<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>
Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee

**Meeting to be held on Wednesday 16 March 2016 at 2.00pm in the
Raeburn Room, Old College
AGENDA**

1.	Welcome and Apologies	
2.	Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2016	LTC 15/16 4 A

3.	**Matters Arising**	
3.1	Matters arising from the meeting held on 27 January 2016 (and not elsewhere on the agenda):	
	3.1.1 Lecture Capture (Item 5.8)	Verbal update

4.	**Convener's Communications**	
4.1	Teaching Excellence Framework Update	Verbal update

5.	**For Discussion**	
5.1	2015 New Student Survey Results	LTC 15/16 4 B
5.2	Learning and Teaching Communications – Teaching Matters Website	LTC 15/16 4 C
5.3	Student Systems Roadmap	LTC 15/16 4 D
5.4	Interim Report of Task Group to Review the Academic Year Structure	LTC 15/16 4 E
5.5	Grade Point Averages (GPA) – Update on Sector Developments	LTC 15/16 4 F
5.6	Feedback on Assessment – Turnaround Times	LTC 15/16 4 G
5.7	Senate Committee Planning for 2016/17 Onwards	LTC 15/16 4 H

6.	**For Approval**	
6.1	Innovation in Teaching and Learning Working Group – Remit and Membership	LTC 15/16 4 I
6.2	Student Surveys Review	LTC 15/16 4 J

7.	**For Noting / Information**	
7.1	Report from Learning and Teaching Policy Group (LTPG)	LTC 15/16 4 K
7.2	Enhancement Led Institutional Review – Final Report
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/provider?UKPRN=10007790#.Vt6rkJ1FCUl	
7.3	Enhancement Themes - Update	LTC 15/16 4 L
7.4	Student Survey Response Rates	Verbal update
7.5	Knowledge Strategy Committee Report	LTC 15/16 4 M
7.6	Digital Education	LTC 15/16 4 N
7.7	Draft Strategic Plan
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/govstratplan/Strategic+Plan+2016-2021	

8.	**Any Other Business**	

Date of next meeting: 2.00pm on Wednesday 25 May 2016 in Room 235, Chemistry, Joseph Black Building.

LTC 15/16 4 A

For approval at meeting to be held on 16 March 2016

Minutes of the Meeting of the Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) held at 2pm on Wednesday 27 January 2016 in the Board Room, Chancellor's Building, Little France

1. Attendance

Present:

Professor Sarah Cunningham-Burley	Assistant Principal (Research-Led Learning)
Ms Rebecca Gaukroger	Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions
Ms Shelagh Green	Director, Careers Service (co-opted member)
Professor Tina Harrison	Assistant Principal (Academic Standards and Quality Assurance)
Professor Peter Higgins	Representative of Social Responsibility and Sustainability
Ms Melissa Highton	Convener of Learning Technologies Advisory Group (ex officio)
Ms Erin Jackson	Distance Learning Manager, School of Law, CHSS (co-opted member)
Professor Charlie Jeffery (Convener)	Senior Vice-Principal
Ms Nichola Kett	Academic Governance Representative, Academic Services
Mr John Lowrey	Dean of Undergraduate Studies, CHSS
Ms Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka	EUSA Academic Engagement Co-ordinator (ex officio)
Dr Antony Maciocia	Senior Lecturer, School of Mathematics, CSE (co-opted member)
Dr Velda McCune	Deputy Director, Institute for Academic Development (Director's Nominee) (ex officio)
Professor Anna Meredith	Director for Postgraduate Taught, CMVM
Professor Graeme Reid	Dean of Learning and Teaching, CSE
Professor Neil Turner	Director of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning, CMVM
Mrs Philippa Ward (Secretary)	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Mr Tom Ward	University Secretary's Nominee, Director of Academic Services (ex officio)
Professor Wyn Williams	Director of Teaching, School of GeoSciences, CSE
Ms Imogen Wilson	EUSA Vice President (Academic Affairs) (ex officio)

Apologies:

Dr Elaine Haycock-Stuart	Director of Learning and Teaching, School of Health in Social Science (co-opted member)
Dr Margaret MacDougall	Medical Statistician and Researcher in Education (co-opted member)
Dr Gale Macleod	Dean of Postgraduate (Taught), CHSS

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2015 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Principal's Teaching Award Scheme (Item 7.3)

Members were advised that discussion at the previous meeting about mainstreaming PTAS funding was being taken forward in two ways:

- Consideration was being given to ways in which an ODL funding pot for teaching and learning innovation could be disbursed via PTAS.
- The potential to include an allocation for PTAS in future planning round discussions was being considered, although it was noted that the forthcoming planning round was likely to be very tight.

Members also noted that the Vice-Principal Digital Education would be retiring in the near future. Once a successor had been appointed, the work of the LTC Distance Education Task Group would be reviewed.

3.2 University Representation on Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC) (Item 7.4)

The Committee was advised that the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance would represent the University on SHEEC.

3.3 Knowledge Strategy Committee

It was noted that Senate would be asked to approve changes to Senate representation on Knowledge Strategy Committee. It had been agreed that the Standing Committees would be represented by their Conveners, provided that this resulted in a reasonable spread across the Colleges. As such, Learning and Teaching Committee would be represented by the Senior Vice-Principal.

4. Convener's Communications

4.1 Learning and Teaching Communications

Members were advised that a new website and blog, 'Teaching Matters', had been launched to share and debate ideas and approaches to learning and teaching, and showcase excellent teaching. The website would run as a six month pilot in the first instance.

4.2 Enhancement-Led Institutional Review

It was noted that the draft report of the Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) had been received. The final, publically available report would be received in March once corrections to the draft had been agreed. The Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance would begin to develop an action plan in response to the report's recommendations.

5. For Discussion

5.1 Proposal for Review of the University's Academic Year Structure

The Committee agreed to establish a Task Group to review the structure of the University's academic year in response to discussions at Senate Committees and feedback from staff and students. It approved both the broad remit for the Group and the timescales outlined in the paper.

A number of suggestions and comments were made regarding the review:

- The substantial practical issues (and likelihood of negative student sentiment) associated with the option of examining Semester One courses in January were recognised. It was suggested that, while due consideration be given to this option, greater attention be given to other options which did not involve shifting the Semester One examination diet.
- The Group was encouraged to be creative in identifying options for improving the academic year structure. For example, it was suggested that it may be worth considering holding teaching activities (for continuing students) in Welcome Week, whilst also taking into account the reasoning behind the University's decision in 2002 to align the academic year for all subjects and programmes.

- In considering an appropriate academic year structure, the Group was asked to consider which model would make most efficient use of the University's estate. For example, there was potentially spare capacity across the estate during the summer.
- It was suggested that the Task Group should confirm whether there was any scope to reduce the number of teaching weeks from the current level, while recognising that the University may already be assuming a high number of hours of student effort per week in order to be compliant with SCQF requirements.
- It was noted that the possibility (reported recently in the media) that the date of Easter could be fixed at some point may have implications for the academic year structure.
- The Group was encouraged to think about the academic year as a whole, rather than thinking separately about the structure of each semester.
- It was noted that there would be benefit in learning from what has worked for other institutions.
- The Group needed to remain mindful of the legal implications for students already on programmes of changing the academic year structure – although it was recognised that good consultation and communication should allow the University to meet its obligations.

5.2 Continuing Professional Development for Learning and Teaching: Progress Report

The paper provided an update on work to implement an overarching CPD Framework relating to learning and teaching. Key points discussed by Learning and Teaching Committee included:

- the value of a University-level target for participation – members agreed that a target would be beneficial on the basis that it provided clear evidence of the University's commitment to investing in teaching. It was recognised that any targets set should encourage participation by all staff, not just newer members of teaching staff. It was agreed that the Convener would raise the issue of an appropriate target at Principal's Strategy Group.
- workload issues – it was recognised that workload issues often discouraged participation in CPD. Workload allocation models more generally were being considered by People Committee. People Committee would be asked to include CPD for learning and teaching in its discussions, considering the time involved both in participating in the training and in acting as a mentor.
- School-specific developments – the Committee agreed that scaling up should be achieved through the development of more School-specific variants of the Edinburgh Teaching Award.
- Annual Review – members agreed that all annual review processes for teaching staff should include discussion about CPD.
- Data Capture – the difficulties associated with collecting data relating to qualifications held by teaching staff were noted, although the Committee also noted that IAD and HR were making progress in this respect. It was recognised that, if a target for participation in CPD was set, it would be essential to find ways of collecting accurate data.

Actions:
1. Convener to raise the issue of a University-level target for participation in CPD for learning and teaching with Principal's Strategy Group.
2. Convener to refer workload issues relating to CPD for learning and teaching to People Committee.

5.3 Academic Year 2016/17: Use of Week Between Teaching Blocks 3 and 4

Members discussed proposals produced by a sub-group of LTC concerning the use of the week between Teaching Blocks 3 and 4 in 2016/17. The Committee approved the proposals, and expressed strong support for the proposal that the week be used for reflection and consolidation. It was agreed that it may be more appropriate to offer credit-related than credit-bearing activity during the week.

The opportunity for the Review of the University's Academic Year Structure Task Group to consider the use of this week was noted. It was also agreed that an Innovation in Teaching and Learning sub-group of Learning and Teaching Policy Group (LTPG) would be established to consider the broader issues associated with teaching innovation.

Actions:
1. Review of the University's Academic Year Structure Task Group to consider use of week between Teaching Blocks 3 and 4 – Director of Academic Services
2. Sub-group of LTPG, 'Innovation in Teaching and Learning Task Group', to be established – Director of Academic Services

5.4 Assessment and Feedback: Update on Activities

LTC welcomed the paper and the progress that was being made in relation to assessment and feedback. It was noted that an event focussing on developing assessment and feedback would take place in February. Members were asked to direct substantive comments to the Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback.

Actions: Members to direct substantive comments about the paper to the Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback.

5.5 Strategic Direction for the Edinburgh Award and Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)

It was reported that a useful meeting with representatives of the Careers Service, IAD, EUSA, Student Systems, Academic Services and the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance had been held to discuss the strategic direction of the HEAR and its relationship with the Edinburgh Award. This meeting had proposed:

- that the HEAR be retained in its current form, recognising the value placed on it by students;
- that the merits of offering a HEAR to postgraduate research (PGR) students be considered;
- that the proposal form for adding new categories of achievement to Section 6.1 be reviewed;
- that consideration be given to new ways in which the Edinburgh Award might be promoted.

LTC approved these proposals. It agreed that Researcher Experience Committee should be asked to consider the merits of offering a HEAR to PGR students, taking into account the full practical implications of this. The distinctive position of the Edinburgh Award was recognised by the Committee, and there was a desire to raise its profile. It was agreed that the Award would be featured on the 'Teaching Matters' website in the coming months. The Employability Strategy would be brought to LTC for consideration in due course.

Actions:

1. REC to be asked to consider the merits of offering a HEAR to PGR students, taking into account the full practical implications of this – Director Careers Service / Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
2. Edinburgh Award to be featured on Teaching Matters website – Director Careers Service
3. HEAR proposal form to be amended - Secretary

5.6 University Student Recruitment Strategy: An Update

The paper invited discussion on the emerging content and structure of the University Student Recruitment Strategy, particularly in the area of portfolio development. Members welcomed the emerging Strategy, and proposed that it should:

- Integrate any new guidance on programme and course approval with that that already existed as a result of the Programme and Course Information Management project.
- take into account work being undertaken in the College of Humanities and Social Science through the Programme Pathways Project to avoid unhelpful duplication.
- Be more ambitious in relation to widening participation.

The Committee recognised that the University's use of market intelligence is currently not as effective as it could be. The need to provide more support and guidance for academics in the area of marketing was noted, and greater understanding of costing models was needed. Members were advised that the Distance Education Task Group had already done some useful work in the area of costing.

5.7 Open Educational Resources Policy

Members considered the draft Policy, noting that Schools, Departments and Services could choose whether or not to make resources open, but where there was a desire to share materials openly, the University would support this.

LTC approved the Policy, subject to some minor wording changes. The importance of ongoing monitoring to ensure that open resources were of an appropriate quality was recognised.

5.8 Lecture Capture at the University of Edinburgh

The Committee was advised that the University's existing system for capturing lectures and other events, 'capturED' was now unreliable and at the end of its life.

There was high student demand for University-wide lecture capture. Students at institutions where lecture capture was already being used routinely expressed high levels of satisfaction, and there was no evidence of reduced attendance at lectures. Instead, students were using recordings for revision purposes, and they were particularly appreciated by non-English speakers. The potential benefits of lecture capture for Peer Observation were recognised.

It was noted that the cost of introducing lecture capture would be high over several years given that there would be a requirement to equip rooms, upgrade the network and increase storage. As substantial estate developments were already underway, it was agreed that there would be benefit in introducing a lecture capture system at the current time. It was noted that the risk of not doing anything to improve provision was also high.

Members agreed that the possibility of introducing an enhanced system for lecture capture should be pursued provided the quality was sufficiently high. The Director of the Learning,

Teaching and Web Services Division would progress lecture capture through the Planning Round as a scoping exercise. The Committee was advised that some areas were already successfully using the Panopto lecture capture system, but scaling up Panopto across all three Colleges would require a procurement exercise. The Committee expressed its support for having a single, central system in place and was keen to avoid the proliferation of multiple, local solutions. It would be necessary to decide whether an opt in or opt out system would apply to lecture capture.

Learning and Teaching Committee agreed that an end date for capturED should be agreed upon and published. Learning and Teaching Policy Group (LTPG) would reflect further on lecture capture at its March meeting.

Actions:
1. Exploration of the potential for enhanced lecture capture to be progressed through the Planning Round as a scoping exercise – Director of the Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division
2. End date for capturED to be agreed and published – Director of the Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division
3. Lecture capture to be added to the agenda for the March meeting of LTPG – Director of Academic Services.

5.9 Student Experience Update

Members welcomed the paper, which set out a number of issues which directly or indirectly appeared to be affecting the student experience, together with good practice examples from various Schools. It was noted that a version of the paper would be taken to Academic Strategy Group in February. Dissemination of best practice was considered to be key to addressing issues relating to the student experience.

6. For Approval

6.1 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey 2016: Institutional Questions

The Committee considered the proposed PTES 2016 Institutional Questions. Some concerns were raised about the wording of some questions. The Student Survey Unit would be asked to address these, and the revised questions approved electronically.

Actions: Student Survey Unit to be asked to revise the PTES 2016 Institutional Questions. Revised questions to be circulated electronically for approval – LTC Secretary.

---

7. For Noting / Information

7.1 University Response to 'Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice – Consultation'

The paper provided the University's response to the UK Government consultation. It was noted that EUSA had submitted a separate response.

7.2 Enhancement Themes – Update

The Committee noted the update. 'Gearing up for Transitions 2016' would take place on 2 March 2016. Members were asked to promote the event within the constituencies they represented.

> **Actions:** All members to promote 'Gearing up for Transitions 2016' within their constituencies.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 16 March 2016 at 2.00pm in the Raeburn Room, Old College.

Philippa Ward
Academic Services

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee

16 March 2016

2015 New Student Survey Results

Executive Summary

This paper summarises key findings of the 2015 New Student Surveys pertaining to learning and teaching for on-campus Undergraduate and Post-Graduate Taught students. Headlines, related issues and recommendations are outlined for discussion.

Those wishing to gain a more detailed insight into the whole survey can view the full analysis, including individual School reports, on the following wiki page:

https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SEPROJ/Student+Feedback+2015

Please note: issues relating to recruitment and admissions matters, which are covered in the early questions within the survey, will be reported separately to the Recruitment and Admissions Strategy Group (RASG). PGR Student findings will be presented to The Researcher Experience Committee (REC) in April.

Context:

The New Student Survey was introduced in 2013 and covers many aspects of a new student's pre-arrival, on arrival and first weeks' experience. It is undertaken as a collaboration between Pre Arrival and Induction, EUSA, Communications and Marketing and the Student Surveys Unit.

Following the completion of the Student Experience Project in August 2015, Court approved embedding the Pre-arrival and Induction (PAI) team into Student Recruitment and Admissions (SRA), but with a significant reduction in resource allocation going forward. Whilst the PAI team is resourced to provide consultation services for Schools who wish to enhance their induction practices, any associated activity must be implemented by Schools other relevant services.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

This work is being developed to support the delivery of an **outstanding student experience**.

Action requested

The Committee is asked to endorse the recommendations from the 2015 Survey data as outlined below and to oversee their implementation.   It would be useful if LTC College representatives could take ownership of liaising with Schools to have oversight of actions taken and report back to the Committee in due course. If agreed we ask that this approach be approved by the Committee and repeated annually, following dissemination of future survey reports and recommendations.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

The PAI Team have communicated overall survey and School results directly with our key contacts within each School (January 2016). We now require the committee's input on how this data and endorsed recommendations and actions will be communicated and monitored.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**

   The paper outlines recommendations that could have limited resource implications. However, since the paper does not seek approval for specific proposals, it does not have any direct resource implications at the current time.

2. **Risk assessment**

   This work falls under the 'Education & Student Experience' heading of the University of Edinburgh Risk Policy and Risk Appetite.
   This paper suggests enhancements to current practice we do not foresee any negative impact upon students, staff or reputation of the University.

3. **Equality and Diversity**

   Key aspects of the work of Pre Arrival and Induction Team have already been Equality Impact Assessed. Since this paper makes recommendations for enhancements to current practice it is unlikely to have any major equality impacts.

4. **Freedom of information**

   This paper is **open**

Key words
New Students, Student Surveys, Student Data, Student Experience

Originator of the paper

Jenni Murray, Kristin Sargeant and Ian Sutherland.
The Student Induction Team, Student Recruitment and Admissions 01.03.16.

2015 New Student Surveys Results

1   Background

This paper focuses on headline data which relate to Learning and Teaching matters and makes recommendations we would like the Committee to discuss and action.

Those wishing to gain a more detailed insight into the whole survey (or wishing to see the at a glance graphics) can view the full analysis, including individual School reports, on the following wiki page:

https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SEPROJ/Student+Feedback+2015

The summary PowerPoints and the individual School reports, which were introduced this year, have been distributed to the Induction Team's key School and professional service colleagues. SRA's Pre-arrival and Induction team now asks the Committee to endorse the recommendations and oversee their implementation. Additionally, we seek the Committee's input regarding the future procedure for ensuring the survey's findings are acted upon.

2   Headline Results: Undergraduate

2.1   School Focused (UG)

1. **50%** of students want **more course related information pre arrival.**
   a. Additionally, student feedback indicates that students would like more of their School events programme included in the September Welcome App.
2. Around **a third** of students would have liked **more support pre arrival regarding outside/optional courses**.   Qualitative feedback shows that some students were confused about aspects of Path, DRPS and Learn and about the requirements and content of their programme and courses.
3. Overall UG students were satisfied with the number of events on offer during Welcome Week but **over one third** would have welcomed **more School based events**. There was a significant variation by School on the 'there were too few School events' option ranging from only 4.5% of Vet students to 60.5% in Economics.
4. **Over three quarters** of students had **met their Personal Tutor and fellow students** during Welcome Week. However, lower numbers reported meeting a broader range of staff and feeling part of their School community (as a result of activities/events within their School in September).
5. **40%** indicated that they **did not understand what is expected of them** as a University of Edinburgh student. Additionally, only **33%** indicated they were 'confident I can cope with the academic demands of my studies' (down from 35% in 2014).
6. Only around **1 in 5 students attended Library and IS welcome sessions** however those who did rated them highly. Currently there is a mix of open events which anyone can attend, drop-ins and some specific IS/Library activities organised by Schools in conjunction with IS/Library colleagues.

2.2   General (UG)

1. Students were most likely to report **feeling excited (58%) and confident generally** (**41%**) after starting University (when presented with a list of possible positive and negative emotions).
   a. Those with a University of Edinburgh Bursary were less likely to say they felt confident generally or were excited about living independently. They were more likely to say

they felt confused, worried about money and nervous. On a positive note, they were slightly more likely to say they did feel confident they could cope with the academic demands of their course. Further analysis to compare responses by type of school previously attended and contextualised flags on the student record are currently being conducted.

2. **UG satisfaction with Welcome Week was 90%** (30% very satisfied, 60% quite satisfied). UK students were more likely to be 'very satisfied' compared to International students.

3. When asked about both their experience of specific events and their overall satisfaction after attending September Welcome, **just over half of students reported knowing how to access support and feeling motivated to make their time at University outstanding**.   As was the case in 2014, **95% were satisfied with** their experience of University so far. There were some notably differences:
   a. UK students were more likely to be very satisfied compared to international (**47% vs 41%**)
   b. Students with a **disability were less likely to be very satisfied** (**34%**). They were also **less** likely to agree that they felt confident about transitioning into the university community (**35% vs 49%**).
   c. Students aged 17-19 more likely to be very satisfied (**47%**) compared to those aged 20-22 (**37%**)

4. **37% attended the University Welcome Ceremony** which scored low on various ratings (inspiring, useful, sociable, interesting etc.).
   Action:
   - Event Planners to consider the purpose and content of the Welcome Ceremony and implement changes for 2016.

3   Headline Results – Postgraduate Taught

3.1   School focussed (PGT)

1. **54%** of PGT Students would have liked **more course related information** before arriving.
   a. Again, a desire for all School level information relating to Welcome Week to be included in the Welcome App.
2. In response to the statement beginning 'As a result of attending welcome events and activities organised by my School':
   a. **61%** responded positively to 'I now **understand what is expected of me** as a student at the University'
   b. **51%** to 'I consider **myself a member of my School community'**
   c. Only **6%** stated that they did not attend any School based welcome events.
3. Students were generally satisfied with the number and type of events hosted during Welcome Week, although **30% would have welcomed more School activities**. This ranged from **0%** of Divinity students to **60%** of Biomedical Science Students (requesting more School based events).
4. Similarly to UG, only around **1 in 5 students attended Library and IS welcome sessions**, again, those who did rated them highly.

3.2   General (PGT)

1. Students were most likely to report **feeling excited (55%) and confident generally** (**41%**) after starting University. However only **1 in 3** indicated they were **'confident I can cope with the academic demands of my studies'**, a slight decrease from 2014 - possibly related to Part 3.1 Point 2a above (unclear expectations).
2. **Satisfaction with Welcome Week was 91%** (30% very satisfied, 61% quite satisfied). Again, UK students were more likely to be 'very satisfied' compared to International students.
3. As a result of attending September Welcome events (central, School based and EUSA), **52%** reported knowing how to access support and **46% feeling motivated to make their time at University outstanding.** Students with disabilities were **more** likely to agree that they felt confident about transitioning into the university community (opposite from UG).
4. **93% were satisfied with their experience of University so far**, with UK students more likely to be very satisfied compared to international (**49% vs 40%**)
5. **51% of PGT respondents attended the Welcome Ceremony** (compared to only 37% of UG). Responses were broadly similar to UG, with scope for significant enhancements.

4 Summary

Overall satisfaction with both Welcome Week and with the first few weeks of University are high and have remained consistently so in recent years. The data indicates however that there is still scope for further enhancements to the pre arrival and initial induction period for new UG and PGT students.

It is worth noting that some larger University-wide changes for Welcome Week may be reflected in work that Assistant Principal Liz Grant is leading about addressing a 'Culture of Compassion' during Welcome Week.

This report has focussed on aspects of the data which will be of most relevance to School colleagues, other actions will be addressed by the team, in consultation with colleagues in central services. There are sometimes quite significant variations in School level data, reflecting the different experiences of students across the University during Welcome Week. The recommendations below are based on the University average data and should therefore be reviewed on a School basis before further actions are taken/prioritised locally. We recommend that colleagues consider this report alongside individual School reports.

5 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to endorse the recommendations from the 2015 Survey data as outlined below and to oversee their implementation. It would be useful if L&TC College representatives could take ownership of liaising with Schools to have oversight of actions taken and report back to the Committee in due course. If agreed we ask that this approach be approved by the Committee and repeated annually, following dissemination of future survey reports and recommendations.

1. Schools should consider the implications of their School-level reports. It is evident from the data that students would benefit from:

a. Enhanced pre-arrival information including course options, specifics of meeting with personal tutors, use of resources to help: Path, DRPS etc.

b. Increased interactions with a broader range of staff in Schools (in addition to Personal Tutors). The enhancement of social activities and events within Schools during and beyond Welcome Week is often cited as a way for the University to enhance Welcome Week. This could help increase the proportion reporting that they feel part of their School community.

c. Schools focussing on expectations to ensure that new students are being helped to understand what is expected of them academically. This could also impact on confidence levels.

d. Schools collaborating with IS/Library to enable that higher numbers of new students benefit from IS/Library inductions. There could be more pre-arrival signposting to current IS videos through School communications and more School-based IS inductions during the first weeks.

2. Schools and Central Services should consult the [Student Induction Framework](#) when reviewing their current Welcome/induction provision as it outlines the importance of building a strong sense of community and social contacts within Schools.

3. The Student Disability Service may wish to consider whether to investigate the lower overall satisfaction and confidence reported by UG survey respondents with disabilities and the contrastingly higher ratings from PG respondents with disabilities.

Jenni Murray, Kristin Sargeant and Ian Sutherland, Student Induction Team, Student Recruitment and Admissions (SRA), 01.03.16

<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>

Senate Learning and Teaching Committee

16 March 2016

Learning and Teaching Communications – Teaching Matters Website

Executive Summary

The paper describes the purpose and structure of the Teaching Matters website and accompanying blog site. It sets out the aims and rationale for the site, progress to date, and plans for the short- and long-term future.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

Excellence in Education; Outstanding Student Experience

Action requested

For discussion

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Via newsletters, committees, mailing lists, bulletins, social media and emails to staff and students.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**

   The effectiveness of the website will be reviewed after 6 months and resource-related decisions taken at that point.

2. **Risk assessment**

   The paper does not include a risk assessment.

3. **Equality and Diversity**

   Not included in this paper.

4. **Freedom of information**

   The paper is **open**.

Authors

Amy Burge and Clare DeMowbray

Teaching Matters - promoting, discussing and celebrating teaching at the University of Edinburgh

Authors: Amy Burge and Clare DeMowbray

Introduction

This paper describes the purpose and structure of the Teaching Matters website and accompanying blog site. It sets out the aims and rationale for the site, progress to date, and plans for the short- and long-term future.

About Teaching Matters

Teaching Matters is the University of Edinburgh's new website for debate about learning and teaching, for sharing ideas and approaches to teaching, and for showcasing our successes, including academic colleagues who are leading the way in delivering brilliant teaching. The site was borne out of a desire, expressed by colleagues across the University, in our Colleges and Schools, in our professional services departments, and in the Edinburgh University Students Association, to give sharper focus to our unambiguous priority around learning and teaching.

The site aims to publically and overtly show how important teaching is to the University, and to create a community of interest around learning and teaching. The site encourages readers (both individual staff and Schools) to contribute news, events, and relevant blog posts and comments. Teaching Matters is intended to complement and enhance local communication and engagement around learning and teaching, acting as a University-wide hub for debate, celebration, and engagement with teaching.

In Detail

While Teaching Matters is an ongoing site, a new theme relating to learning and teaching is launched each month. The theme is explored through a video feature, articles, a 'Focus on a School', and a number of blog contributions over the month. We also feature news items, events, and links to resources. The first 5 themes are: February 2016 – 2015 highlights; March 2016 – Community engagement and experiential learning; April 2016 – Digital education; May 2016 – EUSA Teaching Awards; June 2016 – Assessment and feedback.

We have a growing number of blog posts and articles planned (see appendix A), however Teaching Matters is a flexible site and we would be keen to have suggestions and offers for addition themes, blogs and profiles (please contact Amy Burge amy.burge@ed.ac.uk).

Publicity, Engagement, Impact

Teaching Matters had a soft launch on 1 February and we will be increasing promotion from 1 March 2016 onwards, via newsletters, committees, mailing lists, bulletins, social media, and emails (to both staff and students).

Initial Google analytics data for the site indicate unique page views significantly above similar sections of the staff-facing website (see appendix B) with an increase since an increase in promotion. We will use the growing Teaching Matters content to support other communications and activities around learning and teaching (e.g. linking to relevant content in the lead up to the next academic promotion round).

We have created an asset that can be used within EdWeb ("Teaching Matters Include") to allow School to promote Teaching Matters directly on their own website and to reuse or repurpose content (articles, video, case studies and blogs). We will use information from Google Analytics on the main site and the blog site to monitor engagement. We can gather usage data from the "Teaching Matters Include" asset.

The future

The impact of Teaching Matters will be evaluated after 6 months when a decision will be made on its future beyond summer 2016.

Appendix: theme and blog content February-June 2016

Month 1 (February). **2015 Highlights**

- Welcome message (Charlie Jeffrey)
- Video featuring Susan Rhind (Vet School)
- Article – ELIR outcomes (Tina Harrison)
- Blog posts on: Fair's Fair: Embedding Equality and Diversity into the Curriculum (Imogen Wilson, EUSA VPAA); Promoting Teaching: The Exemplars of Excellence in Student Education (Martyn Peggie); Grade Point Averages: What's all the Fuss About? (Antony Maciocia); It's Time to Focus on Teaching-Research Synergies (Elizabeth Bomberg); Massive reach for online learning (Amy Woodgate)
- Focus on a School (Vet School)

Month 2 (March). **Community engagement and experiential learning**

- Welcome message (Lesley McAra)
- Video featuring Richard Milne (Biology)
- Student-created video (made during ILW)
- Article – SLICCs (Jonny Ross-Tatam, EUSA President)
- Article – Student selected components in Medicine (Simon Riley)
- Blog posts on: All4Paws: Vet students at work in the community (Andrew Gardiner); Singing Along: Music in the Community (Dee Isaacs); Hacking into Experiential Learning: Smart Data Hack (Ewan Klein); Free Legal Advice Clinic (Rebecca McKenzie); Community engagement in Geosciences (Isla Simmons)
- Focus on a school (Biology)

Month 3 (April). **Digital Education**

- Video featuring Sian Bayne
- Blogs and articles on: Open Educational Resources; Transforming Impact of Digital Education; Innovators Showcase; Wikimedian in Residence (and more).
- Focus on a School: Chemistry / Divinity / Education

Month 4 (May). **EUSA Teaching Awards**

- Video created at EUSA Teaching Awards
- Video featuring Graeme Laurie (Law)
- Articles and blogs: profiles and interview with EUSA Teaching Award winners and nominees (and more)
- Focus on a School: Law

Month 5 (June). **Assessment and Feedback**

- Video TBC
- Articles and blogs: SES Assessment and Progression project and EvaSys (Barry Neilson); LEAF (Kirsty Hughes) (and more)
- Focus on a School: HCA

Appendix B: Google Analytics data for Teaching Matters (period 1 February-7 March 2016)

Teaching Matters main site:

February 2016
Page views   3,286
Unique views   2,039

Up to and including 7 March 2016
Page views   1,888
Unique views   1,324

As a comparison in February one of the other staff subsections: http://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/teaching-staff
Page views   735
Unique views   586

Or: http://www.ed.ac.uk/students/academic-life
Page views   10,594
Unique views   8,818

For the blog:

February 2016
Page views   1,067
Unique views   734

Up to and including 7 March 2016
Page views   635
Unique views   467

<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>

Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee

16 March 2016

Student Systems Roadmap

<u>Executive Summary</u>

This paper provides LTC with an overview of the high level priorities which will be used to establish the detailed priorities in the Student Systems Roadmap 2016-19. This paper does not provide a review of the effectiveness of the 2013-16 Student Systems Roadmap.

<u>How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?</u>

This work is being developed to support the delivery of an outstanding student experience. .

<u>Action requested</u>

*The committee is asked to **comment** on the paper.*

<u>How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?</u>

The roadmap will be re-drafted and communicated internally to reflect the priorities for 2016-19, the Student Systems Board will maintain oversight of the medium term priorities and programme of projects will fall under existing programme management arrangements.

<u>Resource / Risk / Compliance</u>

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**

   For the purposes of the development of the roadmap, an assumption has been made that the core resource allocation from both USG and ISG to Student System (in terms of business analysts, testers and developers) will remain stable. It is understood that business cases will need to be developed for any areas of additional investment – such as CRM for student recruitment & admissions.

2. **Risk assessment**

   The roadmap may fit best under the 'compliance' heading of the University Risk Policy and Risk Appetite but with some of the development work and strands of the roadmap closer aligned to 'Education & Student Experience'.

3. **Equality and Diversity**

   Not appropriate at the programme level but there may be particular strands or projects which require EIA.

LTC 15/16 4 D

4. Freedom of information

Paper is open.

<u>Key words</u>

Student Systems, Roadmap, EUCLID

<u>Originator of the paper</u>

Barry Neilson

Director of Student Systems

16 March 2016

LEARNING & TEACHING COMMITTEE

16 March 2016

Student Systems Roadmap Priorities: 2016-19

Description of paper

1. This paper provides LTC with an overview of the high level priorities which will be used to establish the detailed priorities in the Student Systems Roadmap 2016-19. This paper does not provide a review of the effectiveness of the 2013-16 Student Systems Roadmap.

Action requested

2. LTC is asked to **comment** on the paper.

Background and context

3. Student Systems add value to the student experience, learning & teaching and operational effectiveness through the development of student & academic processes, digital services, the use of data, partnership working and the support that is provided to applicants, students and staff.

4. The Student Systems Roadmap 2013-16 (https://www.projects.ed.ac.uk/webfm_send/2566), published in October 2013, set out the strategic development of the department and the systems, processes and data it has responsibility for. Initial project priorities have been established for the 16/17 academic year through the Student Systems Board.

5. Established in December 2013, Student Systems operates as a partnership between the University's Secretary Group (USG) and Information Services Group (ISG). Student Systems provides institutional leadership and direction for the support and development of key student systems including EUCLID, Personal Tutor Tools, Postgraduate Progression Management Database (PPMD), Path (course and programme information), SMART (assessment & exam board tool) and other related systems.

6. Tribal is the external supplier of the SITS system which has been customised internally from its' adoption at the University where there has been a case to do so. We signed an extension to our contract with Tribal in 2014 which takes us through to the end of 2018.

7. In addition, Student Systems supports the administration of the student journey and record, including registration, programme and personal detail changes and oversight of final course and award results. The department has

responsibility for supporting the use of student data and responsibility for some major statutory returns including HESA Student & Offshore return and the Key Information Set (KIS). The Student Survey Unit joined the department on 1 August 2015.

8. Student Systems provides systems and support to five main groups of stakeholders: applicants, students, administrative staff, academic staff and those who use data from the systems.

9. The work of the department supports key strategic priorities and initiatives and the operational priorities of the users of the systems. The aim is to ensure support and continuous improvement of our processes and live support receives the same attention and focus as new developments and enhancements.

High Level Priorities

10. The high level priority areas are outlined in appendix 1 of the paper, with the table below providing a high level summary.

---

1. CRM to support student recruitment & admissions phase of student lifecycle.

2. Enhanced use of student data to support learning & teaching, student experience and operational effectiveness.

3. Enhanced student digital experience.

4. Student & academic administration – faster delivery to support efficiency and effectiveness in Schools.

5. Scan external environment for alternative suppliers in medium term (2 years)

---

11. Following the discussion at the Board, Gavin McLachlan, commissioned a short term piece of work which will help us visualise the current and possible Student Digital Experience. This project will report in early April 2016 and will feed directly into the development of the 'student digital experience' strand of the roadmap.

12. The Board also recognised the need to build in a more effective approach to benefits realisation following the implementation of projects and will work with other initiatives internally to deliver this.

Partnership working

13. The partnership developed and implemented in December 2012 between the IS Applications division and USG has been a critical success factor in the ability of the Student Systems to enhance the services provided to the University.

14. A key assumption made is that this partnership will continue in its current guise for the next period of the roadmap. In addition a number of strands of the roadmap will lead to the need for closer partnership working (not necessarily in the same format) with colleagues in other 'student facing' services in USG and Schools, the Learning, Teaching & Web Services division within ISG and the wider data community internally.

Business Change

15. The emergence of the Service Excellence Programme within the University and the likely prioritisation of the student lifecycle within this programme will have an impact on the priorities of Student Systems. The Director of Student Systems is working closely with the Service Excellence Programme as it emerges and will be well placed to link this work before it is formalised.

16. The development of the Student Systems roadmap should of course align with the information presented through the Digital Transformation 10 year plan. The work of student systems will link with broader ISG work on analytics, CRM and cross cutting services (document management, architecture, identity management and information security).

17. In addition the emerging principles on digital first service and process design, while not significantly different from what the service aspires to deliver, will provide an opportunity for some leadership and staff development.

Resource Implications

18. For the purposes of the development of the roadmap, an assumption has been made that the core resource allocation from both USG and ISG to Student System (in terms of business analysts, testers and developers) will remain stable.

19. It is understood that business cases will need to be developed for any areas of additional investment – such as CRM for student recruitment & admissions.

Risk Management

20. The roadmap may fit best under the 'compliance' heading of the University Risk Policy and Risk Appetite but with some of the development work and strands of the roadmap closer aligned to 'Education & Student Experience'.

Equality & Diversity

21. Not appropriate at the programme level but there may be particular strands or projects which require EIA.

Next steps

22. Following feedback from KSC (on 11 March 2016) and LTC, the roadmap will be re-drafted and communicated internally to reflect the priorities for 2016-19, the Student Systems Board will maintain oversight of the medium term priorities and programme of projects will fall under existing programme management arrangements.

Further Information

23. Please contact Barry Neilson, Director of Student Systems (barry.neilson@ed.ac.uk)

<u>Author & Presenter</u>
Barry Neilson
Director of Student Systems
16 March 2016

Freedom of Information

Open.

LTC 15/16 4 D

Student Systems Roadmap 2016-19

High Level Priority Areas

Key Area	Summary
Student Digital Experience	Digital first student lifecycle journey from enquiry through to graduation. Flip the perspective and develop the digital student experience from the student rather than 'system/functional' perspective through delivery of more effective processes and user experience. Open up the student record and appropriate data and analytics to student to support learning and teaching and the student experience. Opportunity to take some risks with student innovation in this area.
Academic & Student Support	Evolution of the processes, systems and data that support and enhance colleagues ability to provide support and advice to students – focussed primarily on Personal Tutors, Student Support Officers, Teaching Administration Office and Course and Programme leaders. Relationship focussed, helping colleagues understand student on an individual level with up to date information, delivering of appropriate data and analytics to colleagues with prompts to support key actions and support.
Assessment	Deliver the established vision for support for assessment administration including: course selection process that clearly visualises assessment schedules; clear communication with students through our systems; closer links between the VLE and the Student Record with simple workflows supporting the end-to-end assessment process; robust effective and efficient administrative processes and systems.
Student recruitment & admissions	Priority the delivery of CRM support for enquiries and application processes to support student recruitment and conversion activity. Provide system and processes which enable the consistent provision of accurate course and programme information externally (and internally). Continue to enhance the use of the applicant and student data to support student recruitment strategy. Deliver a digital first applicant journey.
Corse management and administration	Support the evolving business models within the University and reduce the time lag in doing so – for example increasing study away, collaboration activity, growth in ODL, international partnerships and MOOCS. Continue to shift the focus of the systems to focus on School administration rather than central requirements – ask Schools for data once and closer integration between systems supporting student & academic administration. Continue to meet our external compliance requirements, minimising resource spent while still meeting needs.

LTC 15/16 4 D

Key Area	Summary
Use of Student Data	Improve the use of 'student data' to help Schools enhance the student experience, learning & teaching and operational effectiveness with equal consideration to the content as well as the way the content is presented. Support and lead where appropriate on the emerging learning & teaching analytics work within the University. Increasing focus on data security, accessibility and understanding of data of primary value to the University. Close engagement with wider data architecture work and data community in the University as we seek to work across service boundaries.
Technology	Reduce our technical debt, monitor the market and think about opportunities for change in our platform. Increasing focus on student-centric delivery, mobile and social-enhanced solutions for students and staff, real time analysis of data to support students and staff, student systems role in the interoperability across the education ecosystem, and implementation quicker, less disruptive and less expensive ultimately.
Leadership & Service Delivery	Challenge the scope of the roadmap and work with colleagues to flip perspective from 'system owners' to deliver services from student, applicant and staff perspective. Alignment of plans, scope of work, roles and responsibilities to ensure effective use of resources and capabilities. Lead on and support the delivery of process reviews both system and non-system to enhance operational effectiveness and efficiency in student & academic administrative areas. Focus on provision of excellence service to user base through training, support, continuous improvement, projects, user interface and change initiatives.

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Learning and Teaching Committee

16 March 2016

Interim Report of Task Group to Review the Academic Year Structure

Executive Summary

At its meeting on 27 January 2016, LTC agreed to establish a task group to review the University's academic year structure.

This paper updates the Committee on the Task Group's activities to date, its initial conclusions and its plans for broader consultation. It seeks the Committee's views on the task group's emerging thinking.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

Excellence in Teaching, Outstanding Student Experience.

Action requested

For discussion

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

The Task Group is responsible for coordinating communication and (if a change to the academic year structure is agreed) implementation activities.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**

The Task Group is in the process of identifying and taking account of resource implications relating to different models for the academic year structure.

2. **Risk assessment**

The Task Group is in the process of assessing risks associated with different models for the academic year structure

3. **Equality and Diversity**

1

The Task Group will reflect on the equality and diversity implications of any proposals for changing the University's academic year structure. Any changes would be subject to a formal Equality Impact Assessment.

4. Freedom of information

Open

Key words

Originator of the paper

Tom Ward
Director of Academic Services
5 March 2016

LTC 15/16 4 E

Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)
Meeting 16 March 2016

Interim Report Task Group to Review the Academic Year Structure

This paper updates the Committee on the Task Group's activities to date, its initial conclusions and its plans for broader consultation.

1   Remit and Membership

The Group's purpose is to consider whether a different academic year structure would enhance the student and staff experience. Any changes recommended by the Group would not come into effect into 2018-19 at the earliest.

The Group's remit and membership is attached as Annex A. Since the Group's second meeting, the membership has expanded to include representation from Estates and Buildings, and a representative of the recognised trade unions.

2   Operation of group

The group has met twice to date: 1 February 2016; and 29 February 2016. It has three further meetings scheduled, for Tuesday 22 March 2016; Monday 25 April 2016; and Friday 13 May 2016.

3   Issues regarding the University's current academic year structure

The Group recognises that the asymmetrical nature of the current structure has the following downsides:

- Students can find Semester One tiring since it is intensive and offers no opportunity to rest and consolidate their learning. Similarly staff can also find Semester One tiring.

- The relatively compressed nature of Semester One and the short period of time between the end of teaching and the start of the examination diet in Semester One may be contributing to the bunching of assessments. Some Schools are also reluctant to set Semester One exams for Semester One courses (especially at Honours level) given the lack of time for consolidation and revision.

- Students have less time to receive and take account of feedback on Semester One coursework assessments, or to consolidate their learning and revise in the period between the end of teaching and the start of the examination diet than in Semester Two (normally one week in Semester One, compared to three weeks in Semester Two). This issue is particularly acute in 2015-16 and 2016-17 due to the way the calendar falls (resulting in only three working days for revision

between the end of teaching and the start of the examination diet in Semester One).

- The examination diet is shorter in Semester One than Semester Two (12 days of examinations, compared to c. 20 days in Semester Two). As a result, in Semester One students typically have less of a gap between examinations and more chance of having two examinations on the same day (although in practice this affects only a small proportion of students).

- The compressed Semester One examination diet creates significant pressures on available space for examinations, particularly when key large venues are unavailable due to estates development work.

3   Principles and evaluation criteria

The Group has agreed a set of Principles that academic year structures should align with, and a set of evaluation criteria against which to evaluate options. These are set out in Annex B and C. The group's thinking on one aspect of these principles (the number of teaching weeks per semester) is still tentative (see section 4 below).

4   Emerging ideas regarding the length and structure of each Semester

At present, the University's current structure is:

- Semester One: 11 timetabled teaching weeks
- Semester Two: 5 timetabled teaching weeks + Innovative Learning Week (which offers a different type of teaching week) + 6 timetabled teaching weeks (total 12 teaching weeks)
- Total: 23 teaching weeks

The Task Group supports the idea of each Semester having a week of structured consolidation and revision. One option would be to add such a week to the current 11 teaching weeks in Semester One, and to replace Innovative Learning Week with such a week in Semester Two. That option (in which each Semester would have a 5 + 1 + 6 model) would lead to a total of 24 weeks of teaching.

At its most recent meeting, the Task Group tentatively supported a variant semester structure in which each semester would have 5 teaching weeks + 1 week of structured consolidation and revision + 5 teaching weeks. This would mean a total of 22 teaching weeks, of which 20 weeks (compared to the current 22) would involve timetabled input (ie lectures / seminars / tutorials / laboratory sessions) and a further two weeks would consist of structured consolidation / revision activities. In order to ensure that students continue to have the contact time with academic staff that they value, the week in the middle of each semester would not be a traditional 'reading week'. Instead, all courses would be required to run structured consolidation and revision activities (for example workshops, revision sessions).

It would be important to have further academic input regarding the implications of this model for curriculum design, content and pedagogy. In addition, the University would need to consider whether there are any implications for teaching contact time as reported via Key Information Sets / Unistats.

5   Benchmarking

The review is taking account of benchmarking of the models operating at other institutions in the UK, with a particular reference to Scottish Higher Education institutions and Russell Group institutions. This benchmarking is involving discussions with institutions, and desk-based research.

The initial findings based on the institutions reviewed to date are:

- Start dates
  - o In Scotland, the majority of higher education institutions start the academic year slightly earlier than Edinburgh, although a sizable minority (for example, the University of Glasgow) start at the same time as Edinburgh.
  - o In contrast, the typical Russell Group institution starts the academic year a week or more later than Edinburgh.

- Arrangements for examining semester one courses
  - o In Scotland, the vast majority of higher education institutions examine in December prior to the Christmas break. Indeed, there appears to be a trend for the minority of institutions (currently three) examining in January to be moving towards examining in December. Only two institutions are planning to examine to be moving away from examining in January.
  - o In contrast, the most common arrangement for Russell Group institutions to examine Semester One courses in January.

- Graduation dates
  - o In Scotland, graduations are typically held between the latter part of June and early July. The University's typical graduation dates are therefore in line with the Scottish norm.
  - o In contrast, in the Russell Group, graduation dates tend to be several weeks later (typically in mid-July).
  - o In this context, it is notable that in Scotland, school summer holidays typically start at the beginning of July, whereas in England they typically start in mid-July.

- The most common arrangement is to have 22-24 teaching weeks across the year. The University's current position (23 weeks, including Innovative Learning Week) is therefore fairly typical.

6   Options

5

The group has considered a range of alternatives to the current structure:

1. ***The 'Start Early' model***:
   o Hold the Semester One Welcome Week a week earlier than at present;
   o Start Semester One a week earlier than at present;
   o An additional week for structured revision and consolidation during Semester One (a variant on this model would be to use the additional week for addition revision time instead);
   o The University would continue to examine Semester One courses in December, and there would be no change to the current structures for Semester Two.

2. ***The 'Examine After Christmas' model***:

   o Semester One courses would be examined in mid- January, following a revision week;
   o Moving examinations from December would free up time in Semester One to allow the University to start Welcome Week and Semester One teaching a week later than at present, and to introduce an additional week for structured revision and consolidation in Semester One;
   o Semester Two would begin one week after the end of the examination diet, meaning that Semester Two would finish later than at present;
   o One or both of the current two weeks of Spring vacation would be replaced with teaching weeks;
   o The Semester Two examination diet would be similar to the current arrangement;
   o Graduations would take place in late June / early July as at present.

3. ***The 'Three term' model***
   o Typically, under this model, the first term runs from September to December, the second term from January to March, and, following a break in March / April, the third runs from April to June;
   o Under this model, the third term tends to include few if any teaching weeks, with the remainder of the term given over to revision and examinations.

4. ***The 'Accelerated' model***:
   o Three terms / trimesters running over the full year from September to August;
   o Students would have the potential to complete the equivalent of a full four-year honours degree within three years.

7   Options considered and ruled out

Following initial analysis and discussion, the Group has rejected three of the possible options for the following reasons:

1. ***The 'Start-early model'*** – This model offers some significant benefits for the student and staff experience, although not as many as the Examinations After Christmas model. However, this model also has a significant academic down-side - it would lead to more students starting the academic year late (eg due to delays in obtaining a student visa), which would disrupt the transition of those students as well as the experience of the cohort as a whole. The model would also put the University at a competitive disadvantage in terms of student recruitment (particularly for overseas students). In addition, logistical factors associated with the Edinburgh Festival would make it very challenging and expensive, if not impossible, to have the student accommodation and teaching spaces in place and properly equipped for the start of the academic session without the University and EUSA having to change their relationship to the Festival.

3. ***The 'Three term' model*** – While some Russell Group institutions have this model, the Group felt that the introduction would be too disruptive since it would require Schools to fundamentally restructure their curricula.

4. ***The 'Accelerated' model*** – While recognising that some institutions (predominantly post-1992 institutions) are introducing this model, particular for certain professional programmes (eg Law), the Group identified very few benefits and significant disadvantages to this model in terms of student or staff experience, and did not think there is likely to be substantial demand for this model from prospective University of Edinburgh students.

8   For further exploration – the 'Examinations After Christmas' model

The Group notes that the 'Examinations After Christmas' model is common among Russell Group institutions and considers that it would offers a range of potential benefits to students and staff Edinburgh, as well as recruitment and other institutional benefits. For example, it would lead to much greater balance between the two Semesters, and would reduce the pressure on both students and staff during Semester One by creating the space for a week of structured revision and consolidation part-way through the semester, and by allowing a reasonable period for revision.

The Group also recognises that the model would have significant practical implications for staff and students, and would raise some logistical and resourcing issues for the University. For example, the implication of starting Semester Two late is that teaching weeks would need to replace some or all of the Spring Break, leaving students less time for students to revise for Semester Two examinations and potentially reducing the scope for staff to take annual leave at that time of year.

However, it may be possible to retain part of the Spring Break and / or add additional revision time if the University adopted the '5 + 1 + 5' model that the Group has

tentatively discussed (see Section 4), or if the University were able to contract the period between the start of examinations and graduations (see below).

The Group is currently undertaking further analysis regarding some aspects of this model:

- Whether it would be possible to shorten the Semester Two examination diet or the subsequent period for marking and boards of examinations, in order to create more time for revision in Semester Two;
- The implications of the model for the assessment of Semester One Visiting Students; and
- The implications for the work pattern of professional teaching support staff in Schools.

9   Consultation

The Group plans to consult with students and staff, including the trade unions, on the 'Examinations After Christmas' model in April 2016. It is in the process of developing a consultation / communication plan, for discussion at its 22 March 2016.

10   Timescales

When LTC established the task group, it asked it to submit a final report with recommendations for its 25 May 2016 meeting, with a view to, if possible, seeking Senate and if appropriate Court approval in summer 2016 (meaning the Senate meeting on 1 June 2016 and the Court meeting on 20 June 2016). The Committee had noted that those timescales were extremely challenging, and the Task Group has recognised that it is more likely that it will submit its final report for LTC to consider at its 21 September 2016 meeting, followed by Senate's meeting on 28 September 2016 and (if appropriate) Court's meeting on 26 September 2016. These amended timescales would still allow the University to amend the academic year structure with effect from 2018-19.

11   Other observations

At present, c. 12% of Semester One courses are examined during the Semester Two examination diet. EUSA, Senate Curriculum and Student Progress Committee, and the College of Science and Engineering, support the idea of increasing the proportion of S1 courses examined in S1. The Task Group had initially thought that it would be challenging to move many examinations from the S2 to S1 examination diet without increasing the length of the diet given the timetabling and space pressures that the S1 examination diet already faces. However, further analysis has confirmed that the current length of the S1 examination diet could accommodate all S1 examinations currently held in the S2 diet.

LTC 15/16 4 E

Annex A - Remit and Membership of the Task Group to Review the Academic Year Structure

Remit

The remit of the Task Group is to:

- Evaluate options for changing the academic year taking account of the implications for the student and staff experience, as well as other practical and resourcing implications;
- Manage consultation and communication activities regarding the review; and
- Make recommendations to Senate Learning and Teaching Committee, which would then make recommendations to Senate and other relevant bodies, and consult Principal's Strategy Group and other bodies as appropriate.

Composition and Membership

- Deputy Secretary (Student Experience) (Convener) – Gavin Douglas
- One Assistant Principal – AP (Academic Support), Prof Alan Murray
- One Dean and one senior administrator from each College:
  - Lesley Yellowlees (Head of CSE) / Graeme Reid (Dean of Learning and Teaching, CSE)
  - Joy Candlish (Head of Academic Affairs, CSE)
  - Richard Sparks, (Head of School, Law)
  - Catherine Martin (Registrar, CHSS)
  - Sheila Lodge (Head of Academic Administration, MVM)
  - Other MVM representative TBC
- EUSA representative
  - Imogen Wilson (Vice-President, Academic Affairs)
  - Sarah Purves
- Representative of Student Recruitment & Admissions – Ian Sutherland (Head of Admissions)
- Representative of Information Services – Bryan McGregor (Director of User Services Division)
- Director of Human Resources or delegate – Linda Criggie (Deputy Director, HR)
- Director of Student Administration or delegate – Robert Lawrie (Director of Student Administration)
- Director of Academic Services or delegate – Tom Ward (Director of Academic Services)
- Corporate Services Group representative – Richard Kington (Director of Accommodation Services)
- Estates and Buildings representative – Gary Jedd (Director of Estates and Buildings)
- Joint trade unions representative – Janet Philp

Annex B - Principles underpinning the Review of the Academic Year Structure

The Task Group has identified a number of principles that it will use as one of the criteria for measuring the effectiveness of model academic year structures.

1. Each semester should have:
   (a) No less than 11 weeks of teaching;
   (b) Including a week of structured revision and consolidation*

2. There should be at least a week break at the end of the Semester 1 examinations before teaching begins

3. Both semesters should be balanced in terms of teaching weeks and time for revision prior to exams

4. There should be sufficient time in the Semester 1 examination diet to examine all Semester 1 courses

5. There should be a minimum of one's week revision between the end of teaching and start of examinations

6. All taught programmes and all levels of study will operate to the same academic year unless a programme has a valid reason for an opt-out (Valid reasons would relate to external factors, such as professional practice requirements, which require programmes to operate on an alternate academic year).

* While the Group has tentatively suggested a total of 11 weeks of teaching per week including a week of structured revision and consolidation (rather than 11 + 1 weeks), further discussion, particularly with academic members of the task group, is required. See Section 4 above.

Annex C - Criteria to use for evaluation of models

- Pedagogical and student experience considerations

- Meeting the principles underpinning the review of the academic year

- Staff experience

- Student experience for Visiting Students

- Alignment with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

- Operational academic considerations, including sufficient time allowed for marking and examining and graduations

- Simplicity and consistency – minimising the number of programmes that require opt-outs from the standard academic year structure

- Impact on availability of space for teaching and examinations

- Access to University facilities and services

- Financial impact on students

- Financial impact on the University

- Impact on the University's and EUSA's involvement with the Edinburgh Festival

- Legal implications

- Admissions issues

- System issues

- Implications for Study Abroad arrangements

- Impact on collaborative programmes with other institutions

- Change management issues

- Equality and Diversity

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Learning and Teaching Committee

16 March 2016

Grade Point Averages – Update on Sector Developments

Executive Summary

The paper provides an update regarding sector discussions regarding the adoption of Grade Point Averages (GPA), in the context of the UK Government's Green Paper 'Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice', and the 2015 Higher Education Academic report on GPA. Given that the prevailing mood among the University's comparator institutions remains one of watching and waiting, the paper proposes that the University pauses its planned 'on demand' adoption of GPA until the position in the sector is clearer.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

Excellence in Teaching, Outstanding Student Experience.

Action requested

To agree to a pause in the development of an 'on demand' approach to GPA.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

N/A

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**

   The paper highlights the implications for the planning of Student Systems development work.

2. **Risk assessment**

   The proposed approach would assist the University to manage risks associated with the development of GPA.

3. **Equality and Diversity**

   N/A

LTC 15/16 4 F

4. Freedom of information

Open

Key words

Originator of the paper

Tom Ward
Director of Academic Services

3 March 2016

Grade Point Averages – Update on Sector Developments

At its meeting on 18 November 2015, the Committee agreed to adopt GPA on a minimalist 'on demand' basis.

Student Systems planned to undertake the necessary system development work by May 2016, in time for students exiting in June / July 2016.

External factors

In deciding on this way forward in November 2015 the Committee had noted two external drivers for adoption of GPA:

- In 2015 the Higher Education Academy had launched a report recommending that all UK higher education institutions should adopt GPA (using a single scale)

- The UK Government Green Paper 'Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice', which stated that the UK Government would be encouraging institutions to adopt GPA and that it proposes that the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) panel ask institutions to state whether they have adopted GPA and that it would take this into account when making assessments.

The paper presented to the Committee in November 2015 had noted that at that stage anecdotal evidence suggested that few if any of the University's comparator institutions have decided to adopt GPA following the publication of the HEA report, but that it was very likely that, over the current session, there would be further discussion across the sector regarding the issue, given that the recent Green Paper.

Update on sector developments.

The University has continued to monitor discussion in the sector. Perhaps surprisingly, there is still no sign of institutions moving towards adopting GPA (where they are not among the minority that already operate it). Instead, the prevailing mood among the University's comparator institutions remains one of watching and waiting, with some institutions expressing significant reservations regarding the idea of adopting GPA.

Proposed pause on development work

Given the continued uncertainty in the sector, and that during the new few months the UK Government is likely to signal its way forward regarding TEF (including engaging in a technical consultation), the Committee is invited to agree to a pause in the University's adoption of the 'on demand' model of GP. This modest delay in implementation would enable the University to ensure that its approach to GPA is compatible with the technical requirements for a TEF and is aligned with other institutions' developments.

If Student Systems pauses the work at this stage, it anticipates that it would be able to reschedule it for October 2016.

LTC 15/16 4 G

The University of Edinburgh
Learning and Teaching Committee
16 March 2016

Feedback on Assessment:
Turnaround Times

Executive Summary
This paper invites the Committee to discuss Schools' reported turnaround times for providing feedback on assessment in Semester One, 2015-16.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
Improving feedback on assessment will contribute to the University's strategic goal of excellence in education.

Action requested
For discussion.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
Not applicable – since the paper is not asking the Committee to take any decisions at this stage there is no need for implementation and communication.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   There are significant resource implications associated with providing students with feedback on assessment, and monitoring the promptness of feedback. However, since the paper is not asking the Committee to take any decisions at this stage, the paper does not have any direct resource implications.

2. **Risk assessment**
   Not applicable – since the paper is not asking the Committee to take any decisions at this stage.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   Not applicable – since the paper is not asking the Committee to take any decisions at this stage

4. **Freedom of information**
   This paper is **open**

Originator of the paper
Tom Ward & Brian Connolly, Academic Services

Feedback on Assessment:
Turnaround Times

1   This paper invites the Committee to discuss Schools' reported turnaround times for providing feedback on assessment in Semester One, 2015-16.

Monitoring turnaround times for providing feedback on assessment

2   In June 2015 Senate agreed the following Taught Assessment Regulation for 2015/16 regarding feedback arrangements for UG and PGT courses:

Taught Assessment Regulation 15 - Feedback deadlines

> Feedback on formative and summative in-course assessed work will be provided within 15 working days of submission, or in time to be of use in subsequent assessments within the course, whichever is sooner. At the start of the academic year, Schools will publish their timetable for returning feedback.

3   At its 1 October 2014 meeting, Senate discussed regarding the outcomes of the 2014 National Student Survey, emphasising that:

- Schools must collect data on meeting deadlines for providing feedback on assessment and verify the quality of the feedback provided to students.
- This data needed to be communicated to students and to be used internally to plan future actions.
- Interventions must take place where the data is not satisfactory.

4   Learning and Teaching Committee has responsibility for overseeing the arrangements for collecting data on feedback turnarounds. To this end, the Committee received and noted a report (at the meeting held on 28 September 2015) on turnaround times for providing feedback on assessment in Semester Two, 2014-15.

Feedback turnaround times for Semester One, 2015-16

5   The Assistant Principal (Assessment and Feedback) has asked Schools to take the same approach as applied in 2014-15 to calculating the overall School-level percentage of feedback provided on time, when reporting on Semester One:

- Calculate the proportion of assessments for which feedback was provided on time rather than (for example), the proportion of courses for which all feedback was provided on time.

- Do not discount from these figures delays due to particular factors (for example, staff sickness absence).
- When aggregating data up at School level, present data on Pre-Honours, Honours, and PGT separately.

Schools were asked to provide a single percentage summarising the position for summative assessment for each of Pre-Honours, Honours and PGT. In addition, where it was practical and proportionate to do so, Schools were also asked to provide this data for formative assessment.

6   Annex A summarises Schools' reported turnaround times for Semester One, 2015-16 along with the equivalent data submitted for Semester Two, 2014-15.

7   The main points regarding the data are:

- The guidance asked that Schools provide data for all summative assessment, but only for formative assessments where it is practicable and proportionate to do so. Only a minority of Schools have provided data on turnaround times for formative feedback.
- While the data is indicative of Schools' performance, it is not possible to make robust comparisons between Schools' performances due to limitations of the data. At present, Schools are using a variety of different VLEs, databases and local spreadsheets to collect and analyse this data.
- Student Systems and Information Services have undertaken a system needs analysis, and are now considering possible solutions that may assist Schools to collect this data over the longer term. In addition, the University recently decided to move towards online submission of assessment and provision of feedback. In due course, this should assist would greatly facilitate the collection and use of the data and reduce the need to manually create and record it.

8   Senate Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (at the meeting due to be held on 19 April 2016) will discuss the Taught Assessment Regulations that will apply in 2016-17. This will provide the Curriculum and Student Progression Committee with an opportunity to fine-tune the Taught Assessment Regulations to address the uncertainty that some Schools have reported regarding the feedback process.

9   The Committee is invited to discuss the reported turnaround times for Semester One, 2015-16.

LTC 15/16 4 G

Annex A – Summary of data from Schools regarding turnaround times for providing feedback on assessment in Semester One, 2015/16

Note – While the data is indicative of Schools' performance, it is not possible to make robust comparisons between Schools' performances due to limitations of the data. However, data from the last report, covering turnaround times from Semester Two of the 2014/15 academic year, has been included (highlighted columns) to allow comparisons to be made regarding each individual School's ongoing performance.

School	Level	Semester 1 2015-16 - proportion of summative feedback provided in agreed timescales (%)	Semester 1 2015-16 - proportion of formative feedback provided in agreed timescales (%)	Semester 2 2014-15 - proportion of summative feedback provided in agreed timescales (%)	Semester 2 2014-15 - proportion of formative feedback provided in agreed timescales (%)
Business	UG – Pre-Honours	93.8%	Business treat all feedback the same so totals are combined for formative and summative.	90%	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	100%		88%	Nil Return
	PGT	89.2%		67%	Nil Return
Divinity	UG – Pre-Honours	100%	Nil Return	93%	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	96%	Nil Return	100%	Nil Return
	PGT	95%	Nil Return	100%	Nil Return
ECA*	UG – Pre-Honours	Art & Design (via Learn): 100% Art & Design (via ECA Portal): 94.8% ESALA: 100% History of Art: 100% Music: 100%	Nil Return	46% (estimate based on very incomplete data)	Did not provide separate data for formative assessment
	UG – Honours	Art & Design: 94.5% ESALA: 100% History of Art: 93.75%	Nil Return	56% (estimate based on very incomplete data)	Did not provide separate data for formative assessment

LTC 15/16 4 G

		Music (via Learn): 100%			
	PGT	Art: 0% (out of 8 courses that ran in Semester 1, all eight courses were late in returning feedback) Design: 100% ESALA: 93.7% History of Art: 100% Music: 60%	Nil Return	25% (estimate based on very incomplete data, and likely to significantly underestimate actual feedback turnaround times)	Did not provide separate data for formative assessment
Economics	UG – Pre-Honours	100%	Nil Return	57%	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	75%	Nil Return	73%	Nil Return
	PGT	66%	Nil Return	92%	Nil Return
Education	UG – Pre-Honours	100%	Nil Return	Nil Return	73% (estimate based on incomplete data, and not broken down between Pre-Honours and Honours)
	UG – Honours	100%	Nil Return	Nil Return	73% (estimate based on incomplete data, and not broken down between Pre-Honours and Honours)
	PGT	77%	Nil Return	Nil Return	Nil Return
Health in Social Science	UG – Pre-Honours	100%	100%	57%	100%
	UG – Honours	100%	100%	75%	100%
	PGT	96%	100%	51%	100%

LTC 15/16 4 G

History, Classics and Archaeology	UG – Pre-Honours	89%	Nil Return	80%	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	78%	Nil Return	87%	Nil Return
	PGT	86.1%	Nil Return	78%	Nil Return
Law	UG – Pre-Honours	100%	100%	100%	99%
	UG – Honours	75%	100%	84%	100%
	PGT	87.2%	Nil Return	83%	100% (based on incomplete data)
Literatures, Languages and Cultures	UG – Pre-Honours	81.51%	Nil Return	64% (did not break-down between Honours and Pre-Honours)	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	90.4%	Nil Return	64% (did not break-down between Honours and Pre-Honours)	Nil Return
	PGT	74.56%	Nil Return	92%	Nil Return
Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences	UG – Pre-Honours	100%	Nil Return	100%	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	88%	Nil Return	96%	Nil Return
	PGT	88%	Nil Return	78%	Nil Return
Social and Political Science	UG – Pre-Honours	83.8%	Nil Return	78% (largely based on data on summative assessment, but also formative assessment where data available)	78% (largely based on data on summative assessment, but also formative assessment where data available)
	UG – Honours	86%	Nil Return	90% (largely based on data on summative assessment, but also	90% (largely based on data on summative assessment, but also

LTC 15/16 4 G

				on formative assessment where data available)	on formative assessment where data available)
	PGT	67.8%	Nil Return	64%	Did not provide separate data for formative assessment
Biological Sciences	UG – Pre-Honours	96%	Nil Return	83%	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	84%	Nil Return	91%	Nil Return
	PGT	76%	Nil Return	58% (based on incomplete data)	Nil Return
Chemistry	UG – Pre-Honours	85% (10-day turnaround) Currently only collecting data for assessments in Pre-Honours years that are not lab-based.	Nil Return	90% (based on incomplete data)	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	80.9% (10-day turnaround)	Nil Return	81% (based on incomplete data)	Nil Return
	PGT	No assessments in semester 1.	Nil Return	100%	Nil Return
Engineering	UG – Pre-Honours	83.37%	Nil Return	81%	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	81.84%	Nil Return	79%	Nil Return
	PGT	60.83%	Nil Return	76%	Nil Return
GeoSciences	UG – Pre-Honours	93%	100%	92% (data covers both formative and summative assessment)	92% (data covers both formative and summative assessment)

LTC 15/16 4 G

	UG – Honours	92%	100%	90% (data covers both formative and summative assessment)	90% (data covers both formative and summative assessment)
	PGT	89%	100%	83% (data covers both formative and summative assessment)	83% (data covers both formative and summative assessment)
Informatics	UG – Pre-Honours	72%	No separate measurement for feedback on formative assessments - where formatively assessed work is submitted to a strict timetable, this is included in the summative figures.	43% (based on when data recorded on database – actual turnaround time likely to have been quicker)	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	86%		81%	Nil Return
	PGT	89%		94%	Nil Return
Mathematics	UG – Pre-Honours	100%	Estimate 98-99%	Nil Return	100%
	UG – Honours	93%		Nil Return	100%
	PGT	100%		Nil Return	100%
Physics and Astronomy	UG – Pre-Honours	100%	Nil Return	100%	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	96%	Nil Return	87%	Nil Return
	PGT	94%	Nil Return	91%	Nil Return
Biomedical Sciences	UG – Pre-Honours	98%	100%	78%	100%
	UG – Honours	89.9%	88.89%	62%	100%
	PGT	93.02%	100%	88%	Nil Return

LTC 15/16 4 G

Medicine - MBChB	UG – Pre-Honours	75% (Pre-Clinical)	Nil Return	72% (data not subdivided between Honours and Pre-Honours)	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	63% (Clinical)	Nil Return	72% (data not subdivided between Honours and Pre-Honours)	Nil Return
Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences	PGT	89%	Nil Return	82% (data covers both formative and summative assessment)	82% (data covers both formative and summative assessment)
Clinical Sciences**	UG – Pre-Honours	Nil Return	Nil Return	Nil Return	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	Nil Return	Nil Return	Nil Return	Nil Return
	PGT	Nil Return	Nil Return	Nil Return	Nil Return
Veterinary Science	UG – Pre-Honours	88% (Pre-Clinical)	Nil Return	79%	Nil Return
	UG – Honours	100% (Clinical)	Nil Return	100%	Nil Return
	PGT	71%	60%	53% (data covers both formative and summative assessment)	53% (data covers both formative and summative assessment)

* Over the 5 ECA schools there is currently a very mixed approach to the technologies used. The ECA Portal is used in Art and Design, who are currently also piloting the use of Learn in some of their courses. History of Art, Music and ESALA use Learn. Some individual courses still use hard copies to return feedback. In some specific music technology courses SUBSYS is also used: this system does not have a mechanism for recording feedback return dates. ECA intends to streamline the process of feedback return by moving towards 100% electronic return of feedback. The ECA Portal will be shut down at the end of this academic year; most subject areas/courses will then use Learn/Turnitin.

** Clinical Sciences have asked for more time to accrue the data due to a lack of administrative resource.

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Learning and Teaching Committee

16 March 2016

Senate Committee planning for 2016-17onwards

Brief description of the paper, including a statement of relevance to the University's strategic plans and priorities

This paper sets out the framework for Senate Committee planning for 2016-17 onwards, and invites the Committee to suggest high priority projects for 2016-17, and to discuss how to approach planning in the longer-term. It also provides an update on the Committee's progress against its plans for 2015-16.

Action requested

The Committee is invited to:

- Discuss high priority projects for 2016-17
- Confirm whether it is content with a proposed approach to future planning cycles

Communication and Implementation

On 27 April 2016, the Senate Committees Symposium will discuss the four Senate Committees' ideas for 2016-17. Academic Services will then submit the plans to Senate on 1 June 2016, and will then communicate them more widely using the Senate Committees' Newsletter. College representatives on the Committee are encouraged to discuss the plans with their Schools.

Resource implications

Does the paper have resource implications? Yes. The paper will assist the University to use its resources strategically.

Risk Assessment

Does the paper include a risk analysis? No. Since the paper aims to generate ideas rather than to recommend a specific course of action, it is not necessary to undertake a risk analysis.

Equality and Diversity

Has due consideration been given to the equality impact of this paper? No. Since the paper aims to generate ideas rather than to recommend a specific course of action, it is not necessary to undertake an equality and diversity assessment.

Freedom of information

For inclusion in open business
Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services, 10 March 2016

Senate Committee planning for 2016-17 onwards

This paper sets out the framework for Senate Committee planning for 2016-17 onwards that the Learning and Teaching Policy Group has agreed, and invites the Committee to suggest high priority projects for 2016-17. It also invites the Committee to comment on a proposed approach to planning for future sessions

Background - Update on progress against 2015-16 plans

At its meeting on 3 June 2015, Senate endorsed the Committees' plans for 2015-16, see Paper E at:

http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Committees/Senate/2014-15/20150603AgendaAndPapers.pdf

An update on the Committee's progress against its plan for 2015-16 is attached as Annex A.

Process for developing the plans for 2016-17

- The four Senate Standing Committees are invited to discuss priorities for 2016-17 at their meetings in March / April 2016, taking account of the priorities of Colleges / Schools / EUSA, the University Strategic Plan, the recommendations from the 2015 Enhancement-led Institutional Review, and the availability of resources.

- The annual Senate Committees Symposium on 27 April 2016 will then have an opportunity to comment on the plans.

- Senate will be invited to endorse the agreed plans at its meeting on 1 June 2016.

Resources available to support the plans

In order to take forward their projects, the Senate Committees rely on the capacity of Schools, Colleges and EUSA to engage, and on professional support from Academic Services, Student Systems, Information Services Group, the Institute for Academic Development and the Careers Service / Employability Consultancy. These resources from relevant support services will enable all the Senate Committees to undertake a reasonable volume of projects activities. If the Senate Committees wish to undertake new projects with substantial resource requirement, they may need to bid for additional resources via the University planning round (although in practice there is no scope to introduce any new items into the planning round for 2016-17).

In planning for 2016-17, it is necessary to retain sufficient headroom to address high priority issues that emerge (for example as a result of external developments) during the session.

2

For discussion - priorities for 2016-17

Some projects already underway will continue into 2016-17, and several other projects are likely to be required due to external factors. These activities (set out in Annex B) are the starting point for planning for 2016-17. *The Committee is invited to identify any additional projects that may be required for 2016-17 and their rationale.*

Possible approaches to future planning cycles

The recent Light-touch Governance Review of Senate and its Committees indicated that, while the Senate Committee members were broadly satisfied with the approach to planning, that Review also identified a potential disconnect between the timing of prioritisation of Senate Committee activity and the timing of the University's annual planning processes. The Learning and Teaching Policy Group proposes that, from next session, the Senate Committees' planning would involve two distinct stages:

- In the latter part of Semester One, the Committees would be invited to identify any major strategic developments that may require additional resources, which could then be considered during the planning round; and

- In Semester Two, the Committees could undertake a broader discussion of priorities for the coming session.

The Committee is invited to confirm if it is content with this approach.

Annex A - Learning and Teaching Committee's Progress Against Agreed Priorities for 2015-16 at March 2016

The following outlines LTC's progress at March 2016 against the priorities for 2015-16 agreed by Senate on 3 June 2015:

1. **Coordinate and support activities to address issues raised by the National Student Survey and other surveys**
   Work on the student experience, teaching and learning has been LTC's key priority to date. The following action has been taken to address limitations in this area:
   - Greater clarity has been brought to learning and teaching leadership structures.
   - The Convener of LTC has attended meetings with all Schools to discuss the student experience, teaching and learning. Follow-up action will be taken with some Schools.
   - An 'Enhancing Teaching Performance Task Group' has been established to consider better ways of measuring performance in the area of learning and teaching, rewarding outstanding teaching, and addressing poor performance.
   - A 'Simplification Task Group' is considering ways in which University, College and School-level policies and practices in the areas of the student experience, teaching and learning might be simplified.
   - A 'Communications Task Group' is considering ways in which the best learning and teaching practice might be identified, celebrated and disseminated. One output to date has been the development of a new website and associated blog, 'Teaching Matters', http://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/teaching-matters
   - An 'Innovation in Teaching and Learning Working Group' has been established to explore innovative approaches to learning and teaching and how these might be developed within the University.
   - Substantial work on feedback and assessment is being undertaken under the leadership of the new Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback (see **4.** below).

2. **Develop new publication to replace Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes**
   At its November 2015 meeting, LTC approved the proposal that the Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes be discontinued from 2016/17, it being agreed that this was consistent with discussions about the simplification of policy, regulation and processes.

3. **Transitions Enhancement Theme – institutional oversight of activities (broadly focussed on maximising the benefit of the Theme for current**

priorities)
LTC has continued to oversee this work, which is progressing in accordance with plans submitted to the QAA. A successful 'Gearing up for Transitions 2016' event took place on 2 March 2016.

4. **Feedback on assessment – implement recommendations from 2014-15 Internal Audit report, including developing quality standards for feedback**
    An Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback (Professor Susan Rhind) has been appointed to take this work forward. Work is being done on developing measures of feedback quality and approaches to assessment. An Assessment and Feedback Community of Practice has been established to share and encourage best practice. A systems analysis has been undertaken with a view to helping Schools measure feedback turnaround times more effectively. Schools' reported turnaround times for providing feedback on assessment in Semester 1 2015-16 will be considered at the March meeting of LTC.

5. **Oversee the Leading Enhancement in Assessment and Feedback (LEAF) / Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessment (TESTA) Project**
    This year's 11 audits across 4 Subject Areas (plus some student research in a fifth Subject Area) are progressing as planned under the leadership of the Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback.

6. **Support pilot activities to explore innovative learning and teaching using IT and other modern methods**
    Information Services continues to support various activities in this area.

7. **Online Distance Learning – Continued work to develop a strategic framework for Online Distance Learning**
    The Distance Education Task Group has continued to make progress. A new Assistant Principal Digital Education will be appointed in the near future, and the work of the Task Group will be reviewed once the new post-holder is in place.

8. **In partnership with Knowledge Strategy Committee, develop a University policy on Learning Analytics**
    Work on this is being taken forward by Professor Jeff Haywood, Vice-Principal Digital Education, under the auspices of Knowledge Strategy Committee.

9. **Promote research-led and independently-directed learning**

The University has appointed an Assistant Principal Research-led Learning (Professor Sarah Cunningham-Burley) who is leading work in this area. In addition, the University is supporting independently-directed learning through various activities, such as Student-Led Individually Created Courses (SLICCs) (which the Senate Curriculum and Student Progression Committee is overseeing).

10. **Grade Point Averages – respond to outcomes of Higher Education Academy discussions and pilots**
LTC has agreed an approach to introducing an on-demand model of GPA. It has also continued to receive updates on developments within the sector relating to GPA, particularly in the context of the UK Government's Green Paper, 'Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice'. At its March 2016 meeting, LTC will discuss the proposal that no further action be taken in relation to GPA until the position within the sector is clearer.

11. **Ongoing development of Continuing Professional Development framework for learning and teaching**
LTC received a progress report on work to implement an overarching Continuing Professional Development (CPD) framework relating to learning and teaching at its January 2016 meeting. It was noted that good progress was being made, and agreed that further work would be done in the areas of:
- a University-level target for participation in CPD;
- workload issues which might discourage participation in CPD;
- the development of more School-specific variants of the Edinburgh Teaching Award;
- annual review, which it was agreed should include discussion about CPD;
- and improving data capture.

Other activities undertaken this session

- Considering the Green Paper, 'Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice', and the implications of a possible Teaching Excellence Framework
- Lecture capture
- Use of student data – considering ways in which this can be used to enhance learning and teaching, the student experience and operational effectiveness
- Innovative Learning Week (ILW) – considering the use of the week between Teaching Blocks 3 and 4 in 2016/17 and 2017/18 (that which has formally been used as ILW)

Annex B – Senate Committee projects already underway which are likely to continue into 2016-17, and related projects planned for 2016-17

Learning and Teaching Committee

- Transitions Enhancement Theme –institutional coordination and oversight (broadly focussed on maximising the benefit of the Theme for current priorities)

- Leading Enhancement in Assessment and Feedback (LEAF) / Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessment (TESTA) Project

- Implement changes to academic year structure (subject to outcome of review)

- Task Group on Innovation in Teaching and Learning

- Oversee development of Continuing Professional Development for Learning and Teaching

- Implement changes to Innovative Learning Week

- Refine Academic Support / Personal Tutor system

Curriculum and Student Progression

- EUCLID Assessment and Progression Tools project

- Further phase of piloting and evaluation of Student-led individually-Created Courses (SLICCS).

- (Subject to the outcomes of the Special Circumstances Task Group, and subject to a bid for funding), developing systems and EUCLID business processes for Special Circumstances*

- Developing policies and processes (eg around curriculum approval) to ensure compliance with Competition and Marketing Authority guidelines

Quality Assurance Committee

- Enhancement-led Institutional Review – develop and oversee implementation of plan of action in response to ELIR (likely to involve engagement from all Senate Committees)

- Implement and monitor effectiveness of those changes resulting from review of quality assurance framework introduced for 16/17, and further develop and implement changes for 17/18

7

- Roll-out of Evasys course evaluation tool

- External Examiner Project – further monitoring of the implementation of the External Examiner Reporting system and the revised External Examiner Policy.

Researcher Experience Committee

- Postgraduate Research Enhancement Project*

- Enhance annual progression review process – monitoring the full implementation of the new EUCLID system tools for supporting the online annual review process

- Implement recommendations of task group on Distance PhDs

- Address regulatory issues regarding MSc of Research programmes, and the status of students during the writing-up period

Cross-cutting activities

- National Student Survey- continued coordination and support for activities to address issues raised by NSS.

- Engage with proposed Teaching Excellence Framework

- Develop and roll-out student data dashboards*

- Move towards wider use of online assessment

- Work on 'Simplification' of practices and processes regarding learning, teaching and assessment

- Activities to enhance assessment and feedback

- Activities regarding community engagement and experiential learning

- Activities regarding digital education

- Activities regarding reaching performance (eg work on annual review arrangements, CPD for teaching staff)

- Senate and Senate Committees Effectiveness review - undertake externally-facilitated review and implement recommendations.

- Policies and Codes - Programme of review of policies including equality impact assessments

*Seeking funding via planning round

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Learning and Teaching Committee

16 March 2016

Innovation in Teaching and Learning Working Group

Executive Summary

This paper provides the membership and remit for the Innovation in Teaching and Learning Working Group. The Group was originally established as a Working Group of Learning and Teaching Policy Group. However it has been agreed that it would be more appropriate for it to be a Working Group of Learning and Teaching Committee.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

Excellence in Education; Outstanding Student Experience.

Action requested

Members are invited to approve the Group as a Working Group of Learning and Teaching Committee.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

If approved, members of the Working Group will be made aware that it has become an LTC Working Group.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   None

2. **Risk assessment**
   Not relevant

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   Not relevant

4. **Freedom of information**
   This paper is **open**.

Originator of the paper

Philippa Ward
Academic Services, March 2016

Innovation in Teaching and Learning Working Group –Remit and Membership

Membership
- Professor Jeff Haywood (Vice-Principal Digital Education)
- Professor Lesley McAra (Assistant Principal Community Relations)
- Professor Sarah Cunningham-Burley (Assistant Principal Research-led Teaching) - Convener
- Professor Tina Harrison (Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance)
- Kevin Collins (Assistant Principal Industry Engagement)
- Dr Jon Tuner (Director of Institute for Academic Development)
- Melissa Highton (Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services)
- Dr Antony Maciocia (Dean of Students, College of Science and Engineering)
- Ms Imogen Wilson (EUSA VPAA)
- Nichola Kett (Academic Services Representative)
- Pippa Ward (Academic Services) - Secretary

Remit
To develop proposals for the strategic direction of innovation in teaching and learning at the University, and to make recommendations to relevant Committees or other bodies to take forward specific programmes of action:
- To take forward some aspects of the 'Emerging Vision', including research-led learning, experiential learning (locally, nationally and internationally across different sectors) and digital education.
- To set out a plan and possible timescales for introducing an extended portfolio of University-wide courses, including skills-based, using multiple teaching and learning methods.
- To outline how the University supports innovation in teaching and learning, including activities currently captured through Innovative Learning Week, and considering the role of the Principal's Teaching Award Scheme.
- To identify any institutional constraints to innovation in teaching and learning and make recommendations on how to deal with these; and to identify approaches to supporting innovation that would capitalise on grass-roots innovation.
- Ensure that proposals allow for co-operative development and implementation across the University to ensure best fit with different pedagogical approaches and PSRB requirements.
- Sustainable legacy?

Timescale and Outputs
- 1 February 2016 – set up of Working Group (Learning and Teaching Policy Group).
- 22 April 2016 – discussion of interim report from the Working Group (Learning and Teaching Policy Group).
- 25 May 2016 – discussion of a draft report from the Working Group (Learning and Teaching Committee).

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee

16 March 2016

Student Surveys Review

Executive Summary

This paper presents the high level draft plans to review and propose changes to the current suite of student surveys and reporting activity in advance of the 2016/17 academic year.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

This work is being developed to support the delivery of an outstanding student experience. .

Action requested

*The committee is asked to **comment** on and **approve** the paper.*

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

The existing EvaSys Roll-out Project Board will also assume responsibility for the review of student surveys. A schedule of formal engagement has been established, including:

- *Academic Strategy Group on 13 April 2016;*
- *Learning & Teaching Committee on 25 May 2016;*
- *PSG or CMG in June 2016.*

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**

   The activity to support the review of the surveys will require staff time (analysis, consultation, feedback, papers) and the decisions reached are likely to have an impact on the way we use existing resources to support student surveys.

2. **Risk assessment**

Not applicable at this stage.

3. Equality and Diversity

Not applicable at this stage.

4. Freedom of information

Paper is open.

<u>Key words</u>

Student Surveys, ESES,

<u>Originator of the paper</u>

Barry Neilson
Director of Student Systems
16 March 2016

LEARNING & TEACHING COMMITTEE

16 March 2016

Student Surveys Review

Purpose

1. This paper presents a high level, draft plan, to review and propose changes to the current suite of student surveys and reporting activity in advance of the 2016/17 academic year.

2. LTC is asked to **comment** on the paper.

Background

3. LTC previously received a paper providing a high level summary on the plans and actions required to successfully roll out the EvaSys course evaluation system to all Schools and taught courses.

4. A governance structure (see appendix 1) to support the delivery of this work has been developed, a detailed project plan developed and resources have been allocated to support the delivery of this project.

5. Along with business as usual activity, the EvaSys rollout is the number one priority for the Student Survey Unit.

Review of student surveys

6. The Student Survey Unit had the review of the ESES and the International Student Barometer (iSB) surveys as part of its current set of deliverables for the 2015/16 academic year and for proposed changes to be implemented for the 2016/17 academic year.

7. In addition work is underway with the Deans responsible for PGT to identify opportunities to enhance the use of this data with a view to presenting at the Academic Strategy Group in this academic year. No plans are in place for review of PRES survey.

8. This paper and subsequent discussion will help clarify objectives.

Draft Scope – Survey Review

9. It is proposed that the scope of any work reviewing student surveys covers the following areas:

   a. Review the purpose of the main centrally supported University student surveys and propose changes to help meet university priorities over next 2/3 years;

   b. Review the value generated by the reports and data emerging from the surveys and propose changes to extract greater value from survey data individually, when considered as a whole at School level; based on particular themes; and over time.

   c. Clarify the approach to measuring student feedback on Personal Tutors across UG and PGT students.

10. The table below proposes the surveys to be included in scope:

Survey name	Purpose	Student population	Timing (2015/16)
Induction Survey	Assess students' decision making process in choosing UoE and their experiences of Welcome Week and the start of Semester 1	First year students UG & PG (slightly different surveys)	Early Semester 1 (11/09/15 – 28/10/15)
iSB	International survey and benchmark.	International students (EU & non EU)	Mid Semester 1 (30/10/15 – 27/11/15)
ESES	To act as a mirror to the NSS plus cover broader range of academic and service questions.	All non-final year undergraduates	Early Semester 2 (18/01/16 – 04/03/16)
PTES	To provide insights into the experience of postgraduate taught students.	Postgraduate taught students	Mid Semester 2 - Summer (02/03/16 - 17/06/16)

11. The governance group may need to be reviewed particularly if the iSB and the Induction Survey remain in scope.

Out of Scope

12. As a result it is proposed that the following surveys remain out of scope:

a. The NSS, which is being reviewed for changes in January 2017 and will need to feed into this review, as well as preparations being made to manage the change;
b. EvaSys which will be reviewed as part of the EvaSys roll out project;
c. PTES, which we are not due to participate in again until 2017.

Draft Approach

13. The table below proposes an approach to the project, following approval from LTC in March 2016 and taking into account the fact there will be no resources available to support this work until late March/April 2016 (contingent on EvaSys roll-out project). Timescales for each phase to be confirmed but timelines are short.

Phase	Purpose
Strategy	Clarify why we run institutional surveys, what are the key outputs needed internally, what scope surveys cover, what is the impact on Learning & Teaching and Student Experience, what level of priority does work have, what level of engagement do we need.
Current state	Review current state against the revised strategy for surveys. This includes surveys, questions and outputs. Includes consultation. Review current state of 'other surveys' delivered locally by services.
Options	Develop series of options understanding any resource implications. Includes consultation.
Decision	Recommendation delivered to decision making body (PSG/CMG) after appropriate consultation.

Recommendation

14. LTC is asked to **comment** on the paper.

Barry Neilson
Director of Student Systems
16 March 2016

Appendix 1

EvaSys Roll-out Project Board

Membership

Professor Jane Norman (Sponsor)
Professor Tina Harrison
Professor Alan Murray
Professor Susan Rhind
Mr Josh Stapp (Project Manager)
Mr Tom Ward
Dr Gordon McDougall
Dr Sheila Lodge
Dr Inger Seiferheld
Dr Jon Turner
Mr Barry Neilson (Chair)

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Learning and Teaching Committee

16 March 2016

Report from Learning and Teaching Policy Group

Executive Summary

In November 2015, the Senate Committee Convenor's Forum was superseded by a Learning and Teaching Policy Group (LTPG) designed to integrate strategic leadership in L&T across the Senate Committees, the Colleges (via College L&T Deans), thematic areas of priority (via existing and new Vice and Assistant Principals), and key professional services. LTPG reports to the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee.

This paper updates the Committee on LTPG's February and March 2016 meetings.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

LTPG's work supports the University strategic theme of Outstanding Student Experience.

Action requested
For information

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
N/A

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   N/A

2. **Risk assessment**
   N/A

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   N/A

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open

Originator of the paper
Tom Ward
Director of Academic Services

Report from Learning and Teaching Policy Group (LTPG)

Since the Senate Learning and Teaching (LTC) last met on 27 January 2016, LTPG has met twice: 1 February 2016 and 10 March 2016.

The main points from these meetings are set out below. Some of the issues discussed at LTPG are addressed in more detail elsewhere on LTC's agenda.

Meeting 1 February 2016

- Supported the proposal for a review of the current suite of student surveys.
- Discussed a paper from Prof Jane Norman (VP People and Culture) setting out how better (academic) workload modelling could support learning and teaching, suggesting that this work should focus on defining overall principles and standard allocations for particular elements of teaching input, which Schools could incorporate into their workload allocation models, rather than seeking to create a single model for all Schools to adopt. People Committee will discuss the issue in more detail, prior to seeking approval from Central Management Group.
- Discussed an update paper from Prof Alan Murray (AP Academic Support) regarding his ideas for improving academic support arrangement. The paper highlighted the key outputs from a recent meeting of the Senior Tutor Network, including an analysis of data regarding student satisfaction with Personal Tutors which suggested that 80% of Personal Tutors are providing good support but that a minority may not be doing so.
- Received a demo of the new Teaching Matters website.
- Discussed an update on Digital Education activities from Prof Jeff Haywood (VP Digital Education).
- Discussed the plans of Prof Lesley McAra (AP Community Engagement) for Community Engagement and Experiential Learning as Part of the Curriculum.
- Agreed that the 2015 Senate Committees' Symposium should focus on two themes: innovation in curriculum and learning and teaching; and data and teaching performance.

Meeting 10 March 2016

- Discussed issues raised by the 2015 New Students Survey – noting that while overall satisfaction with induction arrangements is high, there are various issues requiring further attention (eg pre-arrival information on courses / programmes), and agreeing that Colleges should discuss the Survey results at their Learning and Teaching Committees (or equivalent);
- Agreed that the Institute for Academic Development would develop proposals for LTC regarding new guidance on Peer Observation of Learning, which would cover a broader range of Peer Observation activities than the current University guidance, which focusses on observation of lectures (these proposals will be presented to LTC's first meeting in 2016-17);
- Discussed a progress paper regarding reward processes for teaching excellence, highlighting the need for further attention to communicating how teaching excellence is taken into account in promotion processes, and to considering how

the statements of referees and Heads of Schools can support cases for
promotion on the basis of excellence in teaching;

- Endorsed some actions to take forward recruitment and selection for teaching;
- Welcomed strategic developments in learning and teaching in the Colleges of
  Humanities and Social Sciences regarding the Programme Pathways Project and
  in Science and Engineering regarding assessment arrangements;
- Agreed how the Senate Committees would approach planning and prioritisation
  for 2016-17;
- Agreed to ask LTC's Innovation in Teaching and Learning Working Group to
  develop proposals for a University strategy that would replace the current
  Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Learning and Teaching Committee
16 March 2016

Enhancement Themes – Update

Executive Summary

This paper provides the Committee with an update on Enhancement Theme (Student Transitions) activity.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

The paper aligns with the University's Strategic Theme of 'Outstanding Student Experience'.

Action requested

Members are asked to **note** the paper.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Information is posted on a wiki and website. Monthly Enhancement Themes email updates are sent out to Institutional Team members and a distribution list of contacts (to be added to this, please email Nichola.Kett@ed.ac.uk). Institutional Team members are responsible for communicating about Enhancement Theme developments within the constituency they are representing and acting as key Enhancement Theme contact. There is a confirmed reporting structure. Communication and implementation will also operate at individual activity level.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   The paper does not have resource implications.

2. **Risk assessment**
   The paper does not require a risk assessment.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   This will be considered through individual areas of activity. Where relevant, individual activities would be required to undertake Equality Impact Assessments.

4. **Freedom of information**
   The paper is **open**.

Key words
Student transitions, enhancement theme

Originator of the paper
Nichola Kett, Head of Enhancement Team, Academic Services
7 March 2016

Gearing up for Transitions – 2 March 2016

Informal feedback on the event has been positive and a survey has been sent out to collate formal feedback. All materials and resources will be posted on the website in due course. The themes emerging from the event were:

- **Peer Support:** support from higher years and "those who have been through it" identified as most important.
- **"Opportunities":** the importance of students being able to find out about the many opportunities available across the University and EUSA.
- **Quality Learning and Teaching and Academic Support:** The support provided by Personal Tutors and academic staff.
- **Expectations:** Knowing what to expect and what is "normal", supported by consistent messaging.
- **Reflection:** Learning from mistakes and through assessment.
- **Diversity:** Balance supporting different students without making them feel different by using inclusive practices.

Theme Leaders' Group (TLG) and Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC) Meetings – 4 and 5 February 2016

TLG's role is to determine, direct, support and evaluate the work undertaken for the Theme. Discussion at the latest meeting focussed on institutional plans and collaboration between institutions. SHEEC supports and promotes quality enhancement of the student learning experience. Discussion at the latest meeting focussed on the role of SHEEC and its communication and engagement strategy.

Institutional Team Meeting – 26 February 2016

The Team heard updates: on key events; from external meetings; and on work taking place on the theme of resilience (including a report from a pilot project at the Vet School). The Team also discussed the format for small project funding reporting and how to ensure that the learning from our Enhancement Themes work is captured and shared. The agenda, papers and meeting notes are available on the wiki.

Quality Assurance Agency Scotland Enhancement Themes Conference – 9 June 2016 (Edinburgh)

This sector-wide one day conference will be an ideal opportunity to share practice, discover areas for collaboration, and meet colleagues in the higher education sector. The call for proposals is now open and will close on Thursday 24 March. Proposals will be accepted for presentations, lightning talks, workshops, and posters and displays. Proposals can be student or staff led and QAAS are especially keen to have a large student contribution at the conference. Further information can be found on the Enhancement Themes website. In order to help gauge the University's contribution to the conference, it would be useful if you could advise (nichola.kett@ed.ac.uk) if you submit a proposal.

Contacts

Professor Tina Harrison	Assistant Principal Academic Standards & Quality Assurance	Institutional Lead and member of Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC)
Nichola Kett	Head of Enhancement Team, Academic Services	Institutional Coordinator and member of the Student Transitions Theme Leaders' Group (TLG)

Senate Learning and Teaching Committee

16 March 2016

Knowledge Strategy Committee Report

Committee Name
1. Knowledge Strategy Committee.

Date of Meeting
2. The Committee met on 22 January 2016.

Action Required
3. LTC is invited to note the key points discussed at the meeting.

Key points
4. *Information Services 10 Year Strategy*
The Committee received presentations on the following:

Digital Transformation of Core Services and Systems
It was noted that a number of core information systems will require replacement over the next ten years, providing an opportunity for a step change in performance. Members discussed:
- The expectations of staff for rapid and regular software updates
- Using cloud computing for software applications
- Not all processes are expected to become wholly digital (e.g. examinations)
- Inclusion within the service excellence programme.

Learning, Teaching and Student Experience
Student involvement in shaping IS investments, providing student feedback electronically, supporting new digital forms of authorship and learning by students, publicising MOOCs to on-campus students and the importance of rationalising legacy systems to further develop online learning were all discussed.

Digital Research Services
Methods of recovering digital research services costs from grants to avoid a 'grant by grant' approach for IT research infrastructure, such as the automatic inclusion of IT costs in grant submissions, were considered.

Library National and International Leadership
Members commented on the high popularity of the Library with students, space utilisation and opportunities for displaying collections, including the St Cecilia's Hall redevelopment.

The projected total gross expenditure of approximately £247M over 10 years was discussed, noting that some expenditure in these areas was

already taking place and would be subject to planning prioritisation and individual business cases.

5. *IT Infrastructure Governance*
The proposed governance processes were approved, including the proposal that the Governance Group be authorised to re-profile the annual budget, where required, with re-profiling to be manageable within the approved overall Information Services budget, with appropriate regard for the distinction between capital and revenue.

6. *Thesis Digitalisation Proposal*
A proposal to digitise the University physical thesis collection (approximately 25,000 theses in total, with 40% already digitised) was considered. The appropriate selection of theses for digitisation by contractors and the development of expertise and safeguards was discussed. Information Services was asked to investigate the possibility of accelerating the project within the current academic year through an in-year bid and raising awareness of the project amongst Edinburgh students was also discussed. The Committee welcomed the proposal and approved the programme of work subject to the approval of the funding request in the planning round.

7. *Library Collections Facility*
The Committee approved the proposal for the development of a University Collections Facility for the long-term storage and management of rare and unique collections and noted the associated potential funding requirements, with any further funding request to require a full business plan to be submitted to Estates Committee.

8. *Other Issues*
The Committee received updates on Student Data Dashboards; the appointment of Mr Alistair Fenemore as Chief Information Security Officer; considered and approved revised terms of reference for the University Collections Advisory Committee; and received reports on the activities of its three Thematic Committees (IT Committee, Library Committee and the University Collections Advisory Committee).

Full minute
9. The full minute and papers considered are available here.

Equality & Diversity
10. There are no equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

Further information
11. *Author*   *Presenter*
     Dr Lewis Allan   Ms Doreen Davidson
     Head of Court Services   Convener, KSC

Freedom of Information
12. The paper is open.

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Learning and Teaching Committee

16 March 2016

Digital Education

Executive Summary

This paper is the current Vice Principal Digital Education's update on Digital Education. The role description for a new Assistant Principal Digital Education is included as Appendix 1.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

Excellence in Education / Outstanding Student Experience

Action requested

For noting

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Not applicable

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**

   Included in the paper where available.

2. **Risk assessment**

   Not included in this paper.

3. **Equality and Diversity**

   Equality and diversity not discussed in this paper.

4. **Freedom of information**

   The paper is **open.**

Originator of the paper

Vice Principal Professor Jeff Haywood

Digital Education: update for Learning & Teaching Committee

Over the past 10 years we have become one of the world's most active distance and online learning providers amongst the highly-ranked research intensive universities. We base this success on 25 years of investment and exploration of innovation in learning and teaching by academic staff across the university, with some bursts of central initiative funding and a steady stream of investment by Schools, Colleges and Support Groups (especially ISG). This implementation is supported by excellent digital education research, much of it in the School of Education (www.de.ed.ac.uk) but with important contributions from other Schools.

The table below gives a 'Present activity' update for each of 6 key areas of digital education work (excluding research) so that Learning & Teaching Committee members are aware of the work going on. I then offer two future 'targets', which are ideal and aspirational and must be viewed in the light of pressures on resources of all kinds. The university's planning processes have a 10 year horizon, with rolling 3 year planning in more detail. It is impossible to forecast 10 years ahead, but we can forecast 5 years ahead and then predict rise/steady/fall thereafter. As these plans are revised annually they will have changed several times in 10 years.

If the University of Edinburgh wishes to retain its leadership position in digital education at least some of these need to be achieved else we fall behind competitors eager for our reputation. Leading this work, making difficult choices, is the work of my successor when appointed. The Job Description for that role is attached to this paper.

Given the current concern with falling income from government sources and uncertainty due to 'Brexit', the Scottish Government's financial situation and global shifts in economies, I propose that the focus for online education for the coming few years needs to be to support income generation through three main actions:

- Expand our online Masters provision but focus on areas of likely high student numbers, although it may not be possible to find these for all Schools. We should be looking for joint ventures. Many NGOs etc are very interested in collaborating in this area. Some degree programmes cap their intakes at unreasonably low levels, and some re-design work is needed to enable them to take more students for the same staff teaching effort.

- Distance PhD. Big markets exist in countries expanding their HE systems so we could do 'deals' with them, rather than rely on sporadic individual applications. This is a significant change from current practice.

- MOOCs. Our new strategy for MOOCs is to use them to support our major current strategies rather than see them as an end in themselves. This means that in place of an opportunistic approach, we use MOOCs strategically, for example as part of the pipeline to enrolments on fee-paying courses, as part of out-reach and civic engagement, as part of internationalisation, as collaboration vehicles with notable organisations where funding can follow, as part of research grant proposals e.g. for dissemination/impact and as part of citizen science research.

I have left 'blended education – technology in predominantly residential programmes' - out of the update, as this area of work is mainly handled and led from within Schools and IS as part of their normal academic business.

Area	Present activity	5 years ahead	10 years ahead
MOOCs:	We now have 28 MOOCs with 7 more to be launched in 2016, three from Schools which have not so far offered them (Business, Maths and Economics). Work is continuing to support these MOOCs on three platforms (Coursera, edX and Futurelearn) and to expand out collaborative and outreach opportunities: Scottish schools (through GLOW); older learners through University of 3rd Age; 'Scotland' with Visit Scotland; British Council on sustainability; referenda and elections (with ESRC) are all part of the mix. The ROI on MOOCs is very positive and so a new strategy is being developed to assist ISG to select and support MOOCs and to ensure the ROI continues to increase in value to the University. Funded by ISG and effort from participating Schools.	Have produced at least 50 MOOCs, with majority still on offer (ie not retired) All will align with MOOC strategy and have demonstrable positive ROI	Have produced at least 75 MOOCs – as 5 years for detail
Online Masters (Level 11) courses and programmes	We have 65 MSc Programmes and courses live in DRPS and ~2500 students enrolled. These involve 18 out of 22 of our Schools. We now have a one-off source of investment to maintain and expand the online Masters programmes, in two £0.5M tranches. One tranche is for underpinning support in ISG (mainly technology, but including a grant	Steady annual enrolments of 2500-3000 students (headcount) onto approx. 75 programmes – poor recruiting programmes closed, new programmes with much better market intel and marketing and generally demand-led	Holding steady at this level

	to English Language teaching Centre to develop online fast-track English language testing for online Masters applicants without IELTS etc). The other £0.5M tranche is for a few Schools to progress their online programme development (probably including Business, SPS, Geosciences and Informatics) and business cases are being developed with them. We are also working to expand the possibility of scholarships for distance learners, especially in developing world regions, something that is quite restricted at present due to funders' rules. It looks likely that we shall be able initially to support students from Africa. Funded centrally through DEI Phases 2 & 3		
Online UG courses	As part of the vision developed by PSG, our residential undergraduate students should be able to take fully online courses in a wide range of subjects. Ideally in the near future all of them would do so as part of their graduate skillset for their future CPD and education, which is clearly becoming increasingly offered in online forms. To date, we have started developing a courses in 'Learning for Sustainability', and have plans for one in Data Science. Other potential topics being at present include: statistics (also see Adaptive Learning below), qualitative and quantitative research methods, citizenship…. Discussions are taking place around sustainable funding for Schools offering such U-wide courses.	At least 20 fully online UG courses ('modules') available and in use so that 'all' (min 90%) UG students are taking at least one during UG study. Some will be university-wide courses and some will be College or School focussed.	Holding steady at this level

	Some ISG funding is available for this area, but much of the effort will be from the Schools participating.		
Flexible PhD options	A Flexible PhD Working Group (under REC) reported at 4th March 2016 on the steps needed to enable admission of 'PhDs at a distance' as a normal activity and not as exceptional cases. This excludes those who study at an institution with which we have a formal agreement, and also leave of absence study away from Edinburgh as part of the PhD. Broadly, it proposes that: some modest changes are made to the 'rules and regs' and to the prospectus; that CMVM and CSCE adopt a version of the current guidelines for evaluating and adopting distance versions of current PhD programmes and for admitting candidates; IAD provides training for supervisors; ISG reviews and modifies software support and library access; and the SIS is distance enabled for PhD. Fee structures and English language requirements are left unchanged. The major area of development is clearly the lack of fully online courses for research training, and Schools wishing to take distance PhDs will need to develop these where they have not been produced as part of online Masters programmes or similar activities. Some funding has been earmarked for this area from DEI, ISG and IAD, but Schools will need to provide much of the course development effort.	Option to study fully on-campus, fully off-campus and any permutation in between operational. Support for remote supervision and vivas, file-sharing, back-up etc in place with appropriate training Schools using service rather than DIY	Holding steady at this level
Learning Analytics	There has been a steady rise in requests to ISG for access to student digital learning systems data from courses wishing to understand more about how	Full LA service in place for all PGT and UG programmes/courses.	Steady at this level

	students learn online. PSG approved a pilot exploration of learning analytics, working with the UK arm of a US company (Civitas), and restricted to online Masters courses. Governance has been established for oversight, using success criteria, risk management and project management reviews. As a result of the emergence of LA, a new university policy is needed to cover collection, retention, access to and uses of student and staff data related to learning and teaching. This will be developed through the work of the governance group and approved through the usual channels. This work is funded by ISG and a side activity of an EC project to Gasevic and Haywood.	All student record data, survey results, interactions with digital and physical library and online software (VLE etc) routinely gathered and used in predictive models for individual students, classes and to support course (re-)design. Training in place.	
Adaptive learning	Following on from a successful pilot of adaptive learning with Cogbooks (a US/UK company) in Geosciences, we are in conversation with various Schools about options for extending the pilot. AL is most suited to conceptually difficult subjects where self-paced and personalised approaches are needed. Statistics, data science, theoretical aspects of sciences, maths are being explored. This area has been funded by ISG, with effort contributed by Schools but in future will need to move to funded by Schools.	At least 5 UG courses are using AL software, where AL is a relevant approach due to ability to define the domain knowledge (eg statistics, economics, maths, research methods, and theoretical science subjects).	At least steady at this level, probably gone beyond this as software and knowledge to apply spread

Vice Principal Professor Jeff Haywood, 9th March 2016

Role Description for Assistant Principal Digital Education

The postholder is expected to:

1. **Provide strategic direction for the university in digital education, including:**
   - Development and implementation of a medium-term vision that places the University at the leading edge of digital education
   - Work with Colleges to develop benchmarks for significant growth of distance education student numbers and to ensure sustainable capacities to deliver a growing portfolio of distance learning programmes
   - Support research and development of innovative online pedagogies in both distance and on-campus education
   - Evaluation and further development of the MOOC strategy
   - Development of the flexible PhD policy and strategy
   - Support and promote best practice in the development and application of learning analytics

2. **Ensure effective coordination in, and support for, the delivery of digital education across the University, harnessing research, pedagogical and infrastructural expertise in Schools, ISG, IAD and Academic Services, including:**
   - Review structures for the governance and delivery of digital education policy and strategy across the University
   - Membership of Learning and Teaching Committee and Knowledge Strategy Committee
   - Working closely with ISG, including as Business Owner for key ISG Learning and Teaching Services
   - Developing a university-wide community of practice in digital education

3. **Develop further the University's international leadership position in digital education, including:**
   - Representation in key UK and international conferences, networks and advisory groups
   - Development of partnerships with universities and technology providers
   - Explore possibilities for educational technology innovation and commercialisation with local and international partners