academic year, subject to one amendment.

An amendment was moved and seconded. The amendment proposed that a priority be added to Section 6 of the paper, under each committee's list of activities:

"Examine and report to Senate on the implications of staff workload, casualisation, pay disparity, and past and possible future industrial action for the matters under its remit."

Discussion on the proposed amendment took place. The following points were made:

- While the consideration of staffing, workload and resource issues are not the formal responsibility of Senate, they may be relevant to work being undertaken or considered by the Senate Standing Committees.
- While the Standing Committees currently give consideration to staffing and resource implications, they cannot consider items which fall outside their remit.
- Any amendment should duly reflect on what is deliverable and within the remit of the relevant Standing Committee - providing an explanation of the consideration of these matters will be challenging where related issues fall outside of the Committees' powers.
- There were opposing views on the requirement to explicitly state each of the items for consideration as presented in the proposed amendment.
- Matters relating to staff workload lack a single 'home' in the University – but Senate cannot provide this 'home'

The spirit of the amendment was supported. However, rather than approving the specific wording of the amendment, Senate considered alternate wording proposed by the Convener, and agreed that the Convener would refine this formulation and add a revised version with the Standing Committee Conveners, taking account of the discussion the minutes, giving consideration to what is deliverable by the Committees and in consultation with Standing Committee Conveners.

Post-meeting update on the wording for the amendment: Senate Standing Committees agreed to ensure due consideration of key issues of staff concern are factored into discussions and recommendations of Committees, inter alia, staff workload and resourcing, when considering business that falls within their remit.

4. Senate Standing Committees: Membership and Terms of Reference

S 22/23 1 D

For formal noting and approval

The item was introduced by Acting Convener, Senate Education Committee Convener, and Vice Principal Harmon. It was noted that there is a meeting scheduled with the Standing Committee Convener's and a group of elected Senate members to discuss some specific issues related to the membership and terms of reference of Standing Committees.

Members made the following points in response to the paper:

- There is a desire among some Senate members for greater visibility of, access to and oversight of work being undertaken by Senate Standing Committees.
- There are two dimensions to the relationship between Senate and its Standing Committees: delegation of authority and composition of the committees.
- The Committee have already taken actions, such as circulating a notification regarding the availability of Standing Committee papers, to increase the visibility of the work of Standing Committees and provide an opportunity for Senate members to feed into the work undertaken by the Committees.

An amendment (Amendment 1) was moved and seconded. In the terms of reference for each committee, it proposed to substitute the following for item 3.1 under Operation:

3.1. The Committee reports to Senate, acting with delegated authority to advise and take decisions on operational matters within existing strategy and policy and to develop, consult, formulate, and propose to Senate changes to strategy and policy within its remit.

Discussion on Amendment 1 took place. The following points were made:

- The wording as proposed could capture nearly all work undertaken by the Standing Committees – meaning that Senate itself may need to make decisions on a far wider range of issues than at present. This would have far-reaching implications.
- These include would have substantial resource and operational implications for the work of Standing Committees and the Senate Exception Committee. For example, it would be likely to require Senate to meet more than the current pattern of three Ordinary meetings per year. In addition, unless Senate is able to meet very frequently, the University may find it difficult to respond appropriately to urgent issues (for example, short-notice changes to laws and regulations).
- The specific wording in the Amendment is not sufficiently precise to allow the Standing Committees to determine where they have delegated power to make decisions and where they would need to make recommendations to Senate – for example, what constitutes an operational matter as opposed to a policy.
- Relevant professional services areas are represented on the Standing Committees in order to ensure the committees have the appropriate range of expertise. Senate's composition has limited scope for professional services

representation – meaning that, were Senate to approve the amendment, it may need to make decisions on issues on which it does not have the appropriate range of expertise.

- The desire for greater transparency and oversight may be achieved by expanding the composition of Standing Committees to include three elected members of Senate (see Amendment 3), rather than reversing the current delegation of a range of responsibilities to the Standing Committees. This would provide the scrutiny requested without raising the broader resource and operational implications for Senate associated with Amendment 1.

An amendment (Amendment 2) was moved and seconded. Under “4. Composition” for each committee, it proposed to add:

The following preliminary committee compositions are to allow the committees to begin work prior to the next Ordinary Meeting of Senate and shall expire at that time. An updated committee composition shall be proposed for approval at that meeting that reflects consideration of representation of elected Academic Staff and elected Student members, BAME members of Senate and the university community, and recognised trade unions.

An amendment (Amendment 3) was moved and seconded. Under “4. Composition” for each committee, it proposed to add:

3 x members of staff chosen by elected academic members of Senate plus Senate Assessors and the Academic Staff Member of Court from among their number.

Discussion on Amendments 2 and 3 took place. The following points were made:

- Senate would need to agree how to approach the practical arrangements for operation, were it to adopt Amendments 2 and/or 3.
- Senate Standing Committees have three co-opted spaces which Convener’s may be able to use to expand the membership as a short-term solution whilst practical arrangements are finalised.
- Senate could establish an electoral process for filling the three positions on each Committee for the elected academic Senate members.
- The proposed addition of elected Senate members to Standing Committees would have a workload implication for those elected members - the Standing Committees meet around five times per year.

Senate approved the amended Membership and Terms of Reference for Senate Standing Committees, on the following basis:

- It agreed to adopt Amendment 2.
- It agreed to the principle of Amendment 3, and agreed that the practical considerations required to adopt this amendment would be considered at a meeting of the Standing Committee Conveners and elected Senate members, and presented to the October meeting of Senate.
- It gave time-limited approval to the membership of Senate Standing Committees, which would expire at the next Ordinary meeting of Senate.
- Amendment 1 requires further discussion and would be deferred for consideration at the October meeting of Senate.

Senate also recognised that the planned External Effectiveness Review would provide an opportunity to consider the range of issues associated with the relationship between Senate and its Standing Committees

5. Proposal to bring forward External Effectiveness Review

For formal noting and approval

S 22/23 1 E

This item was introduced by Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services. He noted that Senate had considered the paper at its 25 May meeting and had confirmed its unanimous support to bring forward the External Effectiveness Review to 2022-23. However, while it had provided comments on the approach to the review, it had not approved the terms of reference due to lacking quorum. Mr Ward indicated that, taking account of that earlier discussion, the University Secretary had confirmed that there will be a standard tendering process to appoint an external reviewer, which will explicitly state that expertise in academic governance is required. While there is no formal requirement for Senate to approve the process or Terms of Reference for the external review, Senate confirmed its support for the Terms of Reference and way forward.

6. Guidelines for Senate Committee Papers

S 22/23 1 F

For formal noting and approval

This item was introduced by Dr Michael Barany. The paper was prepared following a discussion with Senate Standing Committee Conveners in relation to closed papers presented to Senate Standing Committees. The guidelines give consideration to data security and the handling of sensitive personal information.

Members were invited to comment on the paper as presented and the following points were made:

- At present, the vast majority of Senate Standing Committee papers are open by default.
- The proposed guidelines raise a question regarding circumstances where there is highly sensitive information and the University is not the sole stakeholder or owner of that information – for example proposals for partnerships with other organisations. In those cases, the views and interests of external stakeholders will need to be considered on a proposal to share a paper, either in full or redacted form.

Senate approved the Guidelines for Senate Committee Papers as presented in the paper with the addition of an acknowledgement that there may be exceptional circumstances where the Convener is required to make a judgement regarding the sensitive nature of a closed paper which cannot be shared in redacted form. In these instances it will be stated why the paper cannot be shared, and this will be deemed sufficient and give Senate members confidence that there is good reason for this. In addition, Senate noted that the guidelines are applicable to whole-committee papers, rather than items normally considered by Convener's Action, such as individual student concession requests.

7. Regulations Experts and Senate Capacity Building

S 22/23 1 G

To comment

This item was introduced by Dr. Michael Barany. The paper reflects a commitment from Academic Services to hold a briefing on regulations and procedures to supplement existing arrangements for guidance and induction for Senate members.

Senate lost quorum at the conclusion of this item.

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL OR NOTING

- 8. Senate Exception Committee Terms of Reference and Membership 2022-23** **S 22/23 1 H**
For approval

This item was not considered as the meeting was no longer quorate.
This item would be presented at the next quorate meeting of Senate.

- 9. Report from the Central Academic Promotions Committee** **S 22/23 1 I**
For comment (previously received for information)

This paper was received at the 25 May meeting, however there was insufficient time to receive comments. Other than extending congratulations to the new Chairs, members had no comments on the paper.

- 10. Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate** **S 22/23 1 J**
For comment

This paper was received at the 25 May meeting, however there was insufficient time to receive comments. Members were invited to comment on the paper. No comments were received.

- 11. Report from the Senate Exception Committee** **S 22/23 1 K**
For comment (previously received for noting) **CLOSED**

This paper was received at the 25 May meeting, however there was insufficient time to receive comments.
Members were invited to comment on the paper and the following point was made:

- The detail in the paper was insufficient and it would be helpful to provide additional detail in future.

- 12. Update to Senate ex-officio membership** **S 22/23 1 L**
For noting

The paper was noted.

At the end of the meeting, Senate members discussed the format, duration, frequency and mode of Senate meetings. The following points were made:

- Having additional time to consider matters made today's meeting more constructive, and it would be helpful to have more time (than the established one hour) for the formal business section of Senate meetings in future.
- The presentation and discussion sessions which precede formal Senate meetings are useful and these facilitate inclusion of non-Senate members from whom attendance is generally high. However, the presentation and discussion sessions take the bulk of time available to Senate and impact on the consideration of formal business. It may be possible to hold the presentation and discussion sessions as free-standing events, freeing up Senate time for formal business.
- There was support for holding the formal business section of Senate meetings at an earlier timeslot of 2-4pm.

- There is a strong desire expressed for meetings to be held in hybrid or online format. It was noted that holding meetings on campus may impact on quorum and attendance as some members have to take account of travel time to the venue. Where a hybrid meeting is held, there is a desire for the on campus component to rotate around the University campuses.

The Convener agreed to pass these comments to the Principal, who would consider the format, location, duration, timing and frequency of future Senate meetings.

Electronic Senate**Report of Electronic Business of Senate conducted between
Wednesday 14 September and Wednesday 28 September 2022****1. Court Resolutions – Chairs (e-S 21/22 1 A)**

Senate was invited to make observations on the draft Resolutions. A comment was received from one member and the comment was passed to Court Services.

2. 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 from two members and these were passed to the paper author. These comments will be reflected on and a paper and the comments passed to the University Court.

3. 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. A comment was received from one member and this was passed to the relevant College.

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

Senate formally noted the communications.

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

The report was noted. A comment was received from one member received and passed to the author of the report.

Senate**12 October 2022****Further Information on the Powers of Senate****Description of paper**

1. The Senate Handbook provides an overview of the legal framework for the governance of the University, including a brief summary of Senate's powers, and those of Court and the General Council.
https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/senate_handbook_2022-23.pdf
2. In May 2022, Senate considered a paper that asked Senate to direct the University Executive in relation to an aspect of the Sustainable Travel Policy. While the Principal advised that the item did not fall within Senate's remit, some Senate members have sought clarity regarding the legal position. Since the agenda for Senate's 12 October 2022 meeting includes a new paper on the Sustainable Travel Policy, the University Secretary asked that Legal Services provide Senate with further information on the legal powers of Senate, including in relation to the Sustainable Travel Policy in particular.
3. Key points include:
 - The powers of Senate and Court are set out in legislation;
 - The powers of Senate are focussed on academic matters, not resourcing decisions;
 - Senate's power in relation to resources is the power to administer the revenues and property of the University, subject to the control of Court, but not to control how those revenues are applied in a manner that would allow it to direct the University Executive to take or refrain from taking any particular action in relation to the Sustainable Travel Policy;
 - Ultimate control of the Sustainable Travel Policy falls clearly within the scope of Court's powers given the financial implications of that Policy;
 - Directing the University Executive to take particular steps in relation to the Sustainable Travel Policy is not within Senate's scope; and
 - The President of Senate is entitled to rule as to what is on the order of business and, accordingly, decide that a particular matter should not be put before Senate.

Action requested / recommendation

4. Senate is invited to note Legal Services' advice.

Background and context**Summary**

5. Legal Services has been asked to provide legal advice on the powers of the *Senatus Academicus* ("Senate"). In particular, Legal Services has been asked whether it is within Senate's powers to direct the University Executive to take particular steps (as directed by Senate) in relation to the University's Sustainable Travel Policy (the "Policy").

6. We have also been asked to advise on where authority lies to make determinations about what business is put before Senate. In the current context, this would mean which person or body has authority to decide whether a motion to direct the University Executive to take particular steps should be put before Senate.
7. In summary, our advice is that such an action is not within the scope of Senate's powers as set out in law. We also consider that it is for the President of the Senate to determine what business is put before Senate. We have set out more detail for this view below.
8. It should be noted that this advice does not mean that Senate cannot make a decision which has resourcing implications; as set out in this note, Senate's powers include an ability to administer the revenues and property of the University, subject to the control of Court, and that will necessarily include decisions that have resource implications. This paper is limited to the question of whether Senate's powers under law include the power to direct the University Executive to take a particular action in relation to the Policy.

Applicable law

9. Senate's powers are set out in the legislation which established the University. A summary of these powers (and the related powers of the University Court and the General Council) can be found on pages 7, 8 and 9 of the [Senate Handbook](#). The Handbook states that:

“Senate, via its Committees, reviews and has power of approval over the academic elements of [University-wide] projects, while questions of University strategy, resource management and risk management are the responsibility of the University Court, supported by the University Executive.”
10. The powers of Court are set out in legislation and are relevant to an analysis of Senate's powers. This is because Parliament has provided that division of roles and responsibilities intentionally and to recognise the different roles that Court and Senate play within the University.
11. The University Executive's remit in supporting the University Court in relation to resource and risk management is not set out in law, but is instead a function of the Principal's exercise of their delegated responsibilities from Court. This remit includes: (i) agreeing and overseeing the implementation of policies, procedures and plans; (ii) developing and monitoring delivery of University business planning objectives; and (ii) scrutinising items prior to submission to the University Court and its Committees.
12. There is no mechanism for Senate to direct the University Executive in how it fulfils this remit; accordingly, the question is whether such an action is consistent with Senate's powers (and those of Court) under applicable law.
13. It is therefore important that both Court and Senate act consistently with the powers given to them by statute. Failing to do so risks decisions that are vulnerable to challenge on the basis that they are unlawful because either Court or Senate did not have the power to take the relevant decision.
14. There is no explicit reference to decisions on travel policies (nor their status as academic or non-academic matters) or similar matters in the relevant legislation. Accordingly, giving a view on this matter necessarily involves an element of interpretation of the relevant laws, as set out in more detail below.

Discussion – Legal Advice on Scope of Senate’s Powers

Senate’s powers under the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 (the “2016 Act”) and the Universities (Scotland) Act 1889 (the “1889 Act”)

15. The role of Senate, and Senate’s current powers, are set out in section 7(1) of the 1889 Act and section 21 (1) of the 2016 Act. These state that Senate’s role and powers are:

[to be] *“responsible for the overall planning, co-ordination, development and supervision of the academic work of the institution”* [subject to the *“general control and direction”* of Court] (the 2016 Act);

“to regulate and superintend the teaching and discipline of the University and to promote research”; (the 1889 Act)

and that Senate shall:

“continue to possess and exercise the powers hitherto possessed by it so far as they are not modified or altered by the Universities (Scotland) Act 1858, or by this Act...” (the 1889 Act);

16. We have set out below the powers set out in the earlier Act referenced above.

Senate’s powers under the Universities (Scotland) Act 1858 (the “1858 Act”)

17. The 1858 Act states that Senate shall:

“administer the University’s property and revenues, subject to the control and review of the University court...” (emphasis ours)

18. It should be noted that this is a power to “administer” (i.e. spend) property and revenues, not to control such property or revenues.

19. The 1858 Act also established the University Court. Court’s powers include the power to: *“inquire into and **control** the administration by the senatus academicus or principal and professors of any college of the revenue, expenditure, and all the pecuniary concerns of the University...”* (emphasis ours)

20. Therefore, to the extent that Senate had powers in relation to administration of (i.e., the power to spend but not control) revenue under the 1858 Act, these were subject to the control of Court and Court held ultimate responsibility for management of the University’s resources.

21. The powers of Senate and Court were subject to further modification under the 1889 Act.

Court’s powers under the 1889 Act

22. Under the 1889 Act, the powers of Court were amended to include the power to:

“administer and manage the whole revenue and property of the University”; and to *“review any decision of [Senate] on a matter within its competency”*.

23. As noted at para. 15 above, the 1889 Act states that Senate’s powers under the 1858 Act remained unless modified by the 1889 Act. There is a rule of statutory interpretation that

where the provisions of a later enactment are contrary to those of an earlier enactment, the earlier enactment is impliedly repealed.

24. In our view, the language of 'administer' in relation to Senate's powers over property and revenue in the 1858 Act is clearly not the same as to 'control' that revenue (as that term is used in relation to Court's powers under that same Act). However, even if the powers of Senate under the 1858 Act were taken to imply an element of control over University resources (to the extent that Senate would have the power to direct the University Executive to amend the Policy), this would have been impliedly repealed by the language of the 1889 Act, and that power would lie with Court and not with Senate.
25. Accordingly, under legislation, Senate's powers over University resources are to administer funds provided to it by, and under the control of, the Court.

Powers in relation to the Sustainable Travel Policy

26. In light of the above, our view is that ultimate control of the Policy falls clearly within the scope of Court's powers, including its power to "*administer and manage the whole revenue and property of the University*"; and that in contrast, Senate's power is, as per section 7(1) the 1889 Act to: "*...regulate and superintend the teaching and discipline of the University and to promote research*". We consider that issues such as travel costs and provision are clearly a matter for Court, even where such travel is for academic purposes. In practice, Court exercises many of these powers through delegation to the Principal. The Principal is assisted by the University Executive in making decisions in relation to the exercise of these powers.
27. In other words, the powers of Senate are focussed on academic matters, not resourcing decisions; and accordingly, Senate does not have the power to direct the University Executive to take actions in relation to the Policy (including in relation to academic travel), as this goes beyond its power to "administer" resources as set out in the 1858 Act, and would in effect be a "control" of such resources. As noted above, the University Executive is the appropriate decision-making body in relation to the Policy, being the exercise of a delegated function of Court's powers in this regard.
28. This is consistent with other elements of University governance and application of the law. For example, the University Court is the entity within the University which can enter into contracts, sue, and be sued – accordingly, Court must control all policies and procedures that may carry financial implications (and as noted above, much of this work is delegated to the Principal and he is assisted by the University Executive in this regard). This includes matters that may be considered as academic in nature (e.g. the Research Publications Policy).
29. This view is also consistent with the fact that decisions on matter such as the Policy are informed by subject matter experts on the University Executive (e.g. in relation to financial, legal and procurement matters). Under the legislation set out above, there is no role for Senate to challenge or override this advice, nor to seek to direct the University to act contrary to that advice.
30. In reaching this conclusion, it is not relevant from a legal perspective that the Policy may impact on academic matters. There will be a great many decisions about the application of property and revenues that impact academic work (e.g. in relation to estates, finance, information technology, human resources etc.). However, as noted above, Senate does not have the power to control how these are applied (this being a power of Court, as assisted by the University Executive), and therefore Senate does not have the power to

direct the University Executive to take any particular action in this regard. Were Senate to have the power to direct (rather than inform) the University Executive's decision-making on issues such as the Policy, this would be contrary to the clear intention of the legislation and the role of the Court (and therefore the University Executive) as regards the division of these responsibilities under law.

Determining which matters are put before Senate

31. We have also been asked to give a view on which person or body is responsible for determining what matters are put before Senate at a meeting of Senate.
32. We are not aware of any document that expressly states who has authority to rule on what is within the scope of Senate. However, the Standing Orders of Senate (the "**Standing Orders**") assist in this regard.
33. In particular, Standing Order 5 states that the Principal is the President of Senate. Standing Order 6 states that the President determines the order of business at meetings of Senate.
34. We consider that, in giving the Standing Orders their ordinary meaning, the President is entitled to rule as to what is on the order of business and, accordingly, decide that a particular matter should not be put before Senate.
35. We would also note that whether or not the matters referred to above in relation to our advice on powers are put before Senate does not impact our advice on the legality of such a decision (i.e., that such a decision would be outside the scope of Senate's powers even if it were put before Senate).

Resource implications

36. This paper sets out the powers of Court, and Senate, in relation to Senate's powers to direct the University Executive to take or refrain from taking particular action. The production of the advice set out in this paper has had some workload implications for Legal Services.

Risk management

37. Providing Senate with a clear understanding of its legal powers will assist the University to manage its governance, including reducing any risks that the University could make decisions that are vulnerable to challenge on the basis that they are unlawful because Senate did not have the power to take the relevant decision.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

38. While the Sustainable Travel Policy is relevant to these goals, the points made in this paper (which relate to the legal powers of Senate) are not directly relevant to those goals.

Equality & diversity

39. While the Sustainable Travel Policy may have equality and diversity implications, the points made in this paper (which relate to the legal powers of Senate) do not have equality and diversity implications.

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

40. This paper is not seeking a decision, and therefore there is no need to communicate, implement and evaluate the impact of any action.

Authors

Presenter

Tom Ward (Director of Academic Services)
David Matheson (Legal Manager, Legal
Services)

Tom Ward

5 October 2022

Freedom of Information

Open

Senate

12 October 2022

Senate Standing Committees – upcoming business

Description of paper

1. This paper informs Senate of the main points of activity and business that we anticipate that the Senate Standing Committees will consider between October 2022 and January 2023.

Action requested / recommendation

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

Background and context

3. As has been established as practice, a note of upcoming key items of business from the Senate Standing Committees is a standing item on the agenda for Ordinary meetings of Senate. This is intended to facilitate Senate awareness and oversight of Standing Committee activity. This note does not a comprehensive overview of all business that the Standing Committees may receive in this period.

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
Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer
Philippa Ward, Academic Policy Officer

Presenters

Professor Tina Harrison, Convener of
SQAC & Deputy Convener of SEC
Dr. Paul Norris, Convener of APRC

Freedom of Information

Open

Appendix 1

Senate Standing Committees: upcoming business October 2022 – January 2023

<u>Senate Education Committee (SEC)</u>	
Upcoming business:	Brief description and context:
1. Curriculum Transformation	This a standing item on SEC agendas in 2022/23. We anticipate that SEC will be asked to play a key role in decision making for the Curriculum Transformation in the coming months.
2. Student Experience	This is a standing item on SEC agendas in 2022/23. SEC will be receiving updates from the Vice-Principal Students and Deputy Secretary Students on relevant matters and will be invited to comment as appropriate.
3. Doctoral College	This is a standing item on SEC agendas in 2022/23.
4. Curriculum and Future Teaching Spaces	A report on principles and visions for future approaches to connecting teaching space to curriculum.
5. Planning for the Future of Assessment and Misconduct	A report on sector trajectories regarding the impact of platforms, data and AI on assessment practice.
6. Learn Ultra	Updates on the Learn Ultra upgrade and early adopters programme
7. National Student Survey	The Committee will consider whether to approve a set of optional institution-specific questions for the 2023 NSS

Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

Upcoming business:	Brief description and context:
1. Annual Review of College Quality Reports	The Committee will consider the annual College Quality Reports for 2021-22. 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.
2. Student Support Model	The Committee will discuss how to approach evaluation and monitoring for the new system of student support.
3. Annual Reports	<p>The Committee will consider the following annual reports covering 2021-22 (and identify actions in response):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• External Examiner Reports – Thematic Analysis (an analysis of data from the External Examiner Reporting System).• Academic Appeals (an analysis of the appeals submitted, identifying areas for action and further consideration).• Student Discipline (an analysis of breaches of the Code of Student Conduct).• Complaint Handling (an analysis of the handling of complaints to the University, line with the requirements of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and the University’s Complaint Handling Procedure).• Annual Review of Student Support Services (an analysis of the annual reports from each of the Student Support Services, highlighting good practice and areas for further development).

4. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCS)	The Committee will discuss the annual report on MOOC activities.
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<u>Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)</u>	
Upcoming business:	Brief description and context:
1. Curriculum Transformation	Consideration of regulatory issues arising from Curriculum Transformation discussions, providing regulatory advice to support the development of a Curriculum Transformation framework for the University, and being aware of the impact of Curriculum Transformation on existing policies and the required changes to support the rollout of Curriculum Transformation – exact timescales for decisions to be confirmed.
2. Support for Study	Consideration of regulatory changes arising out of a review of the Support for Study policy being conducted by the Deputy Secretary, Students.
3. Coursework Extension (CE) and Special Circumstances (SC) task group	The CE & SC task group was set up by APRC to review policies relating to Coursework Extensions and Special Circumstances. APRC are likely to begin early consideration of regulatory changes arising from the work of the CE and SC task group by January 2023.
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. 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 2023.

Senate

12 October 2022

Senate Standing Committee Membership

Description of paper

1. The paper proposes practical arrangements for implementing Senate's commitment to adding three elected academic staff members of Senate to each of the Senate Standing Committees. It also seeks Senate's approval that the Committees' membership for the remainder of 2022-23 will in all other respects be in line with that presented to Senate in August 2022.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The paper invites Senate to:
 - Discuss and approve the practical arrangements for adding three elected academic staff members to each of the Senate Standing Committees (paragraphs 5 to 15);
 - Agree that the Committees' membership for the remainder of 2022-23 will in all other respects be in line with that presented to Senate in August 2022; and
 - Agree to review the arrangements for adding elected academic members to the Senate Standing Committees during Semester 1 of 2023-24, prior to seeking nominations for the Committees for 2024-25.

Background and context

3. At its meeting on 11 August 2022, Senate discussed a paper seeking its approval for the Membership and Terms of Reference of the three Senate Standing Committees for operation in 2022-23. Senate approved two amendments to the membership of the Senate Standing Committees – to add to the entries relating to composition of each committee the following:

The following preliminary committee compositions are to allow the committees to begin work prior to the next Ordinary Meeting of Senate and shall expire at that time. An updated committee composition shall be proposed for approval at that meeting that reflects consideration of representation of elected Academic Staff and elected Student members, BAME members of Senate and the university community, and recognised trade unions.

3 x members of staff chosen by elected academic members of Senate plus Senate Assessors and the Academic Staff Member of Court from among their number.

4. Senate agreed that the Conveners of the Standing Committees would meet with a group of elected academic Senate members to consider the practical arrangements for implementing the addition of three elected members to each of the Committees, with a view to presenting proposals to Senate's Ordinary

meeting in October 2022. This group met on 12 and 26 September 2022. Paragraphs 5 to 15 below set out the group's proposals.

Discussion

Practical arrangements for adding elected academic members to the Senate Standing Committees for 2022-23

5. The group of Senate Standing Committee Conveners and elected academic Senate members propose that, in order to add the planned new members to the Committees as soon as possible, the following pragmatic arrangements will apply for 2022-23:
 - Three places will be available on each of the three Senate Standing Committees;
 - Current elected academic staff members of Senate plus Senate Assessors and the Academic Staff Member of Court will have the opportunity to nominate themselves for membership of one of the three Senate Standing Committees (they cannot seek membership of more than one Committee);
 - In the event that the number of eligible nominees for a Committee does not exceed the three available places, each nominee will be assigned to the membership of the Committee;
 - In the event that the number of eligible nominees for a Committee exceeds the three available places, the drawing of lots will determine which nominees are assigned to the membership of the Committee;
 - Should one or more of the three places on a Committee remain unfilled following the conclusion of these nomination processes, the vacant place(s) would be offered to member(s) who had unsuccessfully nominated themselves for a place on a different Committee. Were there more members than places, the place(s) would be distributed by drawing lots;
 - For members assigned to a Committee, the term of office will run until the end of 2022-23 (ie to 31 July 2023), with scope to subsequently nominate themselves (in line with the arrangements agreed by Senate) to the Committee for 2023-24;
 - Should the members cease to be members of Senate during 2022-23, their membership of the relevant Committee will cease with immediate effect.
6. If Senate approves these arrangements, Academic Services will seek to take them forward on the following timelines (with a view to, if possible, the new members joining the Senate Standing Committees in time for their meetings in November / December):

- by 21 October 2022 – Invite self-nominations, with a deadline 1 week after the communication is issued; and
- w/c 31 October 2022 – Complete process of assigning nominees to Committees and communicate the outcome to nominees and to Senate as a whole.

Practical arrangements for adding elected academic members to the Senate Standing Committees for 2023-24

7. The group of Senate Standing Committee Conveners and elected academic Senate members propose that the following approach will operate for determining which elected members to assign to the membership of the Standing Committees for 2023-24:

- Three places will be available on each of the three Senate Standing Committees;
- Current elected academic staff members of Senate plus Senate Assessors and the Academic Staff Member of Court will have the opportunity to nominate themselves for membership of one of the three Senate Standing Committees (they cannot seek membership of more than one Committee);
- Where the Senate term of a current member in one of these categories is due to end in July 2023, they can nominate themselves for membership of one of the Committees for 2023-24 as long as they plan to stand for re-election to Senate (on the understanding that they would only be able to take up a place on the Committee if they secure another term on Senate commencing in August 2023);
- In the event that the number of eligible nominees for a Committee does not exceed the three available places, each nominee will be assigned to the membership of the Committee;
- In the event that the number of eligible nominations for a Committee exceeds the three available places, an election will determine which nominees are assigned to the membership of the Committee;
- Current elected academic staff members of Senate plus Senate Assessors and the Academic Staff Member of Court would be eligible to vote in this election (if an election is required);
- If required, the election would be conducted by means of the Single Transferrable Vote, Weighted Inclusive Gregory Method (STV WIGM). For each Committee, the three candidates with the greatest share of the vote would automatically be elected to the relevant Committee. In the event of a

tie, the successful candidate or candidates would be determined by the drawing of lots;

- Voting would be conducted online, and the counting of votes would be conducted using an electronic counting system;
 - For members assigned to a Committee, the term of office will run from 1 August 2023 until the end of 2023-24 (31 July 2024), with scope to subsequently seek election to the relevant Committee (in line with the arrangements agreed by Senate) for up to two further sessions;
 - Should one or more of the three places on a Committee remain unfilled following the conclusion of these nomination and (if required) election processes, the vacant place(s) would be offered to member(s) who had unsuccessfully nominated themselves for a place on a different Committee for 2023-24. Were there more members than places, the place(s) would be distributed to the member(s) who had received the most votes for the Committee that they had stood for (if an election had been held) or by drawing lots (if an election had not been held);
 - Should the members cease to be members of Senate prior to or during 2023-24, their membership of the relevant Committee will cease with immediate effect.
8. If Senate approves this approach, at Senate's Ordinary meeting in February 2023 Academic Services will seek Senate's approval for some of the details, for example the deadlines for submission of nominations, and the election dates (if required).

Roles and responsibilities of elected academic Senate members on Senate Standing Committees

9. The Senate members assigned to the Standing Committees through these processes will be full members and have the same standard roles and responsibilities as other members of these Committees, as set out in the Senate Committee Members' Guidance:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees>

10. In addition to expressing their own views on the relevant Committee's business, each of these Senate members will facilitate dialogue with the broader elected academic Senate membership regarding their Committee's business. They will feed views from this broader Senate membership into their contributions to the Committee that they are on. They will also ensure the transparency of the Senate Committees by reporting back to elected Senate members on how the Senate Committee that they are on is fulfilling its responsibilities. Each of the members

assigned to the Committees will be able to determine how to approach these elements of their roles.

Time commitment

11. Prior to nominating themselves for membership of a Standing Committee, Senate members should ensure that they will have sufficient time to fulfil their role on the Committee.
12. While it would not be possible to provide a precise indication of the amount of time required (due to variation between Committees, between years, and between individuals), the following should assist members to understand the broad quantum of work involved:
 - Each Committee will normally meet c. five times per session (though with potential for additional meetings in exceptional circumstances);
 - Each meeting will normally last 2-3 hours;
 - In advance of each meeting, Committee members will need time to read the Committee papers (the volume of papers varies between meetings, and different members will take different lengths of time to review the documentation);
 - In some circumstances, Committees will undertake some additional business by correspondence;
 - The Committees undertake some of their business via task groups / sub-Committees, and Committee members may form part of the membership of these groups – if members join any of these groups, this would take additional time;
 - Were members to author any papers for a Committee, this would take additional time;
 - Members would also need to factor in some time for facilitating dialogue with elected academic Senate members regarding the business of their Committee.

Responsibility for supporting the arrangements

13. The Senate Support team within Academic Services will manage these arrangements – including communicating about the nominations process, confirming the eligibility of nominees, managing the election process, assigning nominees to Committees, drawing lots where required, and communicating the outcome of the nominations process.

14. The University Secretary will nominate the Returning Officer for the electoral process. The Returning Officer will be responsible for overseeing the nominations process, the electoral process (where required), the drawing of lots (where required), the assignment of Senate members to the Committees, and the declaration of results.

Monitoring and evaluation

15. We recommend that Senate reviews the arrangements for adding elected academic members to the Senate Standing Committees during Semester 1 of 2023-24, prior to seeking nominations for the Committees for 2024-25. The University is arranging an External Effectiveness Review of Senate and its Committees during 2022-23. This may provide useful insights to take into account during that review. In addition, it would be appropriate to seek input from the elected academic Senate members on the Committees, and other members of those Committees.

For discussion and approval

16. We are inviting the committee to:

- Discuss and approve the practical arrangements for adding three elected academic staff members to each of the Senate Standing Committees for 2022-23 and 2023-24 (paragraphs 5 to 15);
- Agree that the Committees' membership for the remainder of 2022-23 will in all other respects be in line with that presented to Senate in August 2022; and
- Agree to review the arrangements for adding elected academic members to the Senate Standing Committees during Semester 1 of 2023-24, prior to seeking nominations for the Committees for 2024-25.

Other membership issues

17. This paper focusses on addressing the second of the two amendments to the Committees' membership that Senate had approved at its meeting in August 2022 (see paragraph 3). When the Conveners of the Standing Committees met with the group of elected academic Senate members, those in attendance concluded that were not appropriately constituted to consider the broader range of issues included in the first amendment, and that it may be more appropriate to consider them following the conclusion of the externally-facilitated review of Senate.

Resource implications

18. The operation of these processes will have workload implications for Academic Services. We will take this into account in our planning processes. Paragraphs 11

to 12 cover the time implications for elected academic Senate members standing on these Committees.

Risk management

19. The proposals set out in this paper will assist the University to ensure that its academic governance arrangements are effective and enable the University to manage a range of risks associated with its academic provision.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

20. Not applicable

Equality & diversity

21. Extending the membership of the Senate Standing Committees may increase the diversity of these Committees. The planned externally facilitated review of Senate provides an opportunity to look more broadly at any equality and diversity issues in the make-up of the Committees and the way they conduct their business.

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

22. The Senate Support Team within Academic Services will take responsibility for managing implementation of these arrangements, including communicating with Senate members about the arrangements. Paragraph 15 sets out the arrangements for evaluation.

Author

Tom Ward
4 October 2022

Presenter

Tom Ward

Freedom of Information Open

SENATE**12th October 2022****Curriculum Transformation Update****Description of paper**

1. This paper provides an update on the Curriculum Transformation Programme, including work in progress on the development of a proposed curriculum framework for consideration via the appropriate University governance channels, including Senate and other groups (including relevant Standing Committees of Senate) in early 2023.

This will directly contribute to Strategy 2030 outcomes ii, v, vi, ix and xii, and be relevant to other outcomes including iv, x and xiii

Action requested / recommendation

2. For information and to raise awareness of work in progress and next steps.

Background and context

3. Curriculum Transformation is a major and long term change and investment programme for the University. We are coming towards the end of an initial scoping phase (April 2021 to December 2022) which will lead into multi-year design, development and implementation phases.

The background to curriculum transformation, our approach and intention was discussed at Senate in February 2022 including what was then work in progress on the development of an Edinburgh Student Vision, engagement with staff, students and external stakeholders, and building an evidence and resource base to inform and support curriculum transformation.

Work has continued throughout 2022 on the Student Vision and on the development of an institutional curriculum framework. This paper provides an update on work in progress and plans for the next three months as we look ahead to discussion of a proposed curriculum framework, readiness assessment and benefits case.

Further information including plans and progress is at <https://edin.ac/curriculum-transformation> (open to external visitors) and the curriculum transformation hub: <https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation> (internal audience – staff and students).

Discussion

4. A consultation on the draft student vision took place in April-June 2022¹. The vision comprises three high level objectives that focus on creating long lasting benefits for our students, alongside a set of core principles for the development of a curriculum that will support the achievement of these objectives. There was

¹ <https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation/SitePages/Edinburgh-Student-Vision-Consultation.aspx>

overall support for the substance of the vision from the majority of respondents and other stakeholders. Key considerations emerging from the consultation included the importance of a stronger focus on wellbeing, how best to make the curriculum distinctive to Edinburgh, the need for investment in systems and other areas of support for the curriculum and the importance of a robust implementation plan. These points are being taken forward through current work in progress on curriculum design principles, programme archetypes and the Supporting the Curriculum Workstream.

5. The priority for the next three months is to develop a formal proposal for consideration via the appropriate University governance channels, including Senate and other groups (including relevant Standing Committees of Senate) in early 2023. This will include an updated version of the Edinburgh Student Vision, a statement of intended programme benefits and investment case; an institutional curriculum framework (comprising programme archetypes and design principles); and an impact & readiness assessment on the infrastructure needed to support the curriculum.
6. **Work in Progress: Programme Archetypes & Curriculum Design Principles**
A major focus for 2022 has been on developing a set of prototype programme archetypes and design principles for discussion with Schools, Deaneries and Services. A clear request from colleagues earlier this year was for the development of specific prototypes and possibilities that they could react to and use to stimulate discussion and thinking.

Our aim is to develop a set of programme archetypes (or delivery structures) at undergraduate and taught postgraduate level. The purpose of the archetypes is to facilitate, *inter alia*, exploring the potential for more clarity and greater consistency in our offering to students, the achievement of the agreed curriculum design principles, and understanding of requirements for the supporting infrastructure. The archetypes must be responsive to the requirements for external accreditation, while supporting appropriate and achievable levels of choice and flexibility for students respecting the expectations and requirements of different disciplines. An initial set of prototype undergraduate archetypes was produced in April 2022, with prototype taught postgraduate archetypes following in August. These have been shared for discussion with Heads of School, Directors of Teaching, the University Executive, Curriculum Transformation Board, meetings with School representatives etc. Several Schools and Deaneries have used them to support discussion and thinking locally which is particularly welcome. Feedback from these sources is being used to support the development of second and third iterations of these archetypes for further discussion and testing in different subject areas before the end of the year.

The Curriculum Design Principles are intended to inform and support decisions on the selection and implementation of programme archetypes, and to guide decision making and planning at all levels, looking at how the curriculum is designed, developed, and supported. Prototype design principles were produced in April 2022 and shared alongside the archetypes. Feedback on the first iteration of the design principles (content and approach) was positive but when we started to test the utility and relevance of the principles in the curriculum

design principles & architecture workstream² we identified a need to tighten up the principles and look in more detail at how they could be used in practice for specific tasks (e.g. programme design, review, communication, prioritisation & planning) by different individuals and groups (e.g. programme director, course, organiser, teaching office, lecturer, teaching assistant, support service). This is the focus of the second iteration of the design principles produced in late September.

7. An important theme emerging around the design principles is clarity on the intentions behind their implementation. The Curriculum Transformation Board have emphasised that the use of the design principles should support staff and student agency (so be responsive to different disciplinary contexts, enabling colleagues to be creative and use their academic judgment) and increase institutional resilience, particularly the resilience of staff and students (so helping to manage workloads for individuals and introduce systems and policies that remove the need for time consuming workarounds).
8. Further information on this work in progress, the detail of the student vision and prototype programme archetypes and design principles is available in an overview & look ahead presentation recently added to the hub at: [https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation/SitePages/Curriculum-Transformation-Overview-and-Look-Ahead-\(September-2022\).aspx](https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation/SitePages/Curriculum-Transformation-Overview-and-Look-Ahead-(September-2022).aspx)
Our intention is to update this with the next iteration of the design principles and archetypes after Senate Education Committee in November and in the lead up to Senate in February.

9. Work in Progress: Supporting the Curriculum

In parallel with the development of proposals for the curriculum transformation framework, members of the Supporting the Curriculum Workstream are developing an impact and readiness assessment and indicative timelines for the changes we would need to make to regulations, Quality Assurance processes, Course & Programme approvals, systems, support for staff and students, digital and physical infrastructure. While difficult to do before the framework has been finalised workstream members are looking at potential scenarios and likely pinch points, focussing initially on the critical path for advertising and rolling out degree programmes, before considering the wider requirements. This is also being fed into the development of the next iterations of the archetypes and design principles.

10. Engagement and next steps

During 2021 the focus of engagement was on building awareness of curriculum transformation within the University, compiling an evidence base and gathering perspectives on the priorities and potential for curriculum transformation, including the content of an Edinburgh Student Vision. While information and updates on curriculum transformation have continued during 2022, including significant efforts to promote the Edinburgh Student Vision Consultation, there has been more of a focus on keeping groups like Heads of School and Directors

² <https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation/SitePages/Workstreams-Overview.aspx#curriculum-design-principles-architecture>

of Teaching informed and involved in developing the prototype programme archetypes and design principles.

During this semester we are keen to further extend awareness and engagement with curriculum transformation more broadly across the University community. We will return to the dissemination of regular updates on curriculum transformation³ and have developed slides sets and recorded presentations for use in Schools, Deaneries, Services and Committees⁴. We have and will continue to provide updates and gather reactions to work in progress from groups and committees across the University⁵. Opportunities for School or Deanery presentations are welcome. We would be grateful for support from Senate members through raising awareness. Dedicated opportunities for feedback will be provided.

Resource implications

11. The programme resources to date have been managed through the project team staff time to support the development of the programme archetypes and design principles and the supporting the curriculum work. During the upcoming semester a draft investment case will be developed working with key stakeholders, based on feedback already received and experience from other universities undertaking a similar programme. As well as setting out the vision we want to achieve, this will also set out the initial forecast for staff effort required to deliver the programme. In addition to resource, the initial scheduling and timeline for implementation will be developed which is expected to be over a number of years, and dependencies and opportunities with other initiatives will need to form part of this consideration.

Risk management

12. Key risks include the readiness and suitability of current University systems and support, along with concerns around capacity and timelines, particularly when considering the demands of running curriculum transformation alongside other major institutional change programmes and as we emerge from the pandemic. These risks are being monitored and ameliorating actions identified through the use of a risk log reported on to the Programme Board.

The connections between these risks and implications for the scale and timeline of curriculum transformation will be a key consideration for the Board as we move from principles to specific sets of recommendations and take these recommendations through the appropriate governance channels. Central to this will be whether providing more time to understand and use the curriculum framework will increase the positive impact of curriculum transformation, and the need for a thorough assessment of whether the systems and other changes needed to support curriculum transformation can be implemented in time. In

³ <https://uo.e.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation/SitePages/Curriculum-Transformation-Programme-Update-%E2%80%93-September-2022.aspx>

⁴ [https://uo.e.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation/SitePages/Curriculum-Transformation-Overview-and-Look-Ahead-\(September-2022\).aspx](https://uo.e.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation/SitePages/Curriculum-Transformation-Overview-and-Look-Ahead-(September-2022).aspx)

⁵ Please contact curriculum.programme@ed.ac.uk if you would like a member of the Programme team to participate in meetings or discussions in your area of the University.

short, transformation and innovation to improve student and staff experience is the core aim, and this must dominate our actions and planning.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

13. Curriculum Transformation will support a positive contribution to the SDGs by the University. Objectives around inclusive and equitable access to education (SDG4), wellbeing (SDG3) and gender equality (SDG5) align with the purpose of Curriculum Transformation and the prototype Curriculum Design Principles. SDG13 (action to combat climate change and its impact) features directly in the Edinburgh Student Vision and through consideration by a Climate and Sustainability working group.

Equality & diversity

14. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and will be reviewed periodically as we move from the scoping to the design and implementation phases of the programme. Going beyond this, a commitment to equity, inclusivity and diversity is a key element of the Student Vision and the prototype Curriculum Design Principles. This will be a major focus for the resources and guidance developed to support curriculum transformation.

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

15. The work in progress and next steps described in this paper will be discussed and evaluated through the Curriculum Transformation Board⁶ reporting to the University Executive, through appropriate Senate Committees, Senate and Court. In addition to an expanded set of University wide communication and engagement activities, the programme team will continue to work with Heads of School, Directors of Teaching, Schools and Deaneries on the preparation of the curriculum framework.

Authors

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Presenters

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October 2022

Freedom of Information

Open

⁶ <https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation/SitePages/Who-is-working-on-CT.aspx>

Senate**12 October 2022****Draft Resolution - Code of Student Conduct****Description of paper**

1. This paper is presented to Senate for consultation in accordance with the procedures for the creation of Resolutions as set out in the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

Action requested / Recommendation

2. Senate is invited to make observations on the draft Resolution No. 177: Code of Student Conduct.

3. The final Resolution will be submitted to Court in December for approval.

Background and context

4. The Senatus Academicus ('Senate') has a formal responsibility to superintend student discipline at the University. The Code of Student Conduct provides the University's policy and procedure for handling allegations of misconduct against students of the University. Senate has delegated responsibility for the Code of Student Conduct to its Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC). APRC has undertaken a periodic review of the Code of Student Conduct and approved amendments to the Code. The amendments are designed in particular to equip the Code to deal more appropriately with allegations of serious misconduct.

5. A draft Resolution (contained in Appendix 1 with all proposed changes from the current Code marked up) has been formulated to deal with the amendments to the Code of Student Conduct.

Discussion

6. The key changes to the Code of Student Conduct are as follows:

- Clarifies that the Reporting Party in a case will be given the opportunity to respond to new evidence provided by the Respondent, where relevant;
- Where the Student Discipline Committee withdraws from a Respondent the right to cross-examine directly the Reporting Party (in order to safeguard the wellbeing of the Reporting Party), an amendment clarifies the arrangements for ensuring that the Respondent retains the right to challenge the evidence presented by the Reporting Party, in order to maintain a fair process;
- Clarifies the Reporting Party's right to complain about the way the discipline process has been conducted at the conclusion of the process;
- Clarifies the nature of the decision made by a Conduct Investigator when they refer a case to the Student Discipline Committee, in order to prevent confusion regarding the fact that it is the Student Discipline Committee which makes the ultimate determination as to whether the allegations are proven;
- Extends the length of the notice period given to Respondents in advance of a hearing of the Student Discipline Committee to ten working days, in order to allow Respondents a more appropriate length of time to prepare for a hearing;
- Clarification that the Student Discipline Committee has discretion to decide which of the witnesses named by the Conduct Investigator should be invited to a hearing of the Committee;
- Establishes criteria for Respondents wishing to provide new evidence or bring forward new witnesses to the Student Discipline Committee, where such evidence or

witnesses have not been presented or named during the Conduct Investigation process. This encourages more active engagement in the Conduct Investigation process by Respondents, and prevents the need for the Committee to have to carry out a frontline investigative process at the hearing, which imposes an unreasonable burden upon them;

- Adds provision for the Respondent to notify the Student Discipline Committee of any preliminary issues relating to a hearing five working days before the hearing. This will prevent procedural issues being raised on the day of the hearing, which can lead to adjournment, and cause delay for all parties;
- Extends the Student Discipline Committee's power to apply suspensions of specified privileges as a penalty to a student for up to the remainder of the student's studies (full suspension remains limited to one year). This may present the Committee with a reasonable alternative to permanent exclusion in some cases;
- Removes "requiring the Respondent to write an approved apology to any wronged party" from the range of penalties available to the Student Discipline Committee. This penalty is inappropriate in the kinds of serious cases considered by the Committee;
- Where the Student Discipline Committee upholds an allegation of misconduct against a Respondent who is on a programme which is subject to fitness to practise requirements, an amendment clarifies that the Committee will always refer the matter to the relevant Fitness to Practise Committee for consideration.

Resource implications

7. There are no direct resource implications.

Risk Management

8. APCR has considered any risks presented by the proposed amendments.

Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

9. N/A

Equality and Diversity

10. APCR has considered in detail the equality and diversity implications of the amendments to the Code of Student Conduct. These amendments have the potential to deliver a positive impact from an equality perspective.

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

11. The final Resolution will be submitted to Court on 5 December 2022 for approval.

Consultation

12. Academic Services have consulted widely on the amendments to the Code of Student Conduct among staff and the Students' Association. The University's Legal Services department have also provided legal advice on the amendments.

Further information

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September 2022

Presenter(s)

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UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Draft Resolution of the University Court No. 117/2022

Code of Student Conduct

At Edinburgh, the Fifth day of December, Two thousand and twenty two.

WHEREAS the University Court, on the recommendation of the Senatus Academicus, deems it expedient to amend the regulations governing student conduct:

THEREFORE the Court, on the recommendation of the Senatus Academicus and in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Section 3 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, with special reference to paragraph 4 of Part II of Schedule 2 to that Act, hereby resolves:

1. The attached Code of Student Conduct shall become operative in the University of Edinburgh.
2. On the date on which this Resolution comes into force, Resolution 7/2019 shall be repealed.
3. This Resolution shall come into force with effect on 1 January 2023.

For and on behalf of the University Court

LEIGH CHALMERS

University Secretary



Code of Student Conduct

THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Purpose of Policy

The primary purposes of the University are the advancement and application of knowledge and the education of its members; its central activities are teaching, learning and research. These purposes can be achieved only if the members of the University community have mutual trust and confidence and can live and work beside each other in conditions which permit freedom of thought and expression within a framework of respect for the rights of other persons. The University expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in their day to day activities, including in their dealings with other students, staff and external organisations. Students are expected to comply with University policies and regulations. Where they do not comply with these requirements, and where they disrupt University activities, then the University will follow relevant procedures to resolve matters, including this Code of Student Conduct. Failure to comply with this Code will be treated as misconduct for the purposes of paragraph 12 below. The University aims to deal with all disciplinary issues in a fair and consistent manner. It recognises that, for the student and staff concerned, involvement in disciplinary procedures can be difficult and stressful. The University will therefore ensure that those involved are made aware of available guidance and support, and that disciplinary issues are dealt with as quickly as the specific circumstances allow.

Overview

The Code of Student Conduct states the University's expectations for student conduct; outlines examples of misconduct offences; and states how the University will handle such offences. It outlines specific responsibilities and actions for staff who investigate alleged offences and who apply disciplinary penalties. The Senatus Academicus (Senate) has responsibility for the Code of Student Conduct, which is governed by University Court resolution.

Scope

The Code of Student Conduct applies to all students of the University.

Contact Officer

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Document control

Dates	Approved: 17.06.19	Starts: 01.08.19	Equality impact assessment: 14.06.19	Amendments:	Next Review: <u>2023/24</u> <u>2025/26</u>
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Approving authority

Senate; [CSPCAPRC](#) and the University Court for the associated resolution.

Consultation undertaken

~~Academic Services have consulted widely on the amendments to the Code of Student Conduct among staff and the Students' Association. The University's Legal Services department have also provided legal advice on the amendments. The development of the Code was based on widespread consultation with the Discipline Committee, Authorised Officers, Standing Commission on Student Discipline, CSPC, EUSA, the University lawyers and those responsible for related procedures. Two senior judges commented as "critical friends". Benchmarking against other institutions. The University acknowledges, in particular, the relevant policies on student conduct and discipline of the Universities of Aberdeen, Glasgow and Sheffield.~~

Section responsible for policy

Academic Services

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

The operation of the Code of Student Conduct relates to other student regulations and general policies in the University. These relationships are clarified in guidance which supports the Code of Student Conduct. www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline

UK Quality Code

n/a

Policies superseded by this policy

~~This Code supersedes the General Statement on Student Discipline and Code of Student Discipline, covered by University Court Resolution 3/2009 23.2.09. This version of the Code of Student Conduct supersedes the [01.08.19](#) [24.4.14](#) version.~~



Code of Student Conduct

Scope

1. The Code of Student Conduct applies to all students of the University. It applies to
 - a. activities in which they engage in their capacity as students of the University; or
 - b. services or facilities they enjoy by virtue of being a student of the University; or
 - c. their presence in the vicinity of, or their access to, any premises owned, leased or managed by the University, the Edinburgh University Students' Association or the Edinburgh University Sports Union (EUSU); or
 - d. any activity not covered by a), b) or c) above, which is considered to affect adversely the safety, interests or reputation of the University, its students, employees or authorised representatives, as outlined in this Code.

Basis of Jurisdiction

2. Under the Universities (Scotland) Acts all students of the University are subject to the jurisdiction of the Senate, for their studies and for their conduct. The Senate has primary responsibility for student discipline and recommends to the University Court the University's disciplinary procedure¹.

3. The processes set out in this Code of Student Conduct are internal processes and they do not have the same degree of formality as proceedings in a court of law. They are not adversarial in nature, but rather involve examination of available evidence as set out in this Code of Student Conduct. They task various members of the University community with responding to misconduct, including by investigating, determining and imposing penalties in respect of such misconduct.

3.4. For students on programmes of study which are provided jointly between the University of Edinburgh and another institution, misconduct alleged to have been committed on the premises of either institution shall be dealt with under the relevant institution's discipline regulations. When the alleged misconduct is committed elsewhere, the University Secretary of the University and of the other institution, or their nominees, shall consult and decide whether the case shall proceed under the Code of Student Conduct of the University of Edinburgh or that of the other institution. Any alternative arrangements will be agreed in writing between the institutions.

Student Conduct

4.5. The primary purposes of the University are the advancement and application of knowledge and the education of its members; its central activities are teaching, learning and research. These purposes can be achieved only if the members of the University community have mutual trust and confidence and can live and work beside each other in conditions which permit freedom of thought and expression within a framework of respect for the rights of other persons.

5.6. All students of the University are required at all times to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in their day to day activities, including in their dealings with other

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1966/13>



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students, staff and external organisations. Students are required to comply with University policies and regulations.

- ~~6-7.~~ By matriculating, or by enrolling on any University course or programme, a student becomes a member of the University community and is subject to University discipline. The University may also take action under this Code when the individual concerned is no longer registered or enrolled at the University.
- ~~7-8.~~ Students' behaviour may be affected by some health conditions or disabilities. However, the University has a duty to ensure that members of the University community are not subjected to unacceptable behaviour and any allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be investigated. Where health conditions or disabilities may be a contributing factor, reports or evidence of these will be taken into account. Where student conduct is found to be unacceptable as a result of a health condition or disability, the University will endeavour to offer appropriate support to assist the student but may take action under the Code of Student Conduct.

University responsibilities

- ~~8-9.~~ The University aims to deal with all disciplinary issues in a fair and consistent manner. It recognises that, for the students and staff concerned, involvement in disciplinary procedures can be difficult and stressful. The University will therefore ensure that those involved are made aware of available guidance and support, and that disciplinary issues are dealt with as quickly as the specific circumstances allow.
- ~~9-10.~~ Considering and using disciplinary action at an early stage can prevent more serious offences or issues arising. The University views the Code of Student Conduct and discipline procedures as a part of a welfare approach: misconduct may be the first indicator of underlying problems. The process can provide students with an opportunity for reflection and learning.
- ~~10-11.~~ The University will:
- ~~10.1.1-11.1.1.~~ Make this Code and associated guidance material available to all students and staff
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline
 - ~~10.1.2-11.1.2.~~ Deal with student disciplinary issues in a proportionate and transparent way, as soon as issues become apparent
 - ~~10.1.3-11.1.3.~~ Respect the need for confidentiality in relation to disciplinary issues
 - ~~10.1.4-11.1.4.~~ Implement the Code of Student Conduct in line with all data protection legislation.
- ~~11-12.~~ The Senate may devolve responsibility to relevant Senate committees, with appropriate student membership, for:
- ~~11.1.1-12.1.1.~~ Keeping the Code of Student Conduct under review, and proposing any amendments to the Senate and the University Court;



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~~11.1.2.~~12.1.2. Discussing, reviewing and approving appropriate student disciplinary procedures and guidance;

~~11.1.3.~~12.1.3. Appointing members of the Student Discipline Committee and Student Discipline Officers (see paragraphs ~~2422~~ to ~~2728~~ for information about these roles; and

~~11.1.4.~~12.1.4. Considering an Annual Report about the number, types and outcomes of cases of misconduct found to have been committed.

Misconduct Offences

~~12.13.~~ Examples of student misconduct are provided below. This list is not exhaustive. The University may choose to investigate and take action on misconduct offences whether they take place on University, Edinburgh University Students' Association or EUSU premises or elsewhere, including online and in social media. Below, "Person", means any student of the University; any employee of the University; any visitor to the University; any subcontractor engaged by the University, or any other authorised representative of the University.

~~12.1.~~13.1. Disrupting, or interfering with any academic, administrative, sporting, social or other University activities;

~~12.2.~~13.2. Obstructing, or interfering with, the functions, duties or activities of any Person;

~~12.3.~~13.3. Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening or offensive behaviour or language towards any Person (whether expressed orally, in writing or electronically); (including via social media), including sexual violence or abuse of any Person;

~~12.4.~~13.4. Harassment of any Person whilst engaged in any University work, study or activity, including bullying and sexual harassment;

~~12.5.~~13.5. Conduct which unjustifiably infringes freedom of thought or expression whilst on University premises or engaged in University work, study or activity;

~~12.6.~~13.6. Fraud, deceit, falsification of documents, deception or dishonesty in relation to the University or its staff or in connection with holding any office in the University or in relation to being a student of the University;

~~12.7.~~13.7. Behaving in a way likely to cause injury to any Person or to impair safety;

~~12.8.~~13.8. Harassing, victimising or discriminating against any Person on grounds of age, disability, race, ethnic or national origin, religion or beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, marriage or civil partnership, colour or socio-economic background;

13.9. Failing to comply with any University rule, regulation or policy, including conditions issued under paragraph 45 of this Code of Student Conduct;



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~~12.9-13.10.~~ 13.10. Assessment offences, including making use of unfair means in any University assessment or assisting a student to make use of such unfair means;

~~12.10-13.11.~~ 13.11. Misconduct in research;

~~12.11-13.12.~~ 13.12. Damaging, defacing, stealing or misappropriating University property or the property of any Person, whether deliberately or recklessly;

~~12.12-13.13.~~ 13.13. Misusing or making unauthorised use of University premises or items of property, including IT facilities or safety equipment;

~~12.13-13.14.~~ 13.14. Deliberately doing, or failing to do, anything which thereby causes the University to be in breach of a statutory obligation;

~~12.14-13.15.~~ 13.15. Behaving in a way which brings the University into disrepute (without prejudice to the right to fair and justified comment and criticism);

~~12.15-13.16.~~ 13.16. Making false, frivolous, malicious or vexatious complaints;

~~12.16-13.17.~~ 13.17. Failing, upon request, to disclose name and other relevant details to an officer or employee of the University in circumstances when it is reasonable to require that such information be given;

~~12.17-13.18.~~ 13.18. Failing to comply with a previously-imposed penalty under this Code;

~~12.18-13.19.~~ 13.19. Any misconduct prior to a student's enrolment at the University of Edinburgh which was not previously known to the University, which: raises questions about the fitness of the student to remain a member of the University community; suggests that the student poses a threat to any Person or the discipline and good order of the University; or raises questions about the student's fitness to be admitted to and to practise any particular profession to which the student's course or programme leads directly;

~~12.19-13.20.~~ 13.20. Any other behaviour which: raises questions about the fitness of the student to remain a member of the University community; suggests that the student poses a threat to any Person or the discipline and good order of the University; or raises questions about the student's fitness to be admitted to and to practise any particular profession to which the student's course or programme leads directly.

~~13.14.~~ Detailed regulations and policies are published separately about, for example, University examinations, libraries, the use of computing facilities, the use of automatically processed personal data (in connection with academic work), academic misconduct, fitness to practise in a particular profession and University managed accommodation. Breaches of any of these or other University regulations or policies which amount to misconduct as outlined above, may be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct.

Misconduct and criminal proceedings

~~14.15.~~ The University may report to the police any allegation that a criminal offence has been committed.



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- ~~15~~.16. The University encourages any student who has been the victim of an alleged criminal offence to report this to the police, and, if relevant, to the University.
- ~~16~~.17. Where alleged misconduct constitutes a criminal offence, the University may investigate or take disciplinary action whether or not the matter has been referred to the police and whether or not criminal proceedings have begun or been completed.
- ~~17~~.18. The University may, at its discretion, suspend any internal investigation or disciplinary action on alleged criminal misconduct to await the outcome of any criminal proceedings. The decision whether or not to suspend the University's disciplinary process is taken collectively by the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary or their nominee taking action with a designated Vice-Principal. The University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary or their nominee will inform the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee of the decision to suspend an internal investigation or disciplinary action.
- ~~18~~.19. The University may investigate and take disciplinary action on alleged misconduct whatever the outcome of any external proceedings about the same matter and irrespective of whether external proceedings have been concluded.
- ~~19~~.20. Where a student is convicted of or cautioned or warned for an offence, this may be relied upon as evidence in any University proceedings provided that the circumstances leading to that conviction are relevant to those proceedings.
- ~~20~~.21. Any sentence or order pronounced by a court may be taken into account in the imposition of any disciplinary penalty.

Members of the University community involved in dealing with alleged misconduct cases

~~21~~.22. Members of the University community involved in dealing with alleged misconduct cases are:

~~21.1.1~~.22.1.1. **Conduct Investigators.** Allegations of student misconduct are investigated by Conduct Investigators. ~~Each School, Service, College and Support Group may have one or more Conduct Investigators, who are appointed by their respective College or Support Group. Conduct Investigators will generally be members of staff from Academic Services~~ **staff** but may also be appointed from the relevant School, Support or Professional Services Group. External Conduct Investigators may also be appointed.

~~21.1.2~~.22.1.2. **Student Discipline Officers and Student Discipline Committee.** University disciplinary action can be taken by Student Discipline Officers or by the Student Discipline Committee.

~~21.1.3~~.22.1.3. **Secretary of the Discipline Committee.** The University Secretary appoints a number of administrative staff to have the role of Secretary to the Discipline Committee, to support the Student Discipline Committee. A lead Secretary of the Discipline Committee, with responsibility for the student disciplinary process, is appointed by the Director of Academic Services.

~~21.1.4~~.22.1.4. **University Appeal Committee.** The University Appeal Committee deals with student appeals against a decision of a Student Discipline Officer or the Student



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Discipline Committee. The grounds for appeal are specified in the University's Student Appeal Regulations.

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/appeals/overview

22-23. The lead Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee maintains lists of current Conduct Investigators, Student Discipline Officers and members of the Student Discipline Committee, which are published on the University website.

23-24. The **Student Discipline Officers** are:

23.1.1-24.1.1. The Heads of the Colleges and Heads of Support Groups;

23.1.2-24.1.2. One or more members of the senior management in each College and Support Group, or their nominated representatives, to be appointed by the ~~Curriculum and Student Progression Committee~~ Academic Policy and Regulations Committee on behalf of the Senate.

23.1.3-24.1.3. The University Secretary, Deputy Secretaries and College Registrars, and any deputies they nominate to act on their behalf.

23.1.4-24.1.4. Designated Vice-Principals.

24-25. The **Student Discipline Committee** consists of at least six members of staff of the University and at least six matriculated students of the University, who are appointed to the committee by the ~~Curriculum and Student Progression Committee~~ Academic Policy and Regulations Committee on behalf of the Senate. At least four of the staff members must be academics. The sabbatical officers of Edinburgh University Students' Association and current Student Discipline Officers are not eligible for membership of the Student Discipline Committee.

25-26. Student Discipline Committee members' period of office is three years. All members are eligible for re-appointment provided that no member serves for more than six years. The ~~Curriculum and Student Progression Committee~~ Academic Policy and Regulations Committee appoints the Convener and Vice-Convener from the staff members.

26-27. Meetings of the Student Discipline Committee must consist of not less than five members, including at least two staff members and at least two student members. All meetings must be attended by a **Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee**. The Convener, or in their absence the Vice-Convener, presides at all meetings, and has on all occasions both a deliberative and a casting vote.

27-28. No member of University staff involved in this procedure, and no student members appointed to the Student Discipline Committee, should have any conflict of interest in the matter, and should not take part if there is any reasonable perception of bias; and if a member of the Committee has been involved in a case at an earlier stage, they will not serve on the Committee when it considers that case.

Information regarding student cases



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~~28-29.~~ The University may share information provided by students, staff and other witnesses with people involved in the case, including the student under investigation, for transparency and to provide a fair process. This may be done at any stage of the process, paying due attention to confidentiality and data protection requirements (paragraph 10 above).

Reporting student misconduct allegations

~~29-30.~~ With regard to reports of misconduct, these procedures distinguish between the following:

- a) **Respondent.** This refers to the student who is alleged to have committed an act of misconduct under investigation via this Code.
- b) **Reporting Party.** This is the individual (who may be a student, staff member, or member of the public) who has raised the allegation of misconduct against the Respondent.

Frontline resolution

~~30-31.~~ Students and members of the public may report allegations of student misconduct to any member of staff. Where students or members of the public are aware of misconduct occurring in a Service or Support Group, they may refer it to a relevant point, for example the Student Information Point, or a helpdesk.

~~31-32.~~ It is possible to resolve some misconduct allegations at an early stage. Staff who receive allegations may exercise their discretion on whether to seek to resolve matters locally, for example intervening to stop poor behaviour in University buildings. Where the staff member receiving the allegation considers [local frontline](#) resolution is not possible or appropriate, they should advise the student that they can request an investigation.

Requesting an investigation

~~32-33.~~ Staff may report allegations of student misconduct to their Head of School, Head of College or the Head of the relevant Service or Support Group (or their respective nominee). The relevant Head of School, Head of College, or the Head of the relevant Service or Support Group (or their respective nominee) will determine whether to pass the report to the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee).

~~33-34.~~ A student or a member of the public who wishes to request an investigation into an allegation of misconduct is encouraged to use the Complaint Handling Procedure:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/university-secretary-group/complaint-handling-procedure>

~~34-35.~~ Alternatively, students may wish to report allegations of student misconduct to their Student Support Team or Graduate School and request an investigation. The member of staff receiving the report will raise this with the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee).

Screening of reports of alleged misconduct

~~35-36.~~ On receipt of a report alleging misconduct, the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) will decide whether to initiate an investigation into the alleged misconduct.



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37. If the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) considers that the matter may be appropriately resolved under the frontline resolution process set out in paragraphs 31 and 32, and the matter has not already been considered under that process, they may refer that matter to frontline resolution rather than make a determination on initiating an investigation. Should frontline resolution fail to resolve the matter, the person who reported the allegation may subsequently request that the matter is re-considered for investigation under paragraph 36 above.

36-38. The University will initiate an investigation where:

- a) The report relates to an allegation which, if proven, could plausibly be regarded as a potential breach of the Code; and
- b) The information provided suggests that there is a realistic prospect that sufficient evidence will be available to determine whether or not the alleged incident has occurred.

37-39. Where the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) decides not to initiate an investigation, they will communicate the reasons for this to the Reporting Party.

Allocating the case to a Conduct Investigator

38-40. Where the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) decides to initiate an investigation, they will pass the report to a relevant Conduct Investigator and ask them to investigate the case.

39-41. The Conduct Investigator is usually a member of staff within Academic Services (but may also be a member of staff within the College in which the Respondent is a student, or of the relevant Service Professional Services or Support Group-, or be external to the University). Where there are multiple Respondents in a case who come from different Colleges or where the alleged misconduct applies to more than one area, the Heads of the relevant Colleges and/or Support Groups agree which Conduct Investigator should be asked to investigate the case.

40-42. The University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) may appoint two Conduct Investigators in particularly complex cases. Where two Conduct Investigators are appointed, one will be designated as Lead Investigator. In the event that either Conduct Investigator is unable to conclude the investigation, the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) will determine whether to appoint another Conduct Investigator, or continue the investigation with the one remaining Conduct Investigator. Where two Conduct Investigators acting in a case are unable to agree a finding, the decision of the Lead Investigator is final.

Precautionary suspension

41-43. When initiating an investigation into an allegation of misconduct, the University will consider whether it is necessary to take any precautionary action to suspend the Respondent pending the conclusion of proceedings under this Code.

42-44. Suspension pending the conclusion of proceedings under this Code is not used as a penalty. The power to suspend is used to protect the members of the University community or a particular member or members, or members of the general public, or to ensure that a full



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and proper investigation can be carried out. The power shall be used only where it is urgent and necessary to take such action. The University Secretary or Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) will record written reasons for the decision and send these to the Respondent.

43.45. In urgent situations, the University Secretary or a Deputy Secretary or their nominee, taking action with a designated Vice-Principal, may decide to immediately suspend a Respondent:

43.1.1.45.1.1. who is a danger to themselves or others; or

43.1.2.45.1.2. who is the subject of a misconduct allegation; or

43.1.3.45.1.3. against whom a criminal charge is pending; or

43.1.4.45.1.4. who is the subject of a police investigation.

The decision can be made at any stage of the University's student disciplinary process under this Code. This suspension may be a total or a selective restriction on attending the University or accessing its facilities or participating in University activities. It may also include a requirement that the Respondent should have no contact with named individuals.

44.46. Any Respondent suspended under the provisions of this section must be given an opportunity within five working days to make representations in person and/or through a member of the University community, including a member of Edinburgh University Students' Association staff, to the relevant University Secretary or Deputy Secretary (or their nominee) and the designated Vice-Principal. Where it is not possible for the Respondent to attend in person, they are entitled to make written representations.

45.47. Any decision to immediately suspend the Respondent is subject to review every twenty working days. Such a review will not involve a hearing or submissions made in person, but the student is entitled to submit written representations. Taking account of any written representations from the Respondent, and any other relevant factors, the University Secretary or Deputy Secretary or their nominee will decide whether it is reasonable and proportionate to retain the suspension, or to alter or remove it. The University Secretary or Deputy Secretary or their nominee will record their decision and inform the Respondent of the outcome in writing.

46.48. A decision to permit the Respondent's return following a period of suspension may be made subject to conditions. The University Secretary or Deputy Secretary or their nominee will provide the Respondent with information to support their reintroduction and any conditions which they need to meet.

Investigating student misconduct

49. The Conduct Investigator will investigate the alleged misconduct, in accordance with this Code.

50. As soon as practicable the Conduct Investigator will write to the Respondent to provide details of the alleged misconduct. The Conduct Investigator will give the Respondent the opportunity to respond to the allegations and will invite the Respondent to admit or deny responsibility.



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51. The Conduct Investigator will decide whether it is necessary to interview the Respondent and/or the Reporting Party (as applicable).
52. At the Conduct Investigator's discretion, the investigation may also include interviews with ~~the Reporting Party~~, members of staff and students of the University and, if necessary, members of the public. ~~People may provide~~
53. The Conduct Investigator will normally invite the Respondent and, separately, the Reporting Party (as applicable) to identify any persons from whom they would wish the Conduct Investigator to seek evidence to the . The Conduct Investigator has a discretion as to whether to seek evidence from persons identified to them.
54. The Conduct Investigator will also normally invite the Respondent and the Reporting Party (as applicable) to submit any documentary evidence to them which they would wish the Conduct Investigator to consider.
- 47-55. Evidence may be taken by the Conduct Investigator in writing in addition to, or instead of, ~~attending an~~ by interview.- The Conduct Investigator may decide to interview or request evidence in writing from any individual on more than one occasion, where this supports ~~the~~ the investigation. This may include speaking on more than one occasion with the Respondent and/or Reporting Party should the Conduct Investigator consider it is appropriate for them to comment on any new evidence obtained in the course of the Conduct Investigator's investigation.
- ~~48.1. As soon as practicable the Conduct Investigator will write to the Respondent to provide details of the alleged misconduct and, if appropriate, of the requirement to attend for interview. The Conduct Investigator will give the Respondent the opportunity to respond to the allegations and will invite the Respondent to admit or deny responsibility.~~
- 49-56. The Respondent is encouraged to contact Edinburgh University Students' Association, or the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee for advice about the student discipline procedure.
- 50-57. Any person attending an interview as part of an investigation has the right to be accompanied and/or represented at any interview by a member of the University community, including a member of Edinburgh University Students' Association staff. A person attending an interview may in addition be accompanied by a specialist provider of health or wellbeing support with the agreement of the Conduct Investigator. The Conduct Investigator has the right to question the person directly, where necessary. Those accompanying or representing the person being interviewed will be given the opportunity to contribute at the Conduct Investigator's invitation. The Conduct Investigator invites the person being interviewed, or any representative, to make a statement. The Conduct Investigator may be assisted by a note-taker who will take a record of the meeting.
- 51-58. If the Respondent does not appear on the date appointed for their interview and the Conduct Investigator is satisfied that they have been given due notice to appear, the Investigator may deal with the alleged misconduct in their absence. However, the Investigator may not draw any adverse inference from the Respondent's failure to appear.
- 52-59. If the Respondent admits responsibility or if the Conduct Investigator is satisfied that the allegations are well-founded then disciplinary action may be taken.



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~~53-60.~~ After investigation, the Conduct Investigator decides whether the alleged misconduct has occurred, and whether it constitutes a breach of the Code of Student Conduct. The Conduct Investigator writes a report setting out the case and their decision on the alleged misconduct. The length and detail in the report is appropriate to the nature or gravity of the case. The Investigator may:

~~53.1.1-60.1.1.~~ Dismiss the allegation of misconduct, in which case the Conduct Investigator writes to the Respondent to confirm this and sends the Respondent a copy of the report; or

~~60.1.2.~~ Conclude that in relation to the allegation of misconduct that it is proven, more likely than not that the Respondent has breached the Code of Student Conduct and:

(i) where the Conduct Investigator assesses that the allegation relates to less serious misconduct, pass the report to a Student Discipline Officer for any disciplinary action to be ~~taken~~considered; or

~~Conclude~~(ii) where the Conduct Investigator assesses that the allegation relates to serious misconduct is proven, and, pass the report to the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee ~~for in order that the Student Discipline Committee can determine whether the alleged misconduct occurred and constituted a breach of the Code of Student Conduct and, if so, take any disciplinary action to be taken.~~

61. The Conduct Investigator will notify the Reporting Party of the decision they have reached under paragraph 60 after that decision has been communicated to the Respondent

Disciplinary action: Student Discipline Officers

~~54-62.~~ The Student Discipline Officer receives the report of the case from the Conduct Investigator and sends the Respondent the Conduct Investigator's report. The Student Discipline Officer does not reinvestigate the case.

~~55-63.~~ The Student Discipline Officer decides whether to take disciplinary action, and if so, what penalty to apply.

~~56-64.~~ The Student Discipline Officer may decide to take disciplinary action without meeting the Respondent. Alternatively, the Student Discipline Officer may invite the Respondent to attend a meeting. The Respondent has the right to be accompanied and/or represented at the interview by a member of the University community, including a member of Edinburgh University Students' Association staff. The Respondent may in addition be accompanied by a specialist provider of health or wellbeing support with the agreement of the Student Discipline Officer. The Student Discipline Officer has the right to question the Respondent directly, where necessary. Those accompanying or representing the Respondent will be given the opportunity to contribute at the Student Discipline Officer's invitation. The Student Discipline Officer will be assisted by a note-taker who will take a record of the meeting.

~~57-65.~~ The Student Discipline Officer will invite the Respondent, or any representative, to make a statement in explanation or extenuation of the misconduct or in mitigation of any possible penalty.



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~~58-66.~~ If the Respondent does not appear on the date appointed for the meeting and the Student Discipline Officer is satisfied that they have been given due notice to appear, the Officer may deal with the alleged misconduct and impose a penalty in the Respondent's absence. However, the Student Discipline Officer may not draw any adverse inference from the Respondent's failure to appear.

~~59-67.~~ The Student Discipline Officer may (notwithstanding that a matter has been referred to them under paragraph 60.1.2 (i)) decide that due to the nature or gravity of the case it is more appropriate for the Student Discipline Committee to take disciplinary action. They will discuss this with the Secretary to the Discipline Committee and, if this is agreed, will refer the case to the Student Discipline Committee for a hearing and will inform the Respondent. In this situation the Student Discipline Officer takes no disciplinary action. The Reporting Party shall also be notified that the matter has been referred to the Student Discipline Committee, but only after the Respondent has been so notified.

~~60-68.~~ Student Discipline Officers may impose penalties in line with those established by the relevant Senate committee. In deciding what penalties will apply, the Student Discipline Officer will consider the Respondent's disciplinary record. The penalties are some or all of:

~~60.1.1-68.1.1.~~ a fine;

~~60.1.2-68.1.2.~~ a reprimand;

~~60.1.3-68.1.3.~~ suspension of specified privileges for a specified period that does not exceed three months (this may include suspension from the University Library, computing facilities, particular premises, placements);

~~60.1.4-68.1.4.~~ require the Respondent to make good in whole or in part, the cost of any damage caused;

~~60.1.5-68.1.5.~~ rescind the result of an assessment or examination diet, for academic misconduct offences;

~~60.1.6-68.1.6.~~ impose an academic penalty in the case of an academic offence;

~~60.1.7-68.1.7.~~ terminate the occupancy of University managed accommodation by any resident on giving a month's notice in writing. In the case of gross misconduct or misdemeanour, the Student Discipline Officer may order the termination of occupancy within 24 hours;

~~60.1.8-68.1.8.~~ require the Respondent to write an approved apology to any wronged party;

~~60.1.9-68.1.9.~~ place the Respondent "on probation" for a specified period not exceeding three months with relevant stated conditions (e.g. the requirement to attend specified training, which may be provided by the University).

~~64-69.~~ If the Student Discipline Officer places the Respondent on probation, they will provide the Respondent with a statement outlining the conditions and length of their probation, and



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assign them to a key contact within the University, who will monitor their compliance with these conditions during the period of probation.

~~62-70.~~ The Student Discipline Officer will inform the Respondent of the penalty decision within three working days of the decision and will remind them of their right of appeal (see paragraphs ~~95-99~~112-116).

~~63-71.~~ The Student Discipline Officer will send a record of the offence and the penalty to the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee. Any assessment penalty under paragraph ~~60~~68 is reported to the relevant Boards of Examiners.

Disciplinary action: Student Discipline Committee

Arrangements for Student Discipline Committee hearings

~~64-72.~~ The Student Discipline Committee receives cases from Conduct Investigators under paragraph 60.1.1 (ii) and Student Discipline Officers under paragraph 67. The Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee must agree that the nature or gravity of the case justifies action by the Student Discipline Committee.

~~65-73.~~ The Conduct Investigator provides the Student Discipline Committee with a report on the case, which includes copies of any documents referred to in, or pertinent to, the case. The Conduct Investigator also provides the Student Discipline Committee with the names and contact details of witnesses who may be called in support of the alleged misconduct.

~~66-74.~~ The Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee writes to the Respondent, providing at least seventen working days' notice, requiring them to appear at a hearing before the Student Discipline Committee at a specified time and place. At the same time, the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee sends the Respondent a copy of the Conduct Investigator's report, and a list of the witnesses that the Conduct Investigator plans to call to the hearing. Contact details of witnesses are not sent to the Respondent.

~~67-75.~~ The Student Discipline Committee may hold physical hearings or virtual hearings (or a mix of both). The Convener and Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee will make a decision about the nature of hearings with due consideration of fairness, accessibility and the ability of all involved to participate fully. Where the Respondent waives the right to a hearing, the Student Discipline Committee may decide a case based on written representations without holding a hearing.

76. Following receipt of the report provided by the Conduct Investigator, the Convener of the Student Discipline Committee will determine which, if any, of the witnesses identified by the Conduct Investigator as persons who may be called in support of the alleged misconduct, ought to be invited to attend the hearing. Where the Student Discipline Committee decides to invite witnesses named by the Conduct Investigator, the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee will contact those witnesses to invite them to attend the hearing.

~~68-77.~~ If the Respondent wishes to admit the alleged misconduct in advance of the hearing, they may do so in writing to the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee. They may then be required to appear before the Committee for the imposition of a penalty.



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~~69~~78. The Respondent may request a postponement of the hearing where they are unable to attend for good reason. Where possible, the Respondent should make their request for postponement at least one working day in advance of the hearing, providing their reasons and any relevant evidence to support their request. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee will decide whether to postpone the hearing, taking account of the following factors:

- i) Whether there is evidence that the Respondent will be unavoidably unable to participate appropriately in the hearing on the appointed date due to ill health, lack of availability, or some other reason;
- ii) The likelihood that the Respondent will be able to participate appropriately in a hearing on a subsequent date; and
- iii) Whether it is likely to be possible to reschedule the hearing for a time at which the Respondent, the members of the Student Discipline Committee, the Conduct Investigator, and all witnesses (including the Reporting Party, where relevant) would be able to attend.

~~70~~79. The Respondent may call witnesses to attend the hearing and, if intending to do so, must inform the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee, at least ~~two~~5 working days in advance of the hearing, of the names and contact details of their witnesses. The Respondent must also submit any documents which they wish to present to the Student Discipline Committee at least ~~two~~5 working days in advance of the hearing.

80. The identities of any witnesses whom the Respondent intends to call, and copies of any documents submitted by the Respondent will be shared with the Conduct Investigator.

81. Documents submitted by the Respondent will not be shared with the Reporting Party. However, where the Student Discipline Committee considers that the Respondent has provided evidence which it considers the Reporting Party should have the opportunity to respond to, or they wish to question the Reporting Party about such evidence, they will provide as much information as is reasonably required in order to facilitate this. Any evidence provided to the Reporting Party under this paragraph 81 is provided on a strictly confidential basis and the Reporting Party must not share it with any third party (other than for the purposes of seeking professional advice or as may be required by law).

71~~82~~. Where the Respondent seeks to call a witness to attend the hearing who was not identified by them to the Conduct Investigator as a person from whom the Respondent would wish the Conduct Investigator to seek evidence pursuant to paragraph 53, that witness will not be permitted to attend the hearing, or to submit evidence to the Student Discipline Committee unless the Student Discipline Committee is satisfied that:

- (i) the Respondent could not reasonably have been expected to identify that person to the Conduct Investigator during the Conduct Investigator's investigation as a person who could provide potentially relevant evidence; and
- (ii) the evidence which the witness can be expected to provide is relevant to the issues to be considered by the Student Discipline Committee.

83. Where the Respondent seeks to submit documentary evidence to the Student Discipline Committee which they did not submit to the Conduct Investigator pursuant to paragraph 54 :



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that documentary evidence will not be accepted or considered by the Student Discipline Committee unless the Student Discipline Committee is satisfied that:

- (i) the Respondent could not reasonably have been expected to submit that documentary evidence to the Conduct Investigator during the Conduct Investigator's investigation; and
- (ii) the documentary evidence is potentially relevant to the issues to be considered by the Student Discipline Committee.

84. The Respondent must give at least 5 working days' written notice to the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee of any procedural or preliminary issue (e.g. any issues relating to the procedure to be followed at the Student Discipline Committee) they wish to raise before the Student Discipline Committee.

72-85. The Student Discipline Committee may extend the time for intimating names of witnesses or submitting documents, and may adjourn, continue, or postpone a hearing at its discretion.

73-86. The Student Discipline Committee may request additional information, for example medical evidence of ~~a student's~~ the Respondent's fitness to study.

74-87. The Respondent, the Reporting Party, or any witnesses (where they are in attendance) may be accompanied and/or represented at the hearing by another member of the University community, including a member of Edinburgh University Students' Association staff. The Respondent, the Reporting Party, or any witnesses (where they are in attendance) may in addition be accompanied by a specialist provider of health or wellbeing support with the agreement of the Convener of the Student Discipline Committee.

75-88. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee may agree to make special arrangements to allow witnesses to give evidence to the Committee from a separate location, e.g. via video link. Any evidence provided to the Committee via special arrangements will also be made available to the Respondent.

Student Discipline Committee: Procedure at hearings

76-89. The Respondent (and any person accompanying or representing them) is entitled to attend for the duration of the hearing, except where the Convener of the Student Discipline Committee asks the Respondent to withdraw while the Committee deliberates. The Convener will invite any witnesses called, including the Reporting Party (where they are in attendance), to attend part of the meeting in order to give evidence, but they will not normally attend the duration of the hearing.

77-90. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee will open the hearing by outlining the procedure at the hearing. The Convener will then read out the allegation(s) against the Respondent and will invite them to state whether they admit or deny the charges.

78-91. If the Respondent does not admit the alleged misconduct, the case against them will be presented by the Conduct Investigator at the hearing. The Respondent, and the members of the Student Discipline Committee have the right to question the Conduct Investigator, where necessary. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee will invite any witnesses named by the Conduct Investigator (including the Reporting Party, where they are in attendance) to comment on the allegation of misconduct.



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79-92. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee will then invite the Respondent (or their representative) to present their evidence. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee will invite any witnesses named by the Respondent to comment on the allegation of misconduct. The members of the Student Discipline Committee have the right to question the Respondent and/or their representative directly, where necessary.

93. The members of the Student Discipline Committee and the Respondent and/or their representative may examine, cross-examine, and re-examine witnesses.

94. The Convener of the Student Discipline Committee may withdraw from the Respondent or their representative the right to examine, cross-examine, and re-examine certain witnesses, where it is reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances of the case. In cases relating to allegations of sexual misconduct, the Respondent or their representative will not normally be permitted to cross-examine the Reporting Party.

80-95. Where the Convener of the Student Discipline Committee withdraws from the Respondent or their representative the right to cross-examine a witness or witnesses (including the Reporting Party), the Convener will make alternative arrangements in order to allow the Respondent or their representative to challenge the evidence presented by the witnesses. ~~The members of the Student Discipline Committee also have the right to question the Respondent and/or their representative directly, where necessary.~~ This can include, but is not limited to, inviting the Respondent or their representative to suggest questions that the Student Discipline Committee should put to a witness or witnesses (including the Reporting Party). The Student Discipline Committee, subject to its obligation to ensure the hearing is fair, retains a discretion not to put such questions as suggested by the Respondent or their representative, if it considers them unnecessary in deciding the issues before it.

96. Where, the Student Discipline Committee considers that it wishes to hear from a witness who has not attended the hearing, the Student Discipline Committee may adjourn the hearing in order that that witness can be invited to attend, or to submit evidence.

84-97. The Conduct Investigator and the Respondent or their representative may make a final address, the Respondent or their representative having the last word.

82-98. The Conduct Investigator, the Respondent and any person accompanying or representing them, and any witnesses withdraw while the Committee considers its decision. The Committee's role is to decide whether the alleged misconduct has occurred, and whether it constitutes a breach of the Code of Student Conduct. The Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee records the Committee's decision and its reasons for reaching this decision. Those reasons must be provided in writing to the Respondent.

83-99. If the Committee decides that the alleged misconduct is proved, the Respondent, or any representative, is invited to make a statement in explanation or extenuation of the misconduct or in mitigation of any possible penalty, before a penalty is imposed.

84-100. If the Respondent does not appear at the hearing on the date appointed and the Student Discipline Committee is satisfied that they have received due notice to appear, the Committee may deal with the alleged misconduct and, if it is found to be proved, impose a penalty in the Respondent's absence. However, the Student Discipline Committee may not draw any adverse inference from the Respondent's failure to appear.



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Student Discipline Committee: Penalties

~~85.101.~~ The Student Discipline Committee may impose penalties in line with those established by the relevant Senate committee. Penalties may be imposed on a “deferred” basis. In deciding what penalties will apply, the Student Discipline Committee will consider the Respondent’s disciplinary record. The penalties are some or all of:

~~85.1.1.101.1.1.~~ a fine;

~~85.1.2.101.1.2.~~ a reprimand;

~~85.1.3.101.1.3.~~ suspension of specified privileges for a specified period ~~that does not exceed one year~~ (this may include suspension from the University Library, computing facilities, particular premises, placements; a bar on registering, matriculating, or graduating; or, ~~for a period of no longer than one year,~~ a complete suspension from study, research and attendance at the University) – see paragraphs ~~85.102~~ and ~~86.103~~;

~~85.1.4.101.1.4.~~ require the Respondent to make good in whole or in part, the cost of any damage caused;

~~85.1.5.101.1.5.~~ rescind the result of an assessment or examination diet or diets, for academic misconduct offences;

~~85.1.6.101.1.6.~~ impose an academic penalty in the case of an academic offence;

~~85.1.7.101.1.7.~~ terminate the occupancy of University managed accommodation by any resident on giving a month’s notice in writing. In the case of gross misconduct or misdemeanour, the Student Discipline Committee may order the termination of occupancy within 24 hours;

~~85.1.8.~~ ~~require the Respondent to write an approved apology to any wronged party;~~

~~85.1.9.101.1.8.~~ in relation to research misconduct in a research degree, the Respondent may be deemed to have failed the degree where the misconduct applies and/or will not be permitted to submit work for this or any other research degree of the University;

~~85.1.10.101.1.9.~~ place the Respondent “on probation” for a specified period with relevant stated conditions (e.g. the requirement to attend specified training, which may be provided by the University);

~~85.1.11.101.1.10.~~ immediate permanent exclusion from the University with no eligibility for re-admittance to the University on any course or degree programme.

~~86.102.~~ Where the Student Discipline Committee imposes a suspension of specified privileges or a complete suspension, it may require the Respondent to meet specified conditions before the University ends the suspension. For example, in the event that medical circumstances formed part of the evidence of the case, the Student Discipline Committee may make it a condition of ending the suspension that the Respondent provide medical information confirming that they are fit to return to study. The Student Discipline Committee which imposes the suspension decides who (e.g. the University Secretary; a Deputy



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Secretary and a designated Vice Principal; the Student Discipline Committee) will decide whether the Respondent has satisfied any conditions.

87.103. If the University considers it necessary to extend a student's suspension beyond a year then it is necessary to hold a new Student Discipline Committee hearing. This hearing does not need to take the same format as the original hearing, e.g. the membership could be different.

88.104. If the Student Discipline Committee places the Respondent on probation, it will provide the Respondent with a statement outlining the conditions and length of their probation, and assigning them to a key contact within the University, who will monitor their compliance with these conditions during the period of probation.

89.105. Any assessment penalty under paragraph 84.101 is reported to the relevant Boards of Examiners by the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee.

90.106. ~~In disciplining~~ Where the Student Discipline Committee finds that the alleged misconduct is proved in relation to a student pursuing a course or programme leading directly to a qualification which confers authorisation to practise a profession (such as in Medicine, Nursing, Teaching or Veterinary Medicine) the Student Discipline Committee ~~may consider the relevance of the misconduct in relation to the student's fitness to practise that profession. The Committee may~~ will remit the case to the relevant Fitness to Practise Committee for action or advice. The Student Discipline Committee will notify the Respondent that they will adjourn the hearing for this purpose and will not determine the appropriate penalty (if any) for it to impose until the relevant Fitness to Practise Committee advises the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee of its determination or advice.

91.107. The Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee informs the Respondent of the Committee's penalty decision, with a written statement of the reasons for the decision, within three working days of the decision and reminds them of their right of appeal.

92.108. A summary of the offence, proceedings and the evidence heard and the penalty decision is kept by the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee.

Deferred Penalties

93.109. A deferred penalty is one which does not take effect immediately but which is postponed for a period of time during which the Respondent's conduct will continue to be monitored. When the Student Discipline Committee imposes a deferred penalty then the written statement informing the Respondent about the penalty will specify the period of the deferral and explain what will happen if the penalty needs to be put into effect. During the period of the deferred penalty, if the Respondent's conduct is called into question then they will receive a statement in writing that this conduct is being reported to the Student Discipline Committee. This statement may come from a Conduct Investigator, Student Discipline Officer or the Secretary of the Discipline Committee. Evidence of the misconduct is sent to the Student Discipline Committee and the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee will offer the Respondent the opportunity to comment in writing on this evidence. The Secretary and Convener of the Student Discipline Committee decide whether the Student Discipline Committee needs to reconvene a meeting, with or without the Respondent, or whether the deferred penalty is put into immediate effect. If the penalty is put into immediate effect then the Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee will report this to the Student Discipline



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Committee. If the Respondent's conduct is not called into question during the period of the deferred penalty then, at the end of the period, the Secretary of the Discipline Committee will confirm to the Respondent that the penalty will not be imposed.

Standard of Proof

~~94.110.~~ An allegation of misconduct can only be upheld if there is proof that the Respondent has engaged in the misconduct alleged.

~~95.111.~~ The standard of proof that shall be used in all discipline cases is the balance of probabilities, which is the standard of proof that is used in civil law. This means that a Conduct Investigator, Student Discipline Officer or Student Discipline Committee will be satisfied that an event occurred if they consider that, on the evidence available, the occurrence of the event was more likely than not.

Appeals

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/appeals/overview

~~96.112.~~ If an allegation has been upheld, the Respondent may submit an appeal on the decision of the Student Discipline Officer or the Student Discipline Committee within ten working days of the decision being issued. The Respondent should submit any appeal to the Secretary of the University's Appeal Committee. The grounds for appeal are specified in the University's Student Appeal Regulations.

~~97.113.~~ The appeal is handled under the University's appeal procedures.

~~98.114.~~ The decision of the Appeal Committee is final and there is no further opportunity for appeal against that decision within the University.

~~99.115.~~ If an appeal is upheld then the Appeal Committee will refer the student discipline case to either the Student Discipline Officer or Student Discipline Committee to review their decision.

~~100.116.~~ Any penalties imposed by the Student Discipline Officer or Student Discipline Committee remain in force until the outcome of any review of the decision.

Communication with the Reporting Party

~~101.117.~~ The University will endeavour to provide the Reporting Party with as much information about the status and outcome of an investigation as is reasonably possible, including relevant information regarding any precautionary suspension imposed upon the Respondent. In determining what information to provide to the Reporting Party, the University will take account of the need to balance the interests of the Respondent, the Reporting Party, and any other witnesses, and the University's obligations under relevant data protection legislation.

118. If the Reporting Party is dissatisfied with the way the Code of Student Conduct procedure has been followed, they may be able to raise a complaint using the University's Complaints Handling Procedure. More information about this procedure is available at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/academic-life/complaints>



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Reporting and recording

~~102.119.~~ The lead Secretary of the Student Discipline Committee keeps a record of student misconduct offences and penalties and informs the relevant Senate committee annually of all cases considered by Student Discipline Officers and the Student Discipline Committee.

~~103.120.~~ Details of any discipline penalty imposed on a student are held ~~on the relevant student's record~~ by Academic Services and will not appear on the ~~Respondent's EUCLID Student Record~~, except where the Respondent is subject to a complete suspension from study (under paragraph 101.1.3), or permanently excluded from the University (under paragraph 101.1.10).

Independent review

~~104.121.~~ Once the appeal has been completed, the Respondent is entitled to ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at their appeal. The SPSO considers complaints from people who remain dissatisfied at the conclusion of the appeal process. The SPSO looks at issues such as service failure and maladministration (administrative fault) as well as the way the University has handled the appeal. Information on how to complain to the SPSO will be provided to the student on completion of the appeal. Full information on the SPSO and on how it handles complaints can be found at the SPSO website: [Scottish Public Services Ombudsman](#).

~~24 January 2019~~

~~X [Month] 2022~~

Senate**12 October 2022****Revision to the Sustainable Travel Policy (2021)****Description of paper**

University staff have raised concerns regarding the [University's Sustainable Travel Policy \(2021\)](#) and its effects on: our ability to carry out research projects abroad, our workload, our safety, our commitments to environmental and economic sustainability, and the University's reputation for delivering best value for money; and we note these concerns may have particular effect on members of our community with caring responsibilities, disabilities, or marginalised identities, as well as those early in their careers. This paper recognises the need for changes to the travel policy to address these concerns, including the urgent need to remove the single supplier booking requirement to provide necessarily flexibility to work around these concerns while longer-term solutions are considered.

Action requested / Recommendation

While affirming our commitment to sustainable travel as part of the University's Climate Strategy 2016, this paper asks Senate to endorse the view that the consultation and review process for the Sustainable Travel Policy (2021) did not adequately account for a number of potential implications of the policy negatively affecting academic work at the university, including work associated with academic research travel.

The paper notes ongoing efforts following the May 2022 meeting of Senate to identify measures to address the policy's negative impacts, and asks Senate to call for those with primary executive oversight responsibility for the Sustainable Travel Policy to work constructively and proactively with School and College leadership and staff as a matter of urgency to implement further substantive changes and improvements to the policy to address concerns that have been raised regarding the policy's harmful effects on academic work.

Finally, the paper asks Senate to endorse the removal of the single-supplier rule ([Policy 2.3.1](#)) for academic travel as a measure to allow staff the necessary flexibility to work around the current policy's harms and limitations. This effectively reverts the travel supplier aspect of the policy to the status quo before the STP was enacted, where a contracted travel provider may be used to the extent they provide convenience, value, or other benefits, but is not obligatory in cases where in staff's individual judgement they are not worthwhile. Staff remain responsible, as before, for ensuring compliance with relevant policies and regulations when booking for themselves, and this paper recognises that assisting compliance may be a benefit of the contracted travel supplier when they are functioning well.

Background and context

1. Academic travel policy is properly a matter for Senate consideration, most directly as an aspect of the Senate's power "to promote research" designated in the Universities Scotland Act 1889 as amended in 1966, as well as related to aspects of teaching under Senate's purview. Senate's authority in resource and revenue related matters that are connected to its role as the University's supreme academic body is established in the Universities Scotland Act 1858 as affirmed in amendments by the Higher Education Governance Scotland Act 2016.
2. The University Executive has adopted a [Sustainable Travel Policy](#) despite considerable staff opposition to its compulsory provision for a Single Travel Supplier. Staff share the Executive's stated aim of promoting sustainability and to meet our carbon-reduction commitments, as set out in its goal of [Zero by 2040](#).
3. Academic staff and professional services staff with frontline responsibilities in managing academic travel had limited representation in the behind-the-scenes process of formulating the STP. The policy was not presented to Senate despite representing a major strategically-relevant policy development with significant implications for academic matters.
4. The Policy's rule of consolidating all travel through a Single Travel Supplier closely resembles a previous proposal not linked to the sustainability rationale. In 2018, following an open letter (Appendix 1) opposing the previous proposal's provider monopolies, the Director of Finance at the time confirmed in writing (Appendix 2) that staff were entitled to opt out of using it. A 2021 letter (Appendix 3) reiterated and elaborated these concerns, in light of the new proposal and the apparent lack of an opt-out provision.
5. At the height of Covid pandemic, from 6 March to 30 April 2020 an all-staff consultation on the proposed Sustainable Travel Policy was carried out by the Department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability. The [consultation document](#) refers to a travel management company only once (on p. 40) and without any hint that it could or would comprise a monopoly on staff travel arrangements. Nonetheless, some respondents commented critically on the then-optional services of the single travel management company with which the university had contracted at the time (p. 13).
6. A Travel Management Company is also mentioned only once in the report on the [University Executive meeting on 23 March 2021](#) and there is also no reference that its use could or will be compulsory.
7. The STP was discussed at the 25 May 2022 meeting of Senate, where a version of the action proposed here was presented for approval in Senate. A vote could not be taken due to lack of quorum, but the serious concerns raised in this paper were affirmed and elaborated in comments from those present. The paper was included in the requisition for a special meeting to transact the unfinished business of 25 May, but was erroneously left off the agenda in August 2022 when that meeting was eventually held. This updated paper returns this unfinished business to the agenda.
8. Following the 25 May discussion, a meeting of the university executive affirmed a number of the concerns raised and implemented a suite of exemptions, corrections, and clarifications to the policy. These have made a meaningful difference, but fall short of what was called for in the Senate paper.

Staff continue to report serious concerns as they have attempted to plan and carry out academic travel since May.

Discussion

9. Limiting choice of travel and accommodation providers to the Single Travel Supplier in some cases raises the cost of like-for-like university-related travel, as staff have found since the Policy has come into force. In areas of work where travel is not predominantly supported by large grants that cover all costs directly, the additional costs and inflexibility of a Single Travel Supplier incur additional out-of-pocket travel expenses for staff and limit staff ability to draw on their own experience to seek more efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally sustainable travel plans.
10. Local knowledge, with which experienced research staff may be uniquely familiar, can be vital to securing safe and affordable accommodation abroad. When the Single Travel Supplier does not have access to this knowledge or its ability to book such travel through its own tools, booking this accommodation is not possible.
11. Staff, notably women, are concerned that limiting accommodation to suppliers approved by the Single Travel Supplier may affect their ability to choose local options they consider safe, based on personal knowledge of their destination – or to change accommodation urgently in case safety concerns arise.
12. Limiting options to approved suppliers may favour big hotel chains over local guesthouses with a much lower carbon footprint (and often closer to the site of interest, thus reducing travel-related emissions). This has been justified with concerns about modern slavery, a pressing issue that staff recognise. The Single Travel Supplier may seek to remedy this by booking with international chains. But this, in turn, may prevent staff from encouraging local, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth in the host country.
13. Experience shows that research staff, and not the Single Travel Supplier, are best able to identify the most direct and least emitting travel routes. By necessitating staff involvement in time-consuming negotiation with the Single Travel Supplier, the Policy creates pressure to increase carbon emissions by simply accepting routes generated by Single Travel Supplier.
14. The Policy creates an effective monopoly by mandating compulsory use of the Single Travel Supplier. This may conflict with grant-holders' obligations to seek the most cost-effective use of charitable or public funds. Our current Supplier, Diversity Travel, does not guarantee price-matching on like-for-like bookings by air and does not consider certain cost-effective booking options available to individual bookers in the price guarantees it does make. This means staff cannot report to funders that they have ensured best value for money, with important consequences for the University's reputation and our relationship to funders and partners.
15. In the limited time since the Single Travel Supplier requirement came into force, staff have reported that Diversity Travel cannot book certain kinds of journeys within continental Europe by train or access certain cost-effective and environmentally responsible bus routes, forcing staff members to fly instead, contrary to the policy's stated aim of ensuring environmentally-sustainable travel. They have also been unable to book sleeper tickets in the UK on Diversity's booking portal and been charged premiums for booking through

Diversity's agents. Diversity Travel has acknowledged capacity and performance issues even in the short time under contract with our university. The compulsory provisions of the Policy do not allow mitigation of these circumstances.

Resource implications

16. The proposed reform will save staff time and promote best value for money. The administrative implications of not having to use a Single Travel Supplier are well known and understood. If the using the Single Travel Supplier were optional and not compulsory, then staff may resort to it when doing so will reduce administration and costs. This paper restores trust in staff for minimising the resource costs of our work, as was the case before the single supplier rule was adopted.

Risk Management

17. The proposed reform will reduce risk to staff, allowing the benefit of the travel provider when it is truly beneficial, while enabling flexibility for staff to make other arrangements where alternative approaches better mitigate risk. Staff will continue to submit risk assessments to managers and arrange travel insurance internally, so the University will be as well informed on staff whereabouts and potential risks as it would be the under proposed policy.

Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

18. Enabling staff to choose the most sustainable form of accommodation and the most direct travel routes provides incentives for choosing sustainable forms of travel, e.g., to take the train or ferry whenever possible. The proposed reform will make a much greater contribution to our sustainable development goals than the current version of the Policy, which subcontracts these decisions to a Single Travel Supplier who may not have appropriate local knowledge and expertise.

Equality and Diversity

19. By widening choice and flexibility within travel planning, this proposed reform will mitigate the impact of the Policy among those with less scope to accept increased administrative workloads, namely early-career researchers and those with caring responsibilities and disabilities. It will also address concerns with gender-inequitable impacts that obligatory use of the Single Travel Supplier may impose, unintentionally, on the safety of members of staff travelling on their own.

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

20. Since this paper restores the flexibility that staff enjoyed before the Policy was implemented, staff will be familiar with the effectively conventional system. Responsibility for revisions to and executive oversight of the policy, including evaluation and implementation, are carried out through existing mechanisms of policy and travel accounting and review.

Consultation

This paper has been developed through extensive discussions among academic staff, both within and outwith Senate. The paper has been lightly revised since May to bring the background up to date, clarify the action requested in light of interim developments, and make other minor changes.

Further information

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Prof Diana Paton
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Freedom of information This is an open paper.

Appendix 1: Open letter to the Director of Finance opposing provider monopolies:



9 March 2018

To
Mr Phil McNaul
Director of Finance, University of Edinburgh

Dear Mr McNaul,

We write as academic members of staff at the University of Edinburgh to express our sincere concerns regarding the University's new Expenses Policy. We are very concerned by numerous of its provisions, as well as by its fundamental disregard for the sound handling of financial resources within the University. In our view, this policy is unethical, will bring the University into disrepute, and will massively diminish our productivity, morale and success. We here merely summarise our key concerns, which arise in particular from the policy's unethical provision to establish provider monopolies at the expense of tax payers and external funding providers, including charities. In addition to the particular requests listed below, we ask for an urgent meeting with a view to amending the relevant parts of the policy before further damage is done to the productivity, efficiency and reputation of the University and its staff.

1. Unethical provision to establish provider monopolies

The provision (§ 3.3) that 'The majority of business expenditure must be incurred through University procurement routes, primarily purchase orders', applied (in the case of travel and accommodation bookings over £300) to Key Travel (§§ 5.4 and 6.1) and (in the case of catering) to Edinburgh First or EUSA (§ 7.3), means to establish provider monopolies, also

in the case of the expenditure of externally granted funds. This provision is at odds with the policy statements that (§ 3.1) ‘In the interests of value for money and to support the appropriate use of public funds, claimants are expected to be prudent in their spending’ and that (§ 3.2) ‘Claimants and authorisers must aim to ensure that economy, efficiency and effectiveness are achieved in respect of all expenses incurred’. (Note also the proper emphasis on scrutiny and audit: § 10.2). Commission payments and mark-ups mean that Key Travel and Edinburgh First do not offer competitive pricing, making these providers always a more expensive option vis-à-vis other providers. By way of example, a colleague was recently quoted £1416.06 (Fez – Edinburgh return) by Key Travel, whilst the same return journey was available for £350 elsewhere. We note further that where itemised price quoting is part of (e.g.) a research grant application, inflated pricing due to mark-up and commissions will not be supported by external funding bodies, such as the AHRC, the ERC, the Leverhulme Trust, etc. This provision should be withdrawn immediately for the purchase of goods and services funded through external funders unless the additional expense has been both applied for and granted. In the case of *existing* grants and fellowships, as well as of *submitted* applications to funders, there exists no opportunity to add at this stage commission or an extra mark-up (whether 15% or more) to the costs budgeted at the point of application and subsequently granted. Such cases should therefore be excluded from this **provision**, in compliance with § 1.3, which states that ‘This policy takes precedence unless more restrictive financial limits are stipulated by the funder (for example, a research grant)’. We trust that the University will now clearly acknowledge the exclusion of external funding sources from this provision where funders have not approved the excess costs that it will now entail. To act otherwise would be a misuse of public and charitable funds and would open up the University to accusations of graft, contrary to § 10.3. With regard to internal funds, the provision is hugely damaging to many core activities that depend on competitive pricing, and is therefore plainly undesirable.

2. Negative impact of procurement and purchase regulations

More broadly, we should like to emphasise the impracticality of the purchase and procurement regulations imposed as a result of the new Expenses policy. We note here only in brief

- that projects in our fields regularly require specialised goods at short notice (for instance as a result of new research opportunities arising in the course of fieldwork or due to damage during use);
- that foreign partners often send information on requirements at the last minute, which necessitates flexibility and speed in the ordering and procurement process;
- that inefficiency in the ordering and procurement process is potentially hugely damaging to our research (for instance by rendering teams on fieldwork unproductive at high cost while they wait for cumbersome quotes to be administered).

We note moreover that competitive tender is frequently unworkable, as in our fields many specialised services are often met by a sole provider, and even where there are more than one, these will not normally provide quotations for lower-cost goods and service, and will certainly not do so repeatedly. In this regard, too, the Policy is unrealistic and unworkable.

In our view, there are other, significant repercussions arising from the new Expenses Policy, regarding work efficiency and work relations. The Policy and the associated purchase and procurement regulations have substantial and negative implications for workload management at School level, where the extra administrative work of both academic and administrative staff is not covered by existing budgets. Research-active academic staff whose

research is funded by external funding bodies have clear workload limits imposed by the funder that do not permit the addition of the extra administrative workloads that the new Policy brings with it.

As members of academic staff we too have a strong interest in rigour and integrity in the institution's handling of financial resources. We regard these qualities as threatened by the new Policy, and are therefore forced to challenge it. We request that you, not a deputy, meet with members of staff in the School of History, Classics and Archaeology and the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures to respond to our questions and concerns. We shall contact your Office to arrange a suitable date, time and venue and should be grateful if you could let them know your availability as soon as possible. We look forward to seeing you soon in our Schools and ask for your assurance that provisions that threaten to damage our and the University's reputation, productivity, team spirit and morale are abandoned.

Yours sincerely,

Signed by 130 members of academic staff (63 in the School of History, Classics and Archaeology, 63 in Literatures, Languages and Cultures, 1 member of both Schools and 3 members of other Schools; NB: the letter was only circulated in HCA and LLC and the low number of signatures from other Schools is a result of them not having been informed and is no evidence of lack of support)

Appendix 2: Response by the Director of Finance confirming that the use of a Travel Management Company was optional at the time:



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Finance Department
The University of Edinb
Charles Stewart House
9-16 Chambers Street
Edinburgh EH1 1HT
Tel 0131 650 1000
D/D
Fax

Dear Dr Aird et al,

Thank you for your letter dated 9th March 2018 expressing your concerns about the University's Expenses policy.

The policy was approved by Central Management Group (CMG) on 26th September 2017 and signed by the Combined Joint Consultative Negotiative Committee (CJCNC) on 13th October 2017. There were no ethical concerns raised by committee members in this policy drafting and approval process and the University takes seriously the fiduciary responsibilities of taking care of its financial and other assets.

One of the main drivers for change in the new policy was an Internal Audit Report in August 2016 that highlighted a number of issues with staff expenses. In particular, the Report highlighted that the policy did not provide appropriate guidance on what is and what is not permitted in staff expense claims.

The Report also concluded that the policy was also followed inconsistently across the Schools in the review. Due to the lack of clarity in the current policy, the expenses system was used to procure goods and services such as laptops, tablets, mobile phones, vouchers, advertising, furniture, vehicles, and consultancy which the Internal Audit Report concluded was an inappropriate route to procurement and that these purchases on expenses must be stopped.

We have also introduced more flexibility in the revised policy to allow staff with disability, impairment and other health related issues to access non-standard fares as deemed appropriate.

We reviewed our policy for compliance with tax legislation and operational considerations that address, for example, the purchase of potentially hazardous materials, travel to higher risk destinations, insurance cover and the University's sustainability targets, zero by 2040, particularly around the impact of University business travel on carbon targets and included this in the new policy.

I will address the points raised in your letter:

1. Unethical provision to establish provider monopolies
 - 1.1. The Key Travel clauses (5.4 & 6.1) were not approved by CMG in September 2017 and a footnote to the policy explains this. We can recommend that colleagues use the University Travel Management Service, Key Travel, for booking travel and accommodation but cannot enforce this therefore there is no requirement to withdraw this for external funders.
 - 1.2. Clause 7.3 states that colleagues should use Edinburgh First or EUSA for catering working lunches or dinners with University colleagues on University premises. This is not a requirement of the policy although we encourage staff to support the university by choosing to use its competitive offers rather than spending funds outside the HE system.
 - 1.3. There is no mark-up on flights. We pay a transaction fee according to the booking fee matrix in the procurement framework agreement. These costs are on our website: <http://www.docs.csg.ed.ac.uk/Procurement/Suppliers/KeyTravel/SUPCFeesMay2014.pdf>

Director of Finance Phil McNaull

2. Negative impact of procurement and purchase regulations

- 2.1. You can buy specialised goods at short notice. Clause 3.3 states that “the *majority* of business expenditure must be incurred through University procurement routes, primarily purchase orders.” There have been about 130 requests to buy specialised goods or service to the Expenses Policy helpline since December 2017. These requests have all been agreed. Last-minute, unforeseen requests are also permitted although we encourage forward planning to reduce the incidence of these.
- 2.2. Inefficiency in ordering and procurement process. Our eProcurement system, SciQuest, holds easily searchable catalogues and pricing for 80 of the University’s most commonly used suppliers. It takes a couple of minutes to search for and select items, and submit an electronic order direct to the supplier. In most cases, goods are delivered the following day. Invoices are received directly to the Finance Department and, provided the goods have been received, matched against the order and paid. Once the order has been placed and the goods received, there is no additional effort required in schools for the invoice to be paid.
- 2.3. Competitive tender is required by law for sealed bid tenders for goods and services over £50,000 under the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 and the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014. For goods and services over £181,302, by law, an official EU advert (OJEU) tender is required. It needs to be remembered that the University is one legal entity and whilst individual Schools and units may be spending amounts below this threshold, it is the cumulative spend across the Institution that is scrutinised for legal compliance. Failure to comply with the law can lead to an unlimited fine and serious reputational damage. The University risk register, approved by Court, has no appetite for such risks.
- 2.4. Quotations. The University as a public body in Scotland is subject to the National Procurement Journey which aims to provide Scottish public bodies with practical, straightforward procurement guidance that aligns with current legal obligations and currently serves as the basis for University policies and procedures. There are three routes to procurement, for purchases below £50,000, from £50,000 to £163,999 and for purchases over £164,000 that are explained in the University’s Procurement Journey: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/procurement/policies-procedures/procurement-journey>

I trust that this detailed explanation has shed more light on the rationale for the review and upgrade of the expenses policy and that you will see that it is not as restrictive as you suggested.

Kind regards



Phil McNaull

Appendix 3: Letter to the Principal expressing concerns about the compulsory use of a Travel Management Company:

2 November 2021



To
Professor Peter Mathieson
Principal and Vice-Chancellor
University of Edinburgh

Dear Principal,

As academic staff in History, Classics, and Archaeology, we write to express deep concerns about the negative repercussions for core research activities arising from the proposed implementation of the new Travel Policy. It purports to be driven by concern over sustainability and the university's carbon footprint, a matter which we all recognise is of the utmost importance and urgency. But significant and troubling aspects of the policy are unconnected with decarbonisation, notably the bureaucratic and inflexible booking policy, which is seemingly designed for business travel, lacks understanding of the nature of humanities and social science research, and bears witness to inadequate consultation with researchers. Indeed, the policy is likely to advance practices that are economically and ethically dubious, potentially even increasing the carbon footprint of some of the travel undertaken by academic staff.

The policy envisages that, with few exceptions (e.g. funding via existing restricted grants), *all* travel will be pre-booked by a travel company appointed by the University – whether in the UK or elsewhere, whether for £5 or £5000, and requiring pre-authorisation in most cases. In short, the travel company will have a monopoly to book all travel for all staff. Booking of travel and accommodation will only be made for travel providers listed on the company's list, likely excluding smaller, local providers while privileging international chains. In many cases, it is clear that the selected travel company will not have the expertise on the ground, especially in non-Anglophone countries, that we as researchers ourselves possess. Each booking will accrue a commission for the travel company, thereby enriching a monopoly business potentially at the expense of external funding bodies, including charities.

A similar policy was proposed 3.5 years ago and opposed in an open letter by 130 colleagues in two Schools (HCA and LLC). Despite the concerns expressed at the time, the policy has been revived, disguised as a sustainable travel policy. Staff consultation was minimal, with the changes only made public in a recent bulletin when it was already a *fait accompli*. A recent discussion between the Director of Social Responsibility and some of the signatories of this letter in no way assuaged our concerns.

In short, the new policy will result in inflated charges and delayed booking, while a smaller choice of travel providers is likely to increase travel expenses substantially with doubtful environmental benefits. Past experience with contracted travel firms has shown a repeated pattern of identifying far higher prices for fares than otherwise available, and failing to identify much simpler (and lower emitting) solutions. In some

instances price increases may be multi-fold, e.g. when accommodating a team or student group in an expensive hotel as opposed to an affordable guesthouse (not to mention the higher carbon footprint of the former). This could mean that offering students opportunities abroad will in many instances become impossible.

Schools are apparently expected to make up some of the financial shortfall, but it is unlikely that this will cover the extra costs incurred, and external funding bodies may question funding bids with inflated costs and be unwilling to pay extra for a travel company's monopoly. Even if not, already limited funds will be wasted. Humanities research largely depends on making the greatest possible use of heavily rationed funds. Often not all of our expenses are covered, so economy is vital. Short of reducing our research activities, we will end up having to finance some of the extra costs (e.g. conference attendance, collaborative project meetings etc.) ourselves. Furthermore, we have a moral duty to avoid waste in using public and charitable funds.

Our workload (including the necessary checks that the proposed options are suitable and not excessively over-priced) will increase substantially. Colleagues have stressed that the burgeoning bureaucracy and costs involved are a significant disincentive when it comes to applying for any research funding or that they may opt for making a partner organisation the lead applicant. This policy will cost Edinburgh dearly in terms of lost research income and outputs.

The policy also jeopardises staff safety, notably of women travelling alone, no longer allowed to select accommodation in a safe location that inspires trust or able to change it instantly in case of safety concerns. International hotels, favoured by travel agents, are in some countries potential terrorism targets.

Decisive action against climate change is essential. The university's sustainable travel policy therefore must not prevent staff from opting for low-carbon accommodation, must not boost the profits of a monopoly at the expense of charities and sustainable local businesses, and must not undermine the credibility the University's climate strategy and damage our reputation. The University must trust its staff and support them in making the right decisions. We therefore request an immediate pause in implementation of the proposed harmful and irresponsible procedures to enable proper consultation, and a collaborative attempt to redraft the sustainable travel policy in a way that supports rather than hinders research in our fields. We will be very happy to join in discussion of how this could be done in writing or in person.

With best wishes,

Signed by 78 members of academic staff in the School of History, Classics and Archaeology (74 current and 4 former members)

Senate**12 October 2022****Senate & its Standing Committees Internal Effectiveness Review
2021/22****Description of paper**

1. On 25 May 2022, Academic Services notified Senate members of plans for the annual internal review of the effectiveness of Senate and its Committees.
2. This paper provides Senate with analysis and potential actions drawn from the responses received to the light-touch internal Senate Effectiveness Review conducted in summer 2022.
3. This paper also provides Senate with the responses received to the light-touch Senate Standing Committees Effectiveness Review conducted in summer 2022.

Action requested / recommendation

4. Senate is invited to note and comment on the analysis of feedback received on Senate and the proposed actions set out in Appendix 1, which are intended to aid continuous improvement of our approach to academic governance in 2022/23.
5. Senate is requested to note the responses received from Senate Committees' members in Appendix 2, and to provide any comments and suggestions for potential actions. This report will be presented to the Senate Standing Committees at their next round of meetings for discussion and for proposed actions to be agreed. Comments from Senate will be fed into these discussions.

Background and context

6. The University is required under the 2017 Scottish Code of Good HE Governance to carry out an annual internal review of Senate and its Committees which carry delegated responsibilities.
7. In summer 2022, Academic Services issued a short questionnaire to Senate members and their responses were collated and analysed by Academic Services.
8. In summer 2022, Academic Services issued a short questionnaire to Senate Standing Committee members and their responses were collated.
9. The review was deliberately light touch, taking account of the forthcoming external effectiveness review to take place in 2022/23.
10. A copy of the analysis received from members in relation to Senate and its Committees will be made available to the external effectiveness review. This will highlight key issues for the review to consider.

Discussion

11. An analysis of responses received in relation to Senate, and suggested actions can be found in Appendix 1. Due to the increase in responses received from Senate members, the paper presents a summary of comments (rather than presenting every individual response separately) – with direct quotes provided to illustrate a point.
12. Suggested actions, in response to the feedback from Senate members, are intended to be proportionate to the scope of an annual effectiveness review, and the volume of feedback received.
13. A summary of responses received in relation to Senate Committees can be found in Appendix 2. Given the low number of responses (total of 12) the summary includes the raw responses received from Committee members. Senate Committees will consider the results of the review at their next round of meetings, where proposed actions will be agreed. Senate comments on the responses received will be fed into these discussions.

Resource implications

14. 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

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

Equality & diversity

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

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

17. Academic Services will report to Senate at the first meeting of 2023/24 on progress against actions taken in response to the review.

Authors

Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services
Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer
Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer
Philippa Ward, Academic Policy Officer

Presenter:

Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services

Freedom of Information

Open

APPENDIX 1**Report on the Senate Internal Effectiveness Review 2021/22****1. Context and response rate**

This review of Senate is conducted in compliance with the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance 2017. This analysis compares the results with the previous review conducted in summer 2021.

The Senate review took the form of a short online questionnaire to Senate 2021/22 members.

59 responses were received out of 203 members (29% response rate). Respondents were not asked to identify which College nor membership group they belonged to.

The questionnaire opened on 22 June 2022 and closed on 18 July 2022.

In 2020/21, 30 responses were received from 187 Senate members, which was a response rate of 16%. The number of responses and overall response rate has increased from the previous year.

The findings and any recommended actions or enhancement opportunities are reported to Senate at the 12 October meeting, and to Court via the routine reporting of Senate business to Court.

2. Analysis of responses by question

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?

- The majority of the respondents felt they had a clear understanding of their role on Senate.
- Approximately 50% of the respondents felt that the materials and induction were useful in helping them understand their role on Senate.
- A small number of respondents noted that support offered to new members from existing members of Senate was valuable. Suggestions included the use of short videos from Senate members sharing their experience, providing their perception of the role of Senate and their responsibility as Senate members, '...suggest a short video presentation to explain what the Senate's functions are, and the role of the Senate members..'.
- A minority of respondents did not find the Induction useful. Members suggested training on the procedural elements of Senate to address this and enable greater participation in Senate.
- A very small proportion of respondents (3 responses) were not aware of an induction session.
- A small minority of respondents (4) indicated a lack of understanding on how to engage with Senate Standing Committee business. These comments will be considered in relation to Question 2.

- Approximately 20% of respondents noted that, while they understood their role as members, they raised questions about whether this role is effective or appropriate. Some members noted challenges in participating in a meaningful way and having confidence that input was adequately considered in decision making, 'there doesn't appear to be much evidence that what is said is considered'. The format, timing and length of meetings was also raised as preventing a small number of members from fulfilling their role as effectively as possible, 'I cannot fulfil it [my role] as effectively as possible due to the format, timing and length of meetings'. These comments will be considered in relation to Question 3.

Comparison with 2020/21 response

- There continues to be a majority of respondents who feel they understand their role and this is communicated effectively.
- In 2020/21 several members stated that they understood their role, but raised critical questions about whether this role is effective / appropriate. Similar comments have again been raised in 2021/22. These comments will be considered in relation to Question 3.
- In 2020/21 a small number of members requested clarity on the procedural elements of Senate, which has also been raised in 2021/22.

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?

- Roughly half of respondents (approximately 50%) agreed that the annual report of the Senate Standing Committees on its own provided Senate with sufficient oversight of the Committees' work.
- Approximately 10% of respondents highlighted that the annual report, along with frequent updates on the Committee work, and the notification of papers and minutes being available, was sufficient to provide oversight, 'this is an effective way forward, as it is accompanied by occasional items from those same standing committee..' and '...the reminders we have been getting about papers being available'.
- One member noted that the timing of the annual report lessened the impact as staff time to engage with this is limited, 'whilst the answer might be yes, I feel that the timing of the report, right at the end of a very busy semester, during marking season, and pre-exam boards, means that much of its impact is likely obscured as staff are demanded elsewhere'.
- Approximately 40% of members indicated that the report alone did not provide appropriate oversight of Committees work. Feedback from members noted that the report provided insufficient detail on the work of the Committees nor the priorities for the year ahead. Some members also suggested that greater oversight could be achieved by adding elected Senate members to the membership of each Committee, 'increased involvement of Senate members ourselves on the standing committees would be an improvement'.
- One member indicated they were not aware of the annual report.

Comparison with 2020/21 response

- In the 2020/21 review, two thirds of respondents agreed that the report provided sufficient oversight. Whilst many respondents still agree with this statement, this has reduced from the two-thirds majority in 2020/21 to approximately 50%.

- There was an increase in the minority who did not think of the annual report alone as providing adequate oversight. This is an increase from a reduced minority who returned similar negative responses in 2020/21.
- In 2020/21 members suggested that the Committee conveners could present the annual report in person. This has been acted on, and the 2021/22 report was presented by each Convener with Senate members invited to make comment.

Q3 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?

- The majority of members do not believe that Senate engages effectively with strategic priorities. Members stated that strategic priorities were set by Standing Committees and University Executive, and Senate did not have sufficient input into influencing, setting or implementing strategic priorities, and that Senate acts as an audience for these discussions or as a scrutinising body, rather than a decision-making body. 'Senate has very few opportunities to engage with university strategic priorities far less to do so effectively.'
- One member felt there was insufficient engagement with staff at a 'grass-roots' level to ensure that student experience matters were factored into strategic priorities, 'Senate...would be improved by taking more contributions from academic staff at grass-roots level'.
- Where respondents were positive about how Senate has engaged with strategic priorities, some of them pointed to the Presentation and Discussion sessions as providing opportunity for members to engage do this, 'there were several themed sessions on various strategic priorities; the wider university community is invited to attend...this provides Senate members with a particularly useful insight into how these themes are perceived beyond the core Senate membership.' However, one respondent did not feel that the Presentation and Discussion sessions were appropriately aligned with the strategic priorities, and another respondent expressed a request for staff experience to be included as a future topic.
- Approximately 10% of respondents highlighted that the detailed work on strategic priorities is primarily undertaken by Senate Standing Committees. There were mixed views on whether this was satisfactory, with some members expressing a desire for greater decision making to be taken at Senate, and others noting the difficulties of a large body reaching decisions on strategic matters. Two members noted that the size of Senate membership meant it was challenging for in-depth discussions on strategic priorities to take place at Senate.
- Approximately 20% of responses noted there had been an increase in engagement from Senate members.
- Approximately 10% of responses noted that Senate discussions were dominated by few members. Comments received from members stated that the increase in engagement was not effective, that Senate 'has descended into a fairly hostile environment', and some behaviour was akin to 'civil disobedience'. Other respondents felt that 'huge amounts of time at Senate are being spent responding to procedural and other issues being brought up repeatedly' and prevented Senate's from 'making progress on the priorities'. One member stated that the time spent on procedural matters impacts adversely on their desire to attend or engage with Senate.

- Approximately 20% of respondents highlighted the duration of Senate meetings as being insufficient to allow Senate to engage with strategic priorities. Many respondents suggested additional time be dedicated to the formal meeting part of Senate. One respondent suggested that the presentation and discussion session be held as a separate meeting. In relation to Question 2, four respondents felt that the duration of Senate meetings also this prevented Senate from engaging with reports received from Standing Committees.
- One respondent felt there was insufficient engagement with student members, and that Senate did not engage with student priorities nor take account of student members being in attendance during discussions, '...there should be more student involvement, or at least a recognition by the staff that there are often PG student representatives present during their discussions.'

Comparison with 2020/21 response

- There has been a small decline in the proportion of positive or neutral responses when compared with the previous year. There has been an increase in the proportion of negative responses.
- There continues to be a majority of members who do not feel that Senate engages effectively with strategic priorities. Negative comments are broadly similar to those received previously, namely, lack of Senate influence over strategic priorities, lack of decision-making power of Senate, whether Senate's has influence over management decisions.
- There has been an increase in feedback on the time available for formal meetings, and the engagement of Senate members.

Q4 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 with 80% of respondents agreeing that Senate is effectively supported by Senate Support. Four respondents were dissatisfied with the support provided and seven respondents did not give a view.
- Approximately 10% of members gave feedback on the format of Senate meetings, with four respondents requesting that greater support be dedicated to holding meetings in hybrid format. One respondent indicated they felt in-person meetings were more effective, 'Online meetings have been tricky, as they have felt more one way than when we're all in a room together'. This feedback will be considered in relation to Question 2 under which similar feedback was received.
- A small minority (approximately 5%) of members identified challenges in understanding the procedural and regulatory aspects of Senate. One respondent noted that 'procedures are sometimes obscure' and two respondents stated that, at times, procedure has not been followed. One member noted that the increased demand placed on Senate Support has highlighted potential resourcing challenges. One member noted that more support was required to manage 'disruptive behaviour'. These comments have been taken account of under Question 1.
- One comment related to clarifying the role of Senate Support, and improving Induction materials for new members to better understand the role of Senate Support. This comment has been taken account of under Question 1.

Comparison with 2020/21 response

- The responses received are similar to those returned in 2020/21.
- There was increase in feedback received on meeting format and duration in comparison to 2020/21.

Potential actions in response to 2021/22 review

Area Under Review	Recommended Action	Responsible	Deadline
Role and remit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Academic Services to hold a briefing on Senate regulations and procedures to build members knowledge of the Senate Standing Orders and procedural elements of acting as a Senate member – in line with the paper presented to Senate’s August 2022 meeting. 2. Additional efforts will be made by Academic Services to ensure that any members joining out with the usual cycle receive the induction materials provided to all staff. Induction sessions are held annually and all Senate members are invited to attend. This practice will continue. 	All: Academic Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By end of January 2023 and in time for the second Ordinary meeting of Senate. 1. Ongoing throughout the remainder of 2022/23.
Oversight of Senate Standing Committees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Add three elected members of Senate to Standing Committees – in line with the amendment approved at Senate’s August 2022 meeting. 4. Revise the format of the annual Senate Standing Committees report to provide further detail on the work of Committees. 5. Standing Committee Conveners to continue be available at Senate meetings to answer questions on the work of the Standing Committees. 6. Academic Services to continue with the practice of informing Senate members when Standing Committee papers are available and offering them an opportunity to comment, and to implement the guidelines for Senate Standing Committee papers as approved at the August 2022 Senate meeting 	All: Academic Services and Senate Standing Committee Conveners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. A paper will be presented to 12 October meeting of Senate 4. By the next annual reporting point, expected in May 2023. 5. Ongoing 6. Ongoing

S 22/23 2 H

Senate engagement with strategic priorities	<p>7. Review the format of Senate meetings taking account of members' feedback on the format, duration and timing of meetings. The review will take account of members' preference for hybrid meetings.</p> <p>Senate Support made extensive efforts with ISG to hold the 25 May meeting as hybrid. The technology and functionality for a high-quality hybrid meeting, which allowed for members to engage from home, was unable to be arranged in the time available.</p> <p>It is expected that the briefing on Senate regulations and procedures session will also address some of the feedback received on procedural matters raised under this item.</p>	Academic Services, for discussion with the Convener	7. In time for the remaining meetings of Senate in 2022/23.
Committee Support	<p>8. Support the externally facilitated review of Senate to take place in 2022/23.</p> <p>9. Continuously review practical arrangements for Senate meetings to prioritise accessibility and opportunities for discussion.</p>	All: Academic Services	<p>8. In line with the timelines for the externally facilitated review.</p> <p>9. Ongoing</p>

Progress on actions identified in the 2020/21 review

Area Under Review	Recommended Action	Responsible	Status
Role and remit	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	Legal advice presented to Senate in October 2022 provides information on the agenda-setting process. Any broader review of Senate Standing Orders would be more appropriate after the conclusion of the Senate External Review to take place in 2022/23.

S 22/23 2 H

Oversight of Senate Standing Committees	<p>2. Bring a discussion paper on the Senate Standing Committees to Senate</p> <p>3. Revise the format of the annual Senate Standing Committees report to focus more on key and strategic themes rather than granular detail.</p>	Academic Services and Senate Standing Committee Conveners	<p>2. Discussions with Standing Committee Conveners and a group of Senate members has taken place. A paper is being presented to 12 October 2022 meeting of Senate which proposes the practical arrangements for adding three elected Senate members to each Standing Committee.</p> <p>3. Action was taken to amend the detail included in the annual Senate Standing Committees report. However, feedback requested that greater detail again be included in future years.</p>
Senate engagement with strategic priorities	4. Review process for identifying Senate presentation and discussion topics	Convener and Senate Support, in consultation with Senate	<p>4. Senate members and Senate Standing Committees were invited to put forward suggestions for presentation and discussion topics for 2022/23.</p> <p>The October meeting has dedicated greater time to the formal business section of Senate, and therefore there was insufficient time for a presentation and discussion session. The format of these sessions is still to be confirmed, and topics and presenters will be chosen from the suggestions received.</p>
Committee Support	5. Continuously review practical arrangements for Senate meetings to prioritise accessibility and opportunities for discussion.	Academic Services	5. This action is ongoing. Senate Support have arranged the October meeting to take place in hybrid format and there are continued efforts to prioritise accessibility and opportunities for discussion.

APPENDIX 2

Report of Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee Internal Effectiveness Review 2021/22

The Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee currently has 19 members. 4 responses were received to the Internal Effectiveness Review Questionnaire.

- **Committee Remit**

Majority of respondents strongly agreed with the following statements, one respondent agreed with the following statements:

- The Committee remit is clear
- The Committee remit is appropriate
- The Committee has adapted effectively to challenges of changes in priority.

All respondents agreed that the Committee is using task groups effectively.

General comments received in relation the Committee remit are as follows:

- The remit of the committee is clear
- Policy and governance decisions around wellbeing would be best placed elsewhere, but only if and when another governance structure is in place to support these.

- **Governance and Impact**

Half of the respondents strongly agreed, and half the respondents agreed that:

- They have a clear understanding of how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University
- There is an effective flow of business between relevant College Committees, Senate Committees and Senate
- The Committee makes the desired impact based on its remit and priorities

The majority of respondents agreed that there are clear links between Committee business and University strategic priorities. One respondent disagreed with this statement.

General comments received in relation to governance and impact are as follows:

- There is possibly not quite enough link to Quality Assurance
- Prior to joining the Committee, a member did not have a clear understanding of how APRC fit into the academic governance framework of the University, however, this is now clear since joining the Committee.

- **Composition**

The majority of respondents strongly agreed, and one respondent agreed that the current composition of the Committee enables it to fulfil its remit and the size of the Committee is appropriate in order for it to operate effectively.

The following comments were made by respondents in relation to composition:

- Members are dedicated and the mix of the membership is effective at enabling those with specialist expertise to share their views and knowledge as needed for different agenda areas. The chair enables good discussion about agenda items in order for everyone to feel they can contribute effectively and appropriately.

- Committee membership is quite large but I think this is necessary to cover all the student cohorts. It might be helpful to have student reps covering UG/PGT/PGR to consult and provide feedback on specific papers and proposals as asking a UG rep to feedback on a PGR proposal is not always suitable.

- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**

The majority of the respondents agreed that the composition of the Committee is suitably representative of the diverse University population. One respondent disagreed with this statement.

All respondents agreed that equality and diversity considerations are adequately addressed when discussing Committee business.

The following comment was made on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

- It would be good if APRC could invite some more colleagues from under-represented, and systemically marginalised groups to join.

- **Role**

The majority of respondents strongly agreed, and one respondent agreed that:

- They have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities as Committee members.
- They received an effective induction when they joined the Committee

All respondents strongly agreed that Committee members fully engage in Committee business.

- **Communications**

The majority of respondents agreed, and one respondent disagreed with each of the following statements:

- The Committee communicates effectively with stakeholders
- They have a clear understanding of their role in cascading information from the Committee as a representative of their College or Group
- They have a clear understanding of their role in cascading information from the Committee

The following comments were received in relation to communications:

- There can always be improvements in communication
- I believe it can be made clearer to each member, which 'audience' they are to receive comments from, and who they cascade out to. Although APRC usually have open papers/minutes they are not well-advertised to the wider University community.

- **Support**

All respondents strongly agreed that the Committee is effectively supported by Academic Services.

The majority of respondents strongly agreed, and one respondent agreed with each of the following statements:

- The information provided to the Committee supports effective decision-making;
- Committee papers provide an appropriate level of detail on the background of issues brought to the Committee.

All respondents agreed that Committee papers provide an appropriate level of detail on how Committee decisions will be implemented.

Report of Senate Education Committee Internal Effectiveness Review 2021/22

Senate Education Committee currently has 24 members. 5 responses were received to the Internal Effectiveness Review Questionnaire.

- **Committee Remit**

All respondents agreed that:

- The Committee remit is clear.
- The Committee has adapted effectively to challenges of changes in priority.

One respondent disagreed that the Committee is using task groups effectively and that the scope of the Committee remit is appropriate.

In relation to scope of the Committee remit, some respondents suggested that:

- Student welfare issues should be dealt with elsewhere (and ideally not as part of Senate at all).
- There is continuing potential for overlap and duplication with the other Standing Committees, particularly in relation to Quality Assurance and ELIR recommendations. There may be benefit in being clearer on the ownership of specific actions. Effective oversight and governance of the Student Experience and Wellbeing is complex, and likely to become ever more so. Some thought needs to be given to how best to address this as the new model of student support rolls out. Education Committee already has a very wide remit and SQAC does not necessarily have the right membership. It would therefore make sense to consider a dedicated Senate Standing Committee, potentially replacing SQAC, with relevant QA oversight moving to SEC and / or APRC as necessary.

- **Governance and Impact**

All respondents agreed that:

- They understood how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University.
- There is an effective flow of business between relevant College Committees, Senate Committees and Senate.
- There are clear links between Committee business and University strategic priorities.

One respondent disagreed that the Committee makes the desired impact based on its remit and priorities. They suggested that:

- There is a perceived large gap and disconnect between the work of SEC and Schools. The resumption of short-life task groups with membership drawn from Schools would help to address this, but some thought needs to be given to how SEC can engage and communicate with the wider University Community more effectively.

- **Composition**

Respondents were satisfied that the size of the Committee is appropriate in order for it to operate effectively.

One respondent disagreed that the current composition of the Committee enables it to fulfil its remit.

The following comments were made by respondents in relation to composition:

- As recent discussions at Senate have shown, not everyone in the University is convinced that the current composition of the Committee is right. Regardless of whether I agree with this point or not, it is a problem in itself if there is doubt (or even distrust) over composition - and hence decision-making processes more generally – in part of the institution. These problems may ultimately affect the Committee's ability to fulfil its remit. I would therefore be happy to add other Senate members to the Committee if that led to higher levels of trust. I would be concerned, however, that a further increase in membership (SEC is already very large) may make the Committee less agile, so any increase should be kept small.
- While it continues to deal with student welfare issues, the Committee needs to include those with key responsibility in that area. If the Committee is not dealing with student welfare issues in the future, then the current Committee makeup is fine. The key is that the membership should include all of those with key responsibilities for aspects of the remit supplemented with a number of "experts".
- I have put that I 'agree' on the size, but actually I am between agree and disagree. It is a good size for inclusion, and perhaps that is important for Senate committees. On the other hand, its size means its members don't really carry much responsibility since it makes that all quite diffuse.

- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**

Three respondents agreed that the composition of the Committee is suitably representative of the diverse University population, but two disagreed.

While four respondents were satisfied that equality and diversity considerations are adequately addressed when discussing Committee business, one was not.

The following comments were made:

- I think there could be consideration given to more student representation, beyond EUSA.
- The current makeup of the committee lacks racial diversity.

- **Role**

All respondents agreed that:

- They have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities as Committee members.
- Committee members engage fully in Committee business.

One respondent did not agree that they have received an effective induction when joining the membership of the Committee.

- **Communications**

Two respondents disagreed that the Committee communicates effectively with stakeholders and that they have a clear understanding of their role in cascading information from the Committee.

One respondent disagreed that they have a clear understanding of their role on the Committee as a representative of their College or Group.

The following comments were received in relation to communications:

- I'm not sure that the Committee has much visibility across the University, with members of staff or with students. I'm not saying that it should necessarily have more but as a member of the Committee I don't feel necessarily that I understand what cascading I should do. This is particularly because I am there as a representative HoS, but surely I'd not cascade to my own School only - perhaps to other HoS's...?
- This is the weakest area of the Committee function at present and it is time for us to think more carefully about how the Committee communicates and engages directly (and through reps) with the wider community.

- **Support**

All respondents felt that:

- The Committee is effectively supported by Academic Services;
- The information provided to the Committee supports effective decision-making;
- Committee papers provide an appropriate level of detail on the background of issues brought to the Committee.

One respondent disagreed that Committee papers provide an appropriate level of detail on how Committee decisions will be implemented.

The following comments were received in relation to support:

- Implementation details are sometimes a bit thin;
- All excellent;
- Implementation and communication plans as a result of Committee decisions need to be more carefully discussed especially in relation to any decisions that need to be referred to Senate / other committees before final action can be taken.

Report of Senate Quality Assurance Committee Internal Effectiveness Review 2021/22

Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) currently has 12 members. Three responses were received to the following questions of the Internal Effectiveness Review Questionnaire:

1. 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. The following was noted:

- Committee tasks groups might be able to make more rapid progress on short-life task groups if it could draw on additional resource.
- The committee is very effective and open to different voices which I value. It would be useful to have some means to ensure those charged with taking actions forward follow through.
- SQAC has been responsive to the changes in priority and sympathetic to the workload pressures on key staff across the institution. SQAC has used task groups well although they have been small in number over the last couple of years.

2. Governance and Impact

All respondents understood how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University, and considered there to be a clear link between Committee business and the University's strategic priorities.

However, not all respondents agreed that there is an effective flow of business between College Committees, the Senate Committees and Senate. Respondents noted that:

- Having College Deans as contributors to the committee is useful in ensuring a good relationship between College committees and Senate Committees. I find it a valuable way of being able to ensure there is 2 way communication.
- I think that flow of information between the committees often relies on individual membership rather than something more formal. I'd also like SQAC to make more impact in terms of seeing more effective change happen. It is not always clear that the Committee's findings inform decision-making by APROC and other standing committees. This might be clearer to those who attend a range of standing committees.
- It is notable that the Committee's ongoing scrutiny of and support for the thematic reviews does not always translate into progress and resource, which suggests that the Committee struggles - in some areas - to make the desired impact.
- It is not clear that priorities identified by the Committee have a significant impact on Senate decision making and ESG priorities. Business flows effectively from Senate to the standing committee and to College, and from external bodies to the committee thanks to our QA VP and PS support, but it is less clear that business flows from the committee horizontally or upwards.

3. Composition

All respondents were satisfied that the composition of the Committee, one noting the following:

- I value the current composition as a range of voices are heard and can share information.

However, one respondent did not think the size of the Committee enables it to operate effectively, noting the following:

- The current Committee is doing excellent work, but the volume of work - much of it urgent - is falling heavily on the Deans and VP, who already have significant workloads, and we risk struggling to progress some new projects without further resource. We might benefit from greater student representation.

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

All respondents were satisfied that equality and diversity considerations are adequately addressed when discussing Committee business.

However, respondents disagreed that the composition of the Committee is suitably representative of the diverse University population. The following was noted:

- We are not a diverse group, which reflects the disadvantage specific groups of staff face to reach the grades that are represented at the Committee. Improved representation alone would not ensure EDI considerations are adequately addressed. We could improve further by considering how we mandate EDI consideration, in terms of process and committee member knowledge of EDI.
- The composition is a reflection of those with responsibilities at different levels in the University and Colleges which is appropriate but not as diverse as it could be.

5. Committee members - role clarity and participation

All respondents felt they had a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities, received an effective induction when they joined the Committee, and that Committee members engage fully in Committee business, with one noting the following:

- I have been grateful for the option to engage in hybrid mode this year and would have been unable to attend without this option. I regard this as an effective reasonable adjustment and an example of how the Committee supports EDI consideration.

6. Stakeholder engagement and 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. One respondent noted that:

- Papers from SQAC influence discussions at College level and vice versa if something is raised at College that needs wider discussion this is raised.

However, one respondent disagreed that the Committee communicates effectively with stakeholders, noting that:

- The challenge of communicating QA business to all our stakeholders is longstanding. The committee is obviously working hard on this, e.g. through the Digital Maturity project, but how to ensure QAE is visible, accessible, and usable across the University is still a challenge.

7. Committee 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 appropriate background of issues and an appropriate level of detail on how Committee decisions will be implemented. The following was noted:

- Outstanding support by Academic Services throughout this year.
- In my opinion the committee operates very effectively, is chaired very well and is collaborative in approach to items raised. The size means good discussion but clear decisions and outcomes making it a valuable contribution to the University.
- Further digitisation in line with the Digital Maturity recommendations will be welcomed.

Senate

12 October 2022

Senate Exception Committee Terms of Reference and Membership

Description of paper

1. Minor update to the Senate Exception Committee Membership

Action requested / recommendation

2. Senate is asked to approve the updated Membership. The Terms of Reference are unchanged and are attached for information.
3. This update was presented at the 25 May and 11 August meeting, however as Senate was not quorate when the paper was received, the updated membership was unable to be approved.

Background and context

4. The Senate Exception Committee operates under delegated authority, to make urgent formal business decisions which would otherwise require Senatus approval between meetings.

Discussion

5. The Committee Membership appended below has been updated to note one change in the membership. Niamh Roberts, the new President of the Students' Association will take up position and will become a member of the Exception Committee with immediate effect.

Resource implications

6. None

Risk management

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

Equality & diversity

8. The membership of the Committee is largely a consequence of decisions taken elsewhere to appoint individuals to particular roles. Ensuring that appointment processes support a diverse staff body is part of the broader responsibility of the University.

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

9. The Terms of Reference and updated Membership will be published on the Senate website.

Author

Olivia Hayes

Academic Policy Officer

4 October 2022

Freedom of Information

Open

APPENDIX 1

Senatus Exception Committee

1 Purpose

1.1 Under delegated authority, to make urgent formal business decisions which would otherwise require Senatus approval between meetings of Senatus subject to defined principles and on the understanding that any matter so referred can be referred to the full Senatus should this be the wish of the Exception Committee.

2 Composition

2.1 The Committee shall consist of at least six members.

2.2 The Principal, the Vice-Principal Students, the Convener of the Research Strategy Group, and the Convener of each of the Standing Committees of Senate shall be ex officio members of the Committee.

2.3 Unless otherwise represented, the membership of the Committee must also include two Senate members and a representative of the Edinburgh University Students' Association (normally the President).

2.4 The term of office for Senate members, where they are not ex officio members of the Committee, will be no longer than their membership of the Senatus and will be for a maximum of three years.

2.5 Edinburgh University Student Association annually nominate one fully matriculated student to be a member of the Exception Committee; this is normally one of the elected Students' Association sabbatical officers.

2.6 Previous members are eligible for re-appointment up to a normal maximum of two consecutive terms of office.

2.7 The Principal shall be appointed Convener of the Committee.

2.8 The Vice-Principal Students will be appointed Vice-Convener of the Committee.

3 Meetings

3.1 The Committee will be convened only if required and much of its business is expected to be conducted through correspondence.

3.2 The aim will be to circulate minutes, agendas and papers to members of the Committee at least five working days in advance of the meeting or prior to the conclusion of the consultation period. In cases of extreme urgency, which is likely to be the case given the nature of this Committee, and with the agreement of the Convener, papers may be tabled at meetings of the Committee. If being conducted by correspondence the consultation period may be no shorter than a 24 hour period.

3.3 Papers will indicate the originator/s and purpose of the paper, the matter/s which the Committee is being asked to consider and any action/s required and confirm the status of the paper in respect of freedom of information legislation.

3.4 Four members of the Committee shall be a quorum. This number must include the Principal or Vice-Principal Students and a Senate member.

3.5 A formal minute will be kept of proceedings and submitted for approval as soon as practicable to members of the Committee. The draft minute will be agreed with the Convener of the Committee prior to circulation.

4 Remit

4.1 To consider any matter between meetings of the Senatus and with the full delegated authority of Senatus to make a decision on the matter on behalf of the Senatus.

4.2 The Committee in reaching a decision must be satisfied regarding the following:

- there is evidence of the consideration given to the equality impact of the matter under consideration; and
- there is a robust rationale for the proposals or options being presented by the identified lead senior officer or officers including information on the outcome of any consultation undertaken.

5 Other

5.1 A report on issues discussed at each meeting or concluded via correspondence will be provided to the next available Ordinary Meeting of the Senatus.

5.2 Membership of the Committee will be published on the University's website.

Senate Exception Committee Membership 2022-23

Name	Position/School	Term of office	Composition Section
Professor Peter Mathieson (Convener)	Principal	Ex Officio	2.2
Professor Colm Harmon (Vice Convener)	Convener of the Education Committee, Vice Principal Students	Ex Officio	2.2
Dr Paul Norris	Convener of Academic Policy and Regulations Committee	Ex Officio	2.2
Professor Tina Harrison	Convener of Senatus Quality Assurance Committee, Assistant Principal (Academic Standards and Quality Assurance)	Ex Officio	2.2
Professor Jonathan Seckl	Convener of the Research Strategy Group	Ex Officio	2.2
Dr Ashley Lloyd	Business School	1 August 2021 – 31 July 2024	2.3
Professor David Hay	Edinburgh Medical School	29 September 2020 – 31 July 2023	2.3
Niamh Roberts	Students' Association President	Nominated	2.3

Senate**12 October 2022****Senate Election Dates 2022-23****Description of paper**

1. The paper provides Senate with information on the provisional nomination deadline and election date for staff seeking election to Senate in 2023.

Action requested / recommendation

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

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 call for nominations for each election will be made after 31 January each year. The nomination deadline and election date will be formally confirmed by Senate at its first meeting following this date. This meeting is scheduled to take place on 8 February 2023.
5. Election of student members of Senate is managed by the Edinburgh University Students' Association.

Discussion

6. The provisional dates for staff seeking election to Senate are:

Wednesday 8 February 2023	Senate formally declares nominations open
Wednesday 8 March 2023 (12 noon)	Nominations close
Monday 13 March 2023	Candidate information made available online
Wednesday 22 March 2023 (9am) to Wednesday 29 March 2023 (12 noon)	Voting open online

7. Possible conflicts and mitigating factors:
 - a. As part of broader University website changes, the migration of Academic Services pages, which include Senate, is scheduled for migration in February 2023. It is expected that it will not be possible to make any changes to the website during the migration period. It may be necessary to utilise an alternate system, such as SharePoint, during this period to receive nominations and to minimise any impact on Senate elections. It is not expected that the website migration will impact on voting which is scheduled to take place after the migration concludes.
 - b. Flexible learning week takes place from 20 February to 24 February, during the Senate nomination period. It is possible that some academic staff will take annual leave during this week. However, the length of the nomination period (one month) should ensure that all staff have opportunities to participate in the process.
 - c. Both nominations and voting will take place online, and therefore will remain accessible to staff working across campuses and from home.
 - d. 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.
 - e. The nomination and election process will be complete before the beginning of the Spring teaching vacation (10 to 21 April 2023).

8. Elections have previously been facilitated by the University's Information Services Group. ISG has outsourced the running of elections to Civica Election Services from 2023 onwards. It is not expected that the process for nomination or voting will change for members and elections will continue to be supported by Academic Services with oversight provided by ISG.

Resource implications

9. The resource implications for managing the administrative tasks required for the election will be primarily be met within Academic Services.
10. The University's Information Services Group has outsourced the running of elections to Civica Election Services and the budget required for this will be met by ISG.

Risk management

11. 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

12. 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

13. Any comments will be taken into consider in election planning. The final timetable will be presented to Senate for approval in February 2023

Author

Olivia Hayes
Academic Policy Officer
Clerk to Senate

Freedom of Information

Open

Senate**12 October 2022****Edinburgh University Students' Association VP Education Priorities 2022-23****Description of paper**

1. This paper provides an overview of the Students' Association Vice President Education's priorities for the academic year 2022/23.

Action requested / recommendation

2. This paper is provided for information and comment.

Background and context

3. Following the Students' Association elections in March 2022, Sam Maccallum was elected as Vice President Education for the 2022/23 academic year. They are one of five elected Sabbatical Officers who work full-time within the Students' Association to represent students' interests. The Vice President Education is responsible for representing and advocating for students in areas of learning and teaching. This paper outlines their priorities for the academic year and highlights key areas of work.

Discussion

4. For the 2022/23 session, Sam will be focusing on the following areas:

Increasing academic transparency and student academic support

The last two years of pandemic-altered teaching have demonstrated that substantial change can happen quickly when needed. From assessment methods to student support, the pandemic has demonstrated that policy changes can act reflexively and with timely implementation. With a full-scale return to in-person teaching and assessment now imminent, the University will need to work quickly to ensure adequate provisions are in place to support students through this transition, and to consider alternative methods of assessment where possible to ensure accessibility and equitable outcomes.

Sam will work to address the substantial risk associated with an abrupt return to in-person assessment, particularly for Undergraduate students entering honours this year without previous experience of in-person examinations. They believe that the University must recognise post-pandemic assessment literacy as a key priority for their students, and they will lobby against decisions regarding assessment which will not support the interests of already disadvantaged students.

Narratives have surfaced regarding academic misconduct and student integrity surrounding online assessment methods. In response, Sam will be working to improve student awareness of academic expectations and clarifying grading processes.

Working towards a more accessible and inclusive curriculum

In line with the University's own commitment to improve student satisfaction, Sam will be prioritising overall student experience and staff workloads within the next stages of the Curriculum Transformation Programme. Sam will be working to encourage increased involvement of student voice within decision making related to curriculum content and delivery.

As a global institution, Edinburgh should be giving due consideration towards the diversity of its student body when approaching curriculum reform. Using Curriculum Transformation as a platform to address systemic issues within the curriculum will demonstrate the University's commitment to creating meaningful change for its future students. Sam will push to create spaces for staff and students to work together on key issues surrounding curriculum decolonisation to inform design priorities.

Sam will also be working to ensure that experiential learning within teaching is accessible, particularly for disabled students and those from Widening Participation backgrounds, so that all students feel able to fully engage with opportunities available to them. Sam is hoping to work within student engagement and experiential learning discussions to prioritise the early incorporation of reasonable adjustments into experiential learning structures, prioritising students' needs over a focus on diagnosis.

Improving staff and student engagement with student voice

As the key Sabbatical Officer contact for Programme and School Representatives, Sam will continue to improve engagement and overall awareness with the Association's student voice structure across the University. They will work towards ensuring that student representatives have greater agency in learning and teaching matters, and that staff and students are partners in decisions impacting academic experience.

Sam will be chairing monthly School Representative Forums and will use these spaces to amplify engagement between our School Representatives and the wider University community. They will work to facilitate the effective escalation of issues and strengthen existing feedback mechanisms between staff and students. A key focus throughout their term will be creating accountability methods for feedback gathered from students, and streamlining the process of navigating university structures. Sam aims to develop a greater sense of trust and belonging within the University community, and enhance connectivity and collaboration between students and staff.

Resource implications

5. No changes to workload are envisioned beyond existing staff remits. The Vice President Education will be working full-time with these points as priorities for the academic year.

Risk management

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

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

7. The Students' Association recognises the urgency of the Climate Emergency and the Sabbatical Officer team will be working in collaboration with the university to educate and empower our students to tackle this important issue.

Equality & diversity

8. 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

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

Author

*Name: Sam Maccallum
Vice President Education, Edinburgh
University Students' Association
Date 02/09/2022*

Presenter

*Name: Sam Maccallum
Vice President Education, Edinburgh
University Students' Association*

Freedom of Information This paper is open.

Senate**12 October 2022****Student Partnership Agreement 2022-23****Description of paper**

1. This paper is the University of Edinburgh Student Partnership Agreement for 2022-23. The SPA is negotiated each year between the University and Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA), with groups of staff and students consulted about the priority areas focused on each year. This SPA and its priority areas help to promote Strategy 2030's values, in particular fostering a welcoming community and ensuring our teaching and research is relevant to society, diverse, inclusive and accessible to all. The SPA funded projects also explicitly create opportunities for students and staff to co-create work together enhancing the impact of work we do.

Action requested / recommendation

2. We ask Senate to note the Student Partnership Agreement for 2022-23.

Background and context

3. Responsibility for leading and administering the SPA sits with the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) but is supported by the SPA Panel comprising representatives from IAD, EUSA, and Academic Services, along with the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance.
4. The SPA is a broad statement of intent for the University and EUSA to work in partnership. The priority areas/themes are negotiated annually in consultation with staff and students across the University. The priority areas agreed each year become the focus for SPA Funding which is available for small partnership projects of up to £1000 each (this is an uplift from 2021-22 where up to £500 was offered per project). These projects enable increased activity to take place across the University focused on the agreed priority areas.

Discussion

5. The Assistant Principal (Academic Standards and Quality Assurance) and the Institute for Academic Development have led discussions with the Students Association about the SPA, and have consulted the Senate Standing Committees regarding whether we should make any changes to the SPA for 2022-23. Feedback from students and the Committees suggested that the priorities within the SPA remain appropriate and that we should not make any substantive changes. As a result, for 2022-23 the three Priority areas within the SPA remain the same as 2021-22 – but with some minor amendments to the wording. Since we have not made any substantive changes to the SPA, the Assistant Principal (Academic Standards and Quality Assurance) has approved the 2022-23 SPA on behalf of the University.

Resource implications

6. None for the SPA itself. The SPA funding scheme is funded by the IAD up to a total of £5000 for 2022-23, but with a possibility of a modest uplift if there is an increase in particularly worthy projects the SPA Panel might wish to support.

Risk management

7. There are no significant risks to continuation of the Student Partnership Agreement.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

8. Previous SPA projects have focused on sustainability. The priority areas proposed for 2022-23 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 & diversity

9. Equality, diversity and inclusion are explicitly proposed as a priority area within the SPA 2022-23 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

10. The SPA can be found at the following SPA webpage:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/learning-teaching/staff/student-engagement/student-partnership-agreement>

11. Information about the SPA funding scheme can be found at:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/funding/spa-funding>

12. We are increasing dissemination of information about the SPA funding scheme and support for applications prior to the deadline on 17th October 2022.

13. All SPA funded project-holders are asked to submit a Teaching Matters blog to summarise their project outcomes in place of a final report. This is with the aim of supporting wider dissemination of project work and outcomes across the University.

Author

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Date: 27 September 2022

Freedom of Information Open

STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT 2022-23

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. Many 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 University 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. 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 Student Representatives Forum, the Directors of Teaching Network, all Senate committees' members, and the Student Partnership Agreement Panel.

- **Community, wellbeing and supporting transitions**

Supporting staff and students to collaboratively develop and enhance resilient communities across years and across the University. Developing communities that promote a sense of wellbeing, belonging and mattering. Supporting students as they move to the University, from semester to semester, from year to year, as well as beyond the University and preparing for professional working life.

- **Transforming curriculum and engagement with learning and teaching**

Recognising the power of learning, teaching, and assessment to transform the student experience. Encouraging meaningful engagement with learning and teaching. University-wide curriculum transformation and making the Edinburgh Student Vision a reality. Developing students who are: disciplinary experts; ready to thrive in a changing world; and highly employable. Experiential learning; international dimensions of curriculum; global and local engagement; student-staff co-creation of assessment, teaching and learning, decolonising the curriculum.

- **Equality, diversity and inclusion**

Ensuring 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 have traditionally been systemically excluded, feel welcome and wish to engage.

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
- 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
- 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 October 2022****Research Strategy Group report****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 responsibility for research policy and strategy 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.
- ii. We will be a global leader in artificial intelligence and the use of data with integrity.
- iii. We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and amplify our impacts.
- iv. 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 May 2022, RSG met on 8th July (last meeting for 2021/21) and 31st August 2022; it will meet four more times in 2022/23: 25^h October; 23rd February 2023; 18th April; 20th June)

4. This report outlines:

- Scotland's Research Excellence Grant and equivalent for Wales and England
- EU research funding and UK Government's Plan B
- REF2021 learning from the results and Future Research Excellence Framework
- UK Government support for research, innovation and development

Discussion**Research Excellence Grant funding and equivalent for Wales and England**

5. Each year the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) allocates Research Excellence Grant (REG) to each Scottish HEIs. REG is a block grant which is intended to support research but unlike awards from the UK Research Councils and other research funders does not come with restrictions as to its use. HEIs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland receive funding for similar purposes, which is referred to as Quality-Related Funding (QR).

6. The final SFC funding allocations were announced on 26 May¹ and took into account the results from the Research Excellence Framework, which have been

¹ [SFC Final funding announcement and all the tables](#)

used to calculate the REG allocations to for AY 2022-23. SFC had already announced the overall budget for Research and Innovation would increase by £4.7M (1.6%) to £299.1M. This budget covers not only the Research Excellence Grant but also funding the University's receives for Research Postgraduates and Innovation activities.

7. The University's overall REG allocation for AY 2022-23 is £87.2M, an increase of 6.9% from 2021-22. The University's total share of the REG funding will also increase from 33.6% in 2021/22 to 35.3%. The reasons for this increase are because the University's eligible population has grown by 46% since REF2014; coupled with an increase in the quality of the University's submission and other beneficial changes to the REG formula.

8. In England, the Quality-Related research funding (QR) for 2022/23 will increase by 10% relative to 2021/22. The 2022/23 QR budget is allocated on the basis of the REF2021 results. In terms of actual allocation to individual HEIs in England there has been a broadening of the QR distribution as a result of Research England using the REF2021 results. However the majority of the English QR budget for 2022 will go to the same 20 HEIs which got the majority of the QR budget for 2021/22.

9. For Welsh HEIs, the value of the QR budget for 2022/23 is the same as for 2021/22. There has been some movement in terms of those HEI whose share has gone up or down but overall Welsh HEI sector has not the benefits of an improved REF2021 results that the Scottish and English HE sectors have.

EU research funding and UK Government's Plan B

10 On 31 August, the UK Government extended its application guarantee deadline for all EU Horizon 2020 submissions that close on or before 31 December, vitally for University researchers this includes European Research Council (ERC) grants. Edinburgh researchers are actively encouraged to continue to apply across the entire Horizon 2020 programmes. The University was awarded almost £500 million in 2020/21.

11 At the time of writing no detail has been released on the UK Government's strategy and processes that will apply in the event that the UK does not become an associate member of the ERC. A preliminary vision was published in July for a long term, alternative programme to Horizon Europe should it be required. It believed that a detailed programme will be published by late autumn

REF2021 learning from the results and Future Research Excellence Framework

12 Since June the University has been carrying out a review of its performance in REF2021 and what can be learnt from its peers. This has involved both qualitative and quantitative analysis of the REF submissions of other HEIs. Part of the task was carried out centrally and comparing the University to a set of HEIs chosen as those most likely to yield examples of best practice that could be applied in an Edinburgh context. The three Colleges coordinated a learning exercise that involved the schools selecting their own comparator groups.

13 The results of this large exercise were discussed at the Research Strategy Group on 31 August and will fed into future Research Strategy discussions. Care

however needs to be taken in learning from REF2021 as the rules for the next are likely to differ to a greater or lesser degree.

14 In May 2021 the UK's four research funding bodies of which SFC is one commissioned a Future Research Assessment Programme. The objective is to take the concept of research assessment back to first principals and working with HEIs and those that are users of research understand how best to assess the Research activities of the UK's HEIs. Universities have been consulted in various ways on several occasions and it is expected that the outcome of this major exercise will be published in January 2023. At that point it is hoped that it will be clear if any major changes will be introduced for REF202X.

UK Government support for research, innovation and development

15 In June UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) published its budget for 2022-23 to 2024-25. It is the first time UKRI has produced a multi-year budget UKRI's budget for 2021/22 is £7,785 million and will rise to £8,874 million by 2024-25 (14% increase). UKRI's funding includes the seven UK Research Councils as well as Research England and Innovation UK. The bulk of the increase in UKRI's funding will go to Innovate UK. Its purpose is to help UK companies to grow by developing new products, processes and services. For HEIs this means working with UK companies. The funding for all the Research councils except the Arts and Humanities Research Council will increase.

16 In 2020/21 the University was 4th in the Russell Group in terms of how much funding it received from the UKRI research councils.

Resource implications

17. None. This report is for information only

Risk Management

18 RSG is 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.

Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

19 The University's research contributes to the nine UN SDGs listed which relate to the activities of Higher Education Institutions that educate and carry out research, Innovation and Development. RSG is a platform for strategic discussions about the University's research.

Equality and Diversity

20 The RSG Research Culture Working group which reports to RSG has specific objectives of establishing policies and mechanisms to promote a positive research culture at the University of Edinburgh across all stages in an individual's research career regardless of ethnicity, gender and ability. A University Research Culture action plan is in development

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

21 RSG membership includes representation from Communications and Marketing as well as having a Research Engagement subgroup. The RSG papers for discussion explicitly asked for information about communication plans. RSG works with its subgroups, the

College Research Committees as well as other University committees to evaluate the impact of action agreed and to determine best approach to dissemination.

Consultation

22 None

Further information

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None

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Senate**12 October 2022****Report of Concessions Approved by Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee****Description of paper**

1. This paper provides members with a report of concessions approved by Senate Academic Policy Regulations Committee (APRC) in 2021-22.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Senate is invited to note and comment on the paper.

Background and context

3. APRC will consider concession requests relating to individual students with regards to the University's Degree Regulations and Taught Assessment Regulations. As outlined in the APRC Terms of Reference, the Convener or Deputy Convener has authority for making these decisions. In addition, in 2021/22, Senate Quality Assurance Committee passed APRC the power to approve variations to the operation of examination boards (in response to disruption of the assessment process). Requests for concessions around the operation of examination boards were similarly handled by Convenor's action, based on principles agreed by APRC and the University's Academic Contingency Group.
4. Concessions considered at APRC level are submitted by Colleges, and will only be considered if they have the approval of the relevant College and School/Deanery.
5. As part of discussions at Senate Meetings in May 2022 and August 2022, the convener of APRC agreed they would update Senate on the number of concessions granted around examination boards. This paper provides that information. For context, it also includes a summary of other concessions approved via APRC, which related to individual students.

Discussion

6. Under Convener's or Deputy Convener's action, APRC approved a total of 55 concessions in 2021-22 (47 relating to individual students and 8 relating to the operation of exam boards). A breakdown by student type, and broad category is provided in the tables below. Due to the small number of concessions in some categories, it is not possible to provide a breakdown by College or regulation type, as this could risk allowing the identification of individual students.
7. Concessions are considered by either the Convener or Vice-Convener, depending on which College the concession relates to (such that APRC approval is not granted by a member of staff from the College who submitted the request).
8. Breakdown by student type:

Undergraduate Student Concession	10
Postgraduate Taught Student Concession	24
Postgraduate Research Student Concession	13
Concession Relating to the Operation of a Programme or Course Exam Board (Including the Operation of External Examiners)	8 (6 related to industrial action)
Total	55

9. Breakdown by category

Authorised Interruption of study & period of study	30
Credit load	2
External Examiner or Operation of Exam Board	9 ¹
Posthumous degrees	3
Progression & programme deviation	7
Study Abroad	4
Total	55

¹ The difference between this figure of 9 and the 8 exam board related concessions recorded in the previous table is explained by a concession to allow a colleague to continue to act as member of a PGR viva examination after they had moved to another institution – this is recorded as a PGR concession in the first table.

10. The majority of concessions which related to individual students were for Postgraduate Taught Students.
11. The majority of these concessions related to permitting an additional authorised interruption of study, or the period of study, which includes programme extensions.
12. Within these concessions, the vast majority involved students requiring additional periods of Authorised Interruption of Study beyond the maximum specified in the degree regulations. However, in nearly all cases, these extensions to Authorised Interruption of Studies did not involve students going beyond the maximum time allowed for their studies, rather the addition interruption was taken in place of a period of extended, or repeat, study.
13. With regards to concessions around the operation of examination boards, these related to the absence of external examiners, with very few requests reaching APRC (others were handled through appointing a replacement external examiner for instance). In line with guidance agreed by APRC, where concessions were approved on behalf of the committee, no exam board operated without involvement from of at least one external examiner (from outside the University of Edinburgh). Where external examiners were unavailable for specific courses, assessment on those courses was subject to additional internal scrutiny.

Resource implications

14. The consideration, approval and administration of concessions is delegated to the Convener and Vice-Convener with support provided by the Administrator of APRC. Concessions vary in complexity, and there is some variation in the resource required to support these. Resource required is part of the usual duties required by post holders.
15. Resource is required to maintain records relating to concessions and reports take some time to draw together.

Risk management

16. APRC takes account of institutional or student risk when approving concessions.

Equality & diversity

17. The consideration and approval of concessions takes account of equality and diversity impact as and where appropriate.

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

18. This report is for information. Comments received by Senate will be noted by APRC.

Author

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APRC Administrator

Presenter

Dr Paul Norris
Convener of APRC

September 2022

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