

The University of Edinburgh

**Senate Education Committee
Thursday 19 January 2023, 2.00 – 5.00pm
Hybrid Meeting – Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House
and Microsoft Teams**

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

DRAFT - for approval at meeting to be held on 19 January 2023

1. Attendance

Present	Position
Colm Harmon	Vice-Principal Students (Convener) – Ex Officio
Tina Harrison	Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance (Vice-Convener) – Ex Officio
Sabine Rolle	Representative of CAHSS (Learning and Teaching)
Lisa Kendall	Representative of CAHSS (Learning and Teaching)
Laura Bradley	Representative of CAHSS (Postgraduate Research)
Patrick Walsh	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Tim Stratford	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Antony Maciocia	Representative of CSE (Postgraduate Research)
Paddy Hadoke	Representative of CMVM (Postgraduate Research)
Jo Shaw	Head of School, CAHSS
Jason Love	Head of School, CSE
Sam Maccallum	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Vice President Education
Shelagh Green	Director for Careers & Employability – Ex Officio
Melissa Highton	Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Division of Information Services – Ex Officio; Assistant Principal (Online and Open Learning)
Velda McCune	Representing Director of Institute for Academic Development – Ex Officio
Tom Ward	Director of Academic Services – Ex Officio
Sian Bayne	Assistant Principal Digital Education
Lucy Evans	Deputy Secretary, Students
Marianne Brown	Head of Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling (Interim)
Richard Gratwick	Senate Representative
Susan Morrow	Senate Representative
Philippa Ward	Academic Services (Secretary)
In Attendance	
Teresa Ironside	Director of Data Science Education
Jon Turner	Director of Institute for Academic Development (in place of Velda McCune)
Amanda Percy	Curriculum Transformation
Helen-Rose Wood	Estates Department
Apologies	
Jamie Davies	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, UG)
Sarah Henderson	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, PGT)
Mike Shipston	Head of Deanery, CMVM
Laura Cattell	Representative of Student Recruitment and Admissions – Ex Officio
Mary Brennan	Senate Representative

The Convener welcomed the newly appointed Senate representatives to the Committee.

2. Minutes of Meeting held on 8 September 2022

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2022.

3. Convener's Communications

All relevant matters were discussed at later points in the agenda.

4. For Discussion

4.1 Examination Format

The paper was presented by the EUSA Vice-President Education. It included recommendations relating to examinations in 2022/23 in response to the results of a University-wide student survey on in-person exams.

The EUSA Vice-President Education advised members that almost 800 responses to the survey had been received. Responses showed that many students were unaware that their exams would be in person in 2022/23 and that there was significant unease amongst students about exam format. Students with disabilities and with widening participation backgrounds were particularly concerned about the return to in-person exams. Some of the free-text comments submitted in response to the survey were distressing. It was the EUSA Vice-President Education's view that the 2022/3 exam diets as currently planned posed a significant risk to student wellbeing and safety. Better communication around exam format was required, and the EUSA Vice-President Education urged the University to recognise and take full account of the disrupted educational experience the current cohort of students had had due to COVID-19. Specifically, it was recommended that:

- the summer diet return to online format for honours-level students only, with this being retained for the pandemic cohort in further years unless otherwise specified through further discussion. The same should be applied to the resit diet.
- the Committee should agree to provide time in February and / or at the beginning of Semester 2 to review the impact of the December exam diet on the current pandemic cohorts.
- all Schools support Special Circumstances applications relating directly to the examination format.

The Convener thanked the EUSA Vice-President Education for the high-quality paper and members discussed the following:

- Members shared or were sympathetic towards many of the concerns raised in the paper, particularly those around inclusion.
- It was noted that there was support available through IAD to help students prepare for in-person exams.
- Members welcomed the idea of a review of the December 2022 exam diet early in 2023. The Committee also discussed the need for ongoing review of exam format and its consequences for inclusion and academic misconduct.

- The Student Association's position was that it was supportive of diversifying assessment overall. The Committee was also keen to use forms of assessment other than in-person exams where this was appropriate. The recent work done by the University on Assessment and Feedback Principles reinforced this. However, alternative forms of assessment were not appropriate in all cases and had the potential to reduce academic integrity and therefore the value some professional bodies placed on Edinburgh degrees. It was noted that 'in-person exams' did not necessarily mean 'closed book exams'.
- The EUSA Vice-President Education reiterated that concerns around academic integrity should not override concerns around student wellbeing.

Senate members provided the following comments on the paper through the Senate representatives on the Committee:

- While there was sympathy for students and a recognition that a change of exam format can be unsettling, there was general agreement that staff should be supporting students to understand what was to be expected. There was an openness for a more nuanced conversation in partnership with students about assessment practice, even a more formal and routine justification of those practices from Schools. However there was a very firm view that assessment style and exam format must be a pedagogically-informed decision taken by Directors of Teaching and Learning, Boards of Studies, Exam Boards, and Course Organisers within Schools. Some disciplines may well wish to abandon in-person exams, but in-person exams may suit other disciplines. It was noted that 'in-person' did not automatically equate to 'closed-book'.
- The paper focused on uncertainty and anxiety. Anxiety around exam format however was conflated with anxiety around high-stakes final assessments. The solution to the problem of uncertainty was not to make further changes, but to commit to assessment style early to allow good communication and systems to be put in place.
- In relation to the paper's three recommendations:
 - It was not clear what was being asked in paragraph 13 given that there was no formal sense in which Schools supported Special Circumstances applications or otherwise. Insofar as Student Support Teams guided students through the process, this would continue.
 - Senate members questioned the value of the recommendation in paragraph 12. It was not clear that there would sufficient data available to conduct a thorough review, and there would certainly not be sufficient time to implement changes in time for the April / May 2023 exam diet.
 - Senate members firmly rejected the recommendation in paragraph 11. In-person exams offered equity of exam experience: not all students had a home environment with a stable internet connection and conducive study space. There had been endless problems around scan and upload and late submission, which would not be an issue in an in-person setting. Integrity of assessment was the most important issue. The University had knowingly accepted a compromise on this during the COVID-19 emergency. However, that emergency was now over and it was unacceptable to retain that compromise. In-person exams provided confidence that the person credited with the work was doing the work. Online exams provided no such confidence. There was ample evidence that any suggestion of such confidence was misplaced (formally escalated cases of misconduct massively under-represented the real scale of the problem). Assessments, particular at Honours level, were needed for integrity.

Senate Education Committee agreed that:

- While it was appropriate for the Committee to take a view on the matters discussed in the paper, it would not be possible for the Committee to direct Schools in relation to Semester 1 and 2 2022/23 exam format at this stage.
- As recognised in the paper, it was now too late to make any changes to the December 2022 exam diet. The focus would need to be on providing students with appropriate exam support.
- Where students had already been told what the format of their exams would be in the summer 2022/23 diet, it was unlikely to be possible to make further changes. Changes were likely to result in confusion and further unease. Furthermore, those areas that had chosen to use in-person exams in 2022/23 had generally done so because relevant issues had been carefully considered and it had been determined that in-person was the most appropriate format for the exam.
- Changes were more likely to be possible in those areas where students had not already been told explicitly about the format of their exams. (The EUSA Vice-President Education noted however that, even where Schools had communicated with students about exam format, many remained unaware of the arrangements that had been put in place. In addition, the University had been able to pivot very quickly during the pandemic demonstrating that change, even at a late stage, was possible.)
- Arrangements for the August 2023 resit diet had not yet been finalised and this matter needed to be addressed in advance of the January meetings of Exam Boards. There was thought to be strong support for moving towards a resit diet that was primarily online or conducted by means of alternative assessment. However, some in-person resits were likely to be required to satisfy the requirements of some professional or accrediting bodies.
- A review of the December 2022 exam diet would be conducted, although it was recognised that the suggested timing for the review of February 2023 might prove challenging.

Action:

- 1) Secretary to arrange a meeting to discuss the August 2023 resit diet.
- 2) Secretary to draft a communication to be sent to all Schools on behalf of the Vice-Principal Students highlighting the concerns raised in the paper; asking them to engage in open and detailed discussion with their students about 2022/23 exam format; and requesting that they ensure that students were adequately supported to undertake these assessments.
- 3) Review of December 2022 exam diet to be conducted early in 2023.

4.2 Futures for our Teaching Spaces: Principles and Visions for Connecting Space to the Curriculum

The paper's authors, Sian Bayne and Helen-Rose Wood, noted that the University needed to do further work on the relationship between space and the curriculum to understand how physical environments supported pedagogy, and vice-versa. Significant investment in the Learning and Teaching estate was planned in the next five years and it was hoped that the ideas outlined in the paper could influence the development plans.

The paper aimed to take account not only of internal aspirations, for example around the student experience and Curriculum Transformation, but also to factor in issues around sustainability, planetary health and a desire to create architectures of enduring value to the world.

The Committee strongly endorsed the paper and made the following points:

- The focus on belonging was particularly welcome, and the importance to the student experience of providing students with high quality social spaces was noted.
- There would be value in looking again at the layout of teaching spaces (for example reducing the numbers of desks in rooms) to ensure that these could be used flexibly.
- While it was important to think strategically and ambitiously about our estate, it was also important to ensure that we were being realistic and were not over-promising.

Senate members provided the following comments on the paper through the Senate representatives on the Committee:

- There was no objection to the proposals outlined in the paper per se.
- There was a query about the value of resourcing outdoor teaching spaces given that core undergraduate teaching in Edinburgh is concentrated in Autumn, Winter and Early Spring.
- It was important to prioritize and get the basics right first: adequate core teaching spaces; lectures theatres of appropriate capacity; computer labs with the correct specialist software; lockers and desks for postgraduate students; and office space for staff.
- While the idea of moving away from ‘locking down’ University buildings was supported, there was uncertainty about a ‘museum project’ being the correct approach. “Authentic and inviting public programming” was considered key in relation to this.
- How did we envisage our student composition changing under Curriculum Transformation, and how was this informing Estates’ discussions?

It was agreed that the Committee’s comments and those of Senate members would be fed back to Estates Committee by Helen-Rose Wood.

4.3 Planning for the Future of Assessment and Misconduct

The author of the paper, Sian Bayne, introduced the paper and noted that it argued for:

- Greater awareness of new technologies and the need to make positive changes to assessment practices in response.
- A wider conversation within the University about the use of Turnitin.

The Committee had received feedback on the paper from the three College Academic Misconduct Officers (CAMOs):

- They recognised the threat to the University’s assessment practices posed by essay mills and AI tools, and saw assessment re-design as an opportunity to both produce better assessments and reduce assessment vulnerabilities.
- However, in relation to Turnitin, while the imperfections of plagiarism detection systems were recognised, the CAMOs did not consider there to be justification at the current time for not using them for assessments involving written work that were considered to have

plagiarism vulnerability. The majority of serious academic misconduct cases currently considered by the University were flagged through Turnitin, and it was difficult to see how most would be noticed without it.

The Committee endorsed the analysis set out in the paper, and expressed a desire to ensure that there was not a culture of distrust around our assessment practices. It was noted that the ideas within the paper linked well with the recently introduced Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities. The benefits of setting fewer, higher-quality assessments and of using programme-level as opposed to course-level assessment were recognised. It was noted that it would be important to take the needs of calculation-based courses into account when considering the future of assessment.

4.4 Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review 2021/22

The paper provided the Committee with analysis and potential actions drawn from the responses received to the light-touch internal Senate Standing Committees' Effectiveness Review conducted over the summer 2022.

Members did not have any comments to make during the meeting, but noted that they could follow-up with the Committee Secretary after the meeting if they wished.

Senate members noted that point 11 of the paper, which stated that "No comments were received from Senate" was not wholly accurate. While Senate did not have space to discuss this paper at their October 2022 meeting under the paper heading, it was referenced elsewhere in the meeting that Senate recognised the need to improve BAME and student representation in the Senate Standing Committees.

5. Standing Items

5.1 Curriculum Transformation Update

Jon Turner introduced this paper, which provided an update on progress with the development of a proposed curriculum framework for consideration via the appropriate University governance channels, including Senate and other groups, in early 2023.

Appendix 1 provided information about progress with the main elements of the programme, namely development of the Edinburgh Student Vision, Curriculum Design Principles and Programme Archetypes. A second iteration of the Undergraduate Programme Archetypes was presented and members noted that at least one further iteration would be needed before the end of the Semester. Appendix 2 provided a first pass at articulating some of the rules and guidance for how the Curriculum Framework should be applied and used.

Members discussed the following:

- The Vision and Principles were considered to contain many excellent ideas.
- Concerns were expressed about whether the University was in a position to manage another large-scale change project at the current time given the level of appetite amongst staff for further change in the context of the People and Money implementation.
- It was recognised that there were questions amongst staff around 'what problem the University was trying to fix' with the Curriculum Transformation Programme. However, members noted that feedback showed that students wanted an interdisciplinary

curriculum that equipped them both to survive and thrive in an uncertain world. Some aspects of the current curriculum structures and processes inhibited them and students and many staff were looking for change.

- Members agreed that there was a strong case for running some well-funded and well-supported pilot courses, building on existing good practice, as a starting point. These could incorporate innovative assessment, and the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance was keen to work with anyone who would appreciate support in this area.

In response to members' comments, the paper's authors noted that a co-creation approach was being adopted to ensure that all views were taken into account, and that the project Board would be able to consider adjusting timescales where needed. Learning from other change projects would inform the way in which this Programme was taken forward. It was also noted that additional comments on the paper after the meeting would be welcomed by the authors.

5.2 Student Experience Update

The paper was presented by the Deputy Secretary, Students. A minor correction to point 10 of the paper was noted: the School of Economics had rolled the new Student Support Model out to students in years 1 to 3, not to all years as stated. Feedback at this stage was positive.

6. For Approval

6.1 National Student Survey 2023 – Outcome of Office for Students Review and Optional Questions

The paper confirmed the outcome of the Office for Students (OfS) review of the NSS and the resultant changes to the survey which would be in place for 2023. It also presented the proposed optional questions specifically for students at the University of Edinburgh (Banks 9 and 11).

Senate members flagged concerns about some of the wording of the core NSS questions, but it was noted that the University did not have any control over these questions. Senate members also requested that the University consider asking questions from Banks 2, 7, 10 and 17.

The Committee noted that only two banks of questions could be selected and agreed to the proposal that Banks 9 and 11 be selected on the basis that these questions had been asked of students previously and would allow data to be compared year on year.

7. For Information / Noting

7.1 Learn Ultra

7.1.1 Learn Ultra Upgrade

7.1.2 Learn Ultra Early Adopter Programme

The Committee was advised that the Learn Ultra upgrade was underway and progressing on time and on budget. Most of the existing tools remained in the new system, and the main changes were therefore to navigation.

The paper indicated that the Early Adopter Programme was also progressing well and feedback was positive. Early Adopters were providing information about what it would be most helpful to include in the user support package.

The Committee made the following comments:

- Members had heard very positive feedback about the new system and were grateful for the work that had been done. The improvements to the appearance of the home page in the new system were welcomed.
- While most of the tools previously used by members were still available in the new system, some were not, and the absence of these was causing a degree of concern. Members were reassured that there were ongoing conversations with Schools about what needed to be mapped across. Schools were encouraged to report anything that was missing from the new system. Members requested clear and timely communication from the Learn Ultra team about any features of the old system which were not going to be mapped across.
- In relation to the 'Resource Implications' sections of both papers, members noted that the workload associated with the migration to the new system was perhaps underestimated. In addition to the two hours of training Course Organisers would need to learn the new interface, time would be required to rebuild courses in the new system. In addition, there was likely to be a time commitment for learning technologists and Teaching Office staff.

Senate members provided the following feedback on the papers:

- There was a question around why the University was committing to this platform transformation ahead of a review of digital estates and learning technology within the Curriculum Transformation Programme and elsewhere. How did this major change project align with others?
- Questions were raised about the resource implications described in the paper – the 2 hours of training time quoted was considered to be a significant underestimate. It was further noted that training should be offered in good time: August was too late.
- More emphasis needed to be placed on the risks of ignoring student and staff feedback (17d) and continuity of online learning (17e).
- There were specific questions relating to:
 - Governance: when and how many Learn Ultra project board meetings were scheduled to take place throughout stage 2 (Enabling Learn Ultra Courses)?
 - Resource implications:
 - Did the assumption (2 hours training required) imply learning technologists would be responsible for migrating existing course content into Learn Ultra courses? Or was it expected that course leaders would spend two hours learning the new interface and then build courses themselves? (Note: Sharepoint indicated that courses could not be exported directly without producing a number of error messages).
 - Could there be clarity around the support that would be provided to course teams to handle this aspect of the migration to Learn Ultra?
 - Communication:

- Had this happened? The writer of the question was not aware of any engagement sessions within their area for the purpose of gathering requirements. Who would be asked to feed into discussions and when / how?
- When was an implementation plan expected to be finalised and communicated to staff?

The Assistant Principal Online and Open Learning responded to Senate members' questions directly following the meeting.

Philippa Ward
Academic Services
30 November 2022

Senate Education Committee

19 January 2023

Coordinating Institutional Activities on Assessment and Feedback

Description of paper

1. The Senate Standing Committees – Senate Education Committee (SEC), Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC), and Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) - and the Curriculum Transformation Programme, have a range of assessment-related activities underway at present. This paper provides an overview of current or planned activities – dividing them into two categories:
 - Activities relating to strategy and policy
 - Activities relating to guidance, procedures, data, systems and evaluation
2. The paper sets out options for coordinating and governing these activities.

Action requested / recommendation

3. The Committee is invited to approve the establishment of two new groups, as set out in paragraphs 9 to 18.
4. Some of the activities associated with the second group (Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data and Evaluation Group) is the responsibility of either the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) or the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC). Therefore, if SEC supports the establishment of this group, we will also need to seek approval from SQAC and APRC.

Background and context

5. For a long time, the University has regarding strengthening assessment and a feedback arrangements as a high priority, in the context of persistently low scores for assessment and feedback questions in the National Student Survey. Assessment and feedback is a key theme within the Curriculum Transformation Programme, and the report of the University's 2021 Enhancement-Led Institutional Review highlighted the area as a key priority for development activities, stating that:

“Over an extended period of time, the University has considered a broad evidence-base which has highlighted concerns about assessment and feedback and this remains an area of challenge for the institution. The University is asked to make demonstrable progress, within the next academic year, in prioritising the development of a holistic and strategic approach to the design and management of assessment and feedback. The University should also progress with proposals for the establishment of a common marking scheme to ensure comparability of student assessment processes across Schools.”

6. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent return of many activities to campus, the University has needed to consider a range of issues regarding the design and practical operation of assessment – for example, the operation of examinations in an online and on-campus format. Developments in artificial intelligence and other technologies have also stimulated institutional discussion and activities about assessment practice – particularly in the context of plagiarism and its detection. In addition, debates at sector level, for example on the topics of ‘grade inflation’, and the University’s commitment to equality and diversity and widening participation, have generated a range of activities relating to understanding student progression and achievement.
7. As a result of these and other drivers, the University has initiated a range of different institutional initiatives on assessment and feedback. However, there is scope to coordinate and govern these activities more effectively, in order to avoid duplication and deliver positive synergies between different strands of work, and to ensure that the institution has sufficient oversight of progress in this area.
8. The Annex to this paper summarises the main activities currently underway (focussing on those that are the responsibility of the Senate Standing Committees). It highlights some outstanding issues (where the relevant committee has agreed that work should take place but no plan of action is in place) and some areas of potential overlap between different strands of activity. Paragraphs 8 to 17 propose the establishment of two new groups to coordinate and govern these activities.

Discussion

Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group

9. We propose to establish a strategy group with a remit to address the following:
 - Institutional strategy around assessment and feedback
 - Institutional strategy around academic integrity in assessment
 - Institutional policy around mode of examinations from 2023-24 onwards
 - Overseeing Schools’ activities to align with the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities, and coordinating management responses where required
10. The group would report to SEC. The membership would consist of:
 - Prof Tina Harrison, Vice-Principal (Academic Standards and Quality Assurance (Convener)
 - Prof Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal (Students)
 - Lucy Evans (Deputy Secretary, Students)
 - Deans of Learning and Teaching for each College
 - One School representative from each College (either a Head of School or Director of Learning and Teaching)
 - Students’ Associated representative

- Other staff would be invited to contribute on particular issues

11. The Curriculum Transformation Programme established an Assessment and Feedback Group, which led the development of the Assessment and Feedback Principles. One option may be to revise the remit, membership, and reporting lines of that group so that it can cover these proposed activities along with its current remit. However, in practice, that group has not been active since 2021-22, and, while there is overlap between these proposed activities and Curriculum Transformation, it is important that the University makes progress on a range of activities in advance of the timescales for implementing Curriculum Transformation. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to have a newly-constituted strategy group reporting directly to the Senate Education Committee.

Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group

12. We propose to establish a second group with a remit to address the following:

- Develop institutional advice and guidance on the practical management of online and on-campus examinations
- Oversee the development of academic misconduct procedures*
- Coordinate the evaluation of the operation of examinations during 2022-23 and beyond (including the planned evaluation of the Dec 22 diet)
- Coordinate activities to enhance institutional data on student achievement, progression and completion – with a view to providing a single source of truth in a user-friendly format
- Coordinate practical activities (eg development of guidance) to support the implementation of the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities
- Develop mechanisms for evaluation and monitoring of the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities

* In practice, a separate sub-group would be required for this, with input from College and School Academic Misconduct Officers.

13. The group would report to the three Senate Standing Committees on issues related to their respective remits.

14. The membership would include:

- Lucy Evans (Deputy Secretary, Students) (Convener)
- Lisa Dawson (Academic Registrar)
- Prof Tina Harrison (Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance, and convener of SQAC)
- Dr Paul Norris (Convener of APRC)
- Deans of Learning and teaching for three Colleges
- Deans of Quality for three Colleges
- Heads of Academic Administration from each College
- Representative of Strategic Planning

- Representative of Student Systems
- Students' Association representative
- Academic Services representative
- Information Services Group's Learning, Teaching and Web Services team representative
- Curriculum Transformation Programme representative
- Other staff would be invited to contribute on particular issues

Timelines, next steps and reporting arrangements

15. If the Committee supports the establishment of these two groups, then we will seek APRC and SQAC approval for the second group (see paragraph 4).
16. Each group will start by developing a workplan, taking account of the planned and outstanding issues set out in the Annex, and the level of professional services resources available to undertake the relevant work (see paragraph 19). They would present their workplans to the relevant Senate Committee(s) for approval. If the groups identify any urgent issues, they would oversee progress on these over the next several months in parallel with developing their workplans.
17. The groups would report to the relevant Senate Committees to provide an overview of progress against their workplan at least once in 2022-23 and once in 2023-24. Where they require formal Committee approval (for example, for a change to policy), they would submit formal proposals to the relevant Committee.
18. The Committees would review the operation of the two groups at the end of 2023-24 and decide whether they should continue.

Resource implications

19. Academic Services and the broader Registry Services will need to assess the resource requirements of supporting these two groups, once the Committee (and, for the second group, APRC and SQAC) have signalled that they are content with the direction of travel, and the groups have developed their workplans. As part of this, the Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling team would play a key role in supporting data-related elements of the work. In addition, the Curriculum Transformation Programme have signalled that they may be able to provide some support. The workplan of each group will need to take account of available resources – this is likely to require a degree of prioritisation, and may require the phasing of some activities.

Risk management

20. The recommendations within the paper aim to enhance the assessment and feedback experience for students, reducing the risks associated with poor performance in assessment and feedback and the likelihood of an unsatisfactory outcome in a future ELIR from not taking action

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

21. Not Applicable.

Equality & diversity

22. One of the Assessment and Feedback principles directly addresses inclusive assessment practice and equality in assessment outcomes, and it is likely that some of the planned activities of the Guidance, Procedures, Data and Evaluation Group would relate to developing the University's understanding of student progression, attainment and completion for students with different characteristics and backgrounds.

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

23. Academic Services would use the Senate Committees' Newsletter to communicate regarding the establishment of these groups. Paragraphs 15 to 18 set out implementation and evaluation arrangements.

Author

Tom Ward
Director of Academic Services
10 January 2023

Presenter

Tom Ward

Freedom of Information

Open

Annex - overview of current institutional activities relating to assessment and feedback

1 Activities relating to strategy and policy

1.1 *Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities (SEC)*

At its 8 September 2022 meeting, the Senate Education Committee (SEC) approved the new Principles and Priorities, and asked Schools to implement them on the following basis:

- 2022-23 implement some specific elements of the document in full, plus review current assessment and feedback practice against the Principles and Priorities, identifying gaps and actions to be taken forward in the second year of operation, 2023-24; and
- 2023-24, demonstrate full alignment with the Principles for all their taught portfolio, ensuring baseline expectations are covered, and demonstrate significant action against the Priorities in preparation for Curriculum Transformation.

Over summer 2022 and Semester One of 2022-23, the University is undertaking the following activities to support the launch of the Principles and Priorities:

- During Semester one of 22-23, Prof Colm Harmon (Vice-Principal, Students), Prof Tina Harrison (Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance) and Lucy Evans (Deputy Secretary, Students) met with the senior leadership team in each School separately to discuss progress with the assessment and feedback principles and priorities as part of a wider discussion on student experience.
- The Directors of Teaching Network meeting on 19 October 2022 focussed on the Principles and Priorities.
- A Teaching Matters series comprising eight blogs has provided further discussion of the Principles and Priorities : <https://www.teaching-matters-blog.ed.ac.uk/tag/assessment-and-feedback-principles-and-priorities-theme/>
- A student intern, working as part of the Curriculum Transformation Programme, has developed an initial draft of student-facing guidance that requires some further development before making available to students (aiming to have this available by the end of Semester 2, 2022/23).
- Prof Harrison and Dr Neil Lent (Institute for Academic Development) are coordinating a series of seminar/events with internal and external speakers to support assessment development (linking to the key Principles and Priorities).

1.2 *Futures for Assessment and Misconduct (SEC)*

At its 10 November 2022 meeting, SEC discussed a paper from Professor Sian Bayne (Assistant Principal, Digital Education), which provided “a brief overview of current trends and trajectories in digital assessment and plagiarism detection, with a particular focus on 1) the implications of AI-assisted text generation and 2) rising concern over routine use of plagiarism detections systems such as Turnitin.” The paper aimed to “inform a wider institutional debate on the future of assessment” – and it proposed “that Senate Education Committee lead on more fully developing a response to these new trajectories, building on

the new Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities, and for implementation through the Curriculum Transformation Programme and the Digital Strategy.”

While SEC endorsed the paper’s analysis, it did not approve specific actions to address the issues highlighted in the paper.

There is potential overlap between any activities that SEC may wish to undertake in response to the paper, and work to support the implementation of the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Practices (which includes, for example, a principle around Assessment design to “support and encourage good academic practices and minimise opportunities or incentives for academic misconduct”). There is also potential overlap with the ARPC work on redeveloping academic misconduct procedures (See 2.2).

1.3 Academic Integrity (SEC)

In Spring 2022, SEC held a special meeting with representatives from the University of Sydney, and the College Academic Misconduct Officers, to discuss how to approach academic integrity. While this meeting did not lead to any formal actions, it did highlight various areas for potential development. One potential development was to create a course for students on the topic of academic integrity. The Institute for Academic Development has made progress on this issue – having identified a resource that the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (MVM) digital education team had developed (see separate January 2023 SEC paper on Academic Best Practice).

In its plan for 22-23, SEC agreed to follow up these discussions with Sydney by focusing on academic integrity. At present, SEC has not established a particular plan to address this – although some other activities set out in this Annex (for example, 1.4, 2.2, 2.3) are engaging with aspects of academic integrity.

1.4 Examination formats (SEC)

At its meeting on 10 November 2022, SEC discussed the issue of examination format (whether examinations should be held on-campus or online), and considered a report on the outcomes of a survey commissioned by the Students’ Association on the subject of in-person examinations. The Committee agreed to some follow-up actions:

- Prof Colm Harmon to write to Schools highlighting issues set out in the Students’ Association report (which he did in December 2022); and
- Setting up a short-life working group to consider the policy on the mode (online or on-campus) for resit exams in summer 2023 – with a view to securing a formal SEC position in Jan 2023 (see separate January 2023 SEC paper on August 2023 resits).

These actions relate to examinations held in 2022-23. If the Committee wishes to determine policy in relation to the format of examinations from 2023-24 onwards, it will need to agree a position on this by the end of session 2022-23.

1.5 Curriculum Transformation Programme

The implementation of CTP will have implications for assessment and feedback practices - the CTP has included a working group on Assessment and Feedback, which led the development of the Assessment and Feedback Priorities and Principles document.

2 Activities relating to assessment and feedback guidance, procedures, data, systems and evaluation

2.1 Examination formats (APRC)

In November 2022, the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) approved some guidance for Schools / Colleges on the practical arrangements for managing online exams in 22-23 (focussing on submission deadlines). The Convener of APRC plans to take a broader look at the practical arrangements for online examinations ahead of 2023-24. APRC has agreed that future guidance would take account of exams for wholly online programmes (a category excluded from the guidance approved by APRC in November 2022).

2.2 Academic misconduct procedure (APRC)

In November 2022, APRC agreed some relatively modest amendments to the academic misconduct procedures. Academic Services plan to communicate these changes in January 2023, with a view to them taking immediate effect.

APRC plans to consider some more substantive changes to those procedures later in 2022-23.

2.3 Own Work Declarations (SEC)

The Institute for Academic Development has worked with Information Services Group on proposals for alternate ways to handle Own Work Declarations. They are presenting a separate paper on this to SEC's January 2023 meeting.

2.4 Evaluation of the implementation of the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities (SEC)

When SEC approved the Principles and Priorities, the paper said that: "The Committee will need to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Principles – including determining measures of success, and deciding the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. We will bring proposals to a future meeting for how to approach this."

SEC has not yet discussed how to approach this evaluation. However, at its meeting in December 2022, the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) agreed that the 2022-23 annual School Quality Reports (which they will submit in August 2023) should include the question "Please report on activities to align existing practice with the new Assessment and

Feedback Principles and Priorities”. This will provide one element of an overall approach to monitoring and evaluation.

2.5 Evaluation of the operation of examinations in the December 2022 diet (SEC)

At its 10 November 2022 meeting, SEC agreed to conduct a review of the December 2022 examination diet early in 2023. It has not yet considered any proposals for how to approach this review. If it wants to take account of the outcomes of course results from that diet, these will not be available until Boards of Examiners meet in January / early February 2023 to confirm Semester one results (deadline 9 February 2023 for publishing UG course results, and 17 February 2023 for publishing PGT course results).

2.6 Senate Quality Assurance Committee – annual reporting on undergraduate degree award (SQAC)

SQAC has an established practice of reviewing a report of data on UG degree award / classification on an annual basis, based on a detailed analysis (including benchmarking with comparator institutions, plus some analysis by protected characteristic) produced by Strategic Planning. Academic Services circulates this data to Schools and invites significant outliers to provide more detailed reflection. SQAC considers this dataset each Spring, and plans to discuss the next annual report on 27 April 2023. It wants the next report to include additional focus on the following:

“... a trend analysis excluding data from the 2019-20 and 2020-21 pandemic years. The analysis should also include a comparison of entry qualifications to exit qualifications both at subject area level and institutional level to understand the trajectory of students and the value added by the University. The report should also include analysis of failure rates to understand which groups may need enhanced support.”

This work has potential to overlap with the activities set out in 2.7 and 2.8 below.

2.7 Quality Data Task Group (SQAC)

The Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling team maintains an ‘Insights Hub’ suite of reports that Schools use for annual quality reporting (and that we use for periodic reviews) includes standard reports covering the following categories:

- Applications
- Course marks
- Progression
- Awards
- Graduate outcomes survey
- National Student Survey results

In 2020, SQAC agreed to set up a task group to explore ways to do more systematic monitoring of retention, progression and attainment data. In practice, due to the pandemic,

staff changes, and other factors, this group has not yet made any progress. SQAC considered an update at its meeting in February 2022, and is committed to undertaking more work on this in the current session. However, it has not yet established a workplan. Were SQAC to move forward with this work, it would have potential to overlap with work under 2.6, 2.8 and 2.9, and (depending on the focus of the evaluation, 2.5).

2.8 *Equality Diversity Monitoring and Research Committee (EDMARC) and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) Committee activities*

EDMARC oversees the production of annual equality and diversity reports, which include a detailed analysis of UG / PGT / PGT attainment by protected characteristic (including some data by School):

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/about/reports/edmarc>

EDIC is undertaking work to understand the underlying causes of the awarding gaps for students from different protected characteristics, and the Convener of EDIC is exploring potential ways to collect more granular and accessible data on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students.

2.9 *Research into Undergraduate Non-Continuation (SEC)*

In 2018-19, Academic Services and Strategic Planning commissioned two PhD students to undertake a very thorough analysis of non-completion data. The Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (replaced by the Senate Education Committee from 2019-20) discussed the report in November 2018:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/agendapapers20181114.pdf>

The report include statistical modelling of non-continuation by a range of student characteristics, and identified various areas for further exploration. At its meeting in November 2018, the Committee made various recommendations for follow-up actions, and at its meeting in January 2019, LTC considered a paper setting up proposals for further research into the impact of other factors on non-continuation.

2.10 *Curriculum Transformation Programme – work on inclusion and accessibility*

The CTP has commissioned Advance HE to deliver a programme of learning and engagement to ensure the Curriculum Transformation Programme embeds ED&I throughout its strategy and implementation. This will include a desk-based analysis, which will include an analysis of:

- **Awarding gaps** by protected characteristics
- **Participation gaps** by protected characteristics

Advance HE is in the process of undertaking this work, and plans to submit an interim report in the near future.

Senate Education Committee

19 January 2023

Proposed Arrangements for August 2023 Resit Diet

Description of paper

1. The paper makes proposals for the arrangements for the August 2023 resit diet (and beyond).

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is invited to discuss and approve the proposed arrangements.

Background and context

3. At its November 2022 meeting, Education Committee agreed that, in response to a paper presented by the Students' Association Vice-President Education raising concerns about examination format, a group would be convened to consider arrangements for the August 2023 resit diet.
4. This group met on 5 December 2022. It was convened by the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance and included the Students' Association Vice-President Education; two representatives of the Colleges of Science and Engineering and Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; a representative of the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine; and a representative of Timetabling and Examinations.
5. Following discussion, the group produced a set of proposals for the August 2023 resit diet (and beyond) which are detailed in the discussion section below.

Discussion

6. During its meeting, the group acknowledged that in-person resits in August create significant difficulties for students: many students are not in Edinburgh routinely in August, and travelling and finding short-term accommodation during the Festival can be difficult and costly. In-person resits in August are particularly challenging for international students and for those who are working during the summer or undertaking internships. These considerations are of even greater importance in the context of a cost-of-living crisis.
7. The group agreed that, in the medium-term, the University should be aiming to minimize the use of in-person exams, particularly in the August resit diet.
8. However, further careful thought first needs to be given to the way in which the University can introduce robust and inclusive alternative forms of assessment of the

type envisaged in the University's [Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities](#).

The group agreed that it will not be possible to do all of this thinking in academic year 2022/23 and therefore in advance of the August 2023 resit diet. While some Schools will be in a position to move away from in-person resits in August 2023, and should be encouraged to do so, it will not be possible for all Schools to transition in time.

9. The group further noted that in-person resit exams are always likely to be a requirement for some professional degrees, and that some accrediting bodies stipulate that resits need to take the same form as the original assessment.
10. The group agreed that it may be possible to achieve greater flexibility around resits in future years by:
 - a. Considering how similar to an original assessment a resit needs to be.
 - b. Considering the timing of resits. Do they need to take place in August? Could resits for Semester 1 courses be taken in May alongside the Semester 2 exam diet? Could some resits be carried forward into the following academic year?
 - c. Considering whether vivas might be used to assess students' abilities in some cases.
 - d. Considering whether a distinction can be made between Honours and Pre-Honours assessments. Concerns around moving away from in-person exams often relate to academic integrity. Could the University take a deliberately more relaxed approach to academic integrity in earlier years of study, recognising that students cheating in these exams are ultimately doing themselves a disservice as they are unlikely to possess the competencies required for later years of study?
11. Following discussion, the group proposed the following in relation to the August 2023 diet (and beyond):
 - a. Those Schools that are in a position to move away from in-person resits in the August 2023 resit diet should be encouraged to do so (provided they have not already informed students that resits will take the form of in-person examinations).
 - b. Schools that are not able to transition in Academic year 2022/23 should be permitted to use in-person exams in the August 2023 resit diet.
 - c. Guidance on possible approaches to resits should be issued to Schools in advance of January 2023 Exam Boards.
 - d. Support for those students needing to take in-person resits in the August 2023 diet should be investigated. Options include:
 - Scaling up the overseas resit examination service.
 - Asking Accommodation Services about the accommodation it might be able to make available during the resit diet.
 - Considering ways in which students undertaking resits might be supported financially.(Should the Committee be supportive of this approach, the Academic Registrar will be asked to report on what might be possible at the March 2023 meeting.)

- e. In the medium-term, further work should be done on making changes to assessment to minimize the need for in-person resits. (Benchmarking against other institutions is likely to be beneficial in this respect.) The proposed arrangements for coordinating and governing assessment and feedback activities (see Paper B) may be able to assist with this work.

The Committee is invited to discuss and approve these proposals.

Resource implications

19. Making changes to assessment that minimize the need for in-person exams will have significant implications for the workloads of both academic and professional services staff. Much of this work is already underway: in response to the introduction of the [Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities](#) in September 2022, Schools have been asked to review their assessment practices in the current academic year and to be fully aligned with the Principles and to take significant action against the Priorities from academic year 2023/24. However, making short-term changes for summer 2023 (for example, scaling up the overseas resit examinations service) will have unanticipated resource implications.

Risk management

20. While it is recognised that resits in August create difficulties for students, preventing Schools from offering in-person exams in the August 2023 resit diet would create unacceptable risks around academic integrity. The papers proposes investigating ways in which those students who need to take resits in the August 2023 diet might be supported to minimize risks to their wellbeing.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

21. Not Applicable.

Equality & diversity

22. In the medium-term, minimizing the need for in-person exams, particularly in resit diets, should enhance and make the assessment experience more equitable for students.

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

23. Academic Services will use the Senate Committees' Newsletter to communicate any decisions taken by the Committee in relation the August 2023 resit diet.

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10 January 2023

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Freedom of Information
Open

Senate Education Committee

19 January 2023

Academic Best Practice: Consistent and Equitable Application of an Own Work Declaration

Description of paper

1. Own work declarations (OWDs) are used in various ways across the University leading to an inconsistent experience for students. In some cases, they are used as a gateway to accessing each and every component of assessment, which can be challenging for some student groups. The proposal in this paper outlines a plan for changing the way OWDs are used to make our assessment processes more accessible, supportive and consistent whilst saving valuable time in administration and support. This relates to Strategy 2030 outcome – “We will have more user-friendly processes and efficient systems to support our work.”

Action requested / recommendation

2. For discussion, and for SEC to agree resource options, and that OWD proposal can move on to APRC for approval. There would need to be further discussion with Academic Services to agree wording for a central OWD which would be discussed at APRC.

Background and context

3. Students are sometimes asked when submitting assignments to make a declaration that the work is their own. This ‘own work declaration’ (OWD) as part of the assessment process has become a convention in some areas of the University, the underlying need for which is sometimes lost. In practise it is also inconsistently applied, especially when submission is online via the virtual learning environment (VLE) – sometimes not at all, sometimes for every submitted component of assessment, and often using various mechanisms – which leads to inequity of experience for our student population.
4. OWD workflows often sit in isolation to other aspects of academic skills development including developing an awareness of academic integrity. Alongside the increasingly ubiquitous use of Turnitin for originality checking it forms part of what could be perceived by students as a ‘policing’ approach to academic integrity, reminding them ‘not to cheat’ rather than encouraging good practice and creativity in their assessed work (see also Professor Sian Bayne’s recent paper to Senate Education Committee on *Futures for assessment and misconduct*). In relation to University academic policy, OWD is only mentioned briefly as a suggested ‘academic best practice’ in point 29.3 of the Taught Assessment Regulations: “Students may be asked to sign a declaration that the work submitted is their own work” (<https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf>). There is no further University-level guidance on how, when, or why to apply an OWD.

Discussion

5. As submission of assignments have moved online, the workflows for OWD have become ‘baked into’ a number of ‘workarounds’ in the virtual learning environment (VLE), Blackboard Learn. This is the VLE used by the vast majority of students. These

workarounds take many and varied forms, but broadly involve hiding the submission link, and sometimes other content, until the student clicks on a checkbox, or completes a quiz, asking them to confirm that they have read and understood the OWD. This OWD text is provided annually to the Learn service team by Academic Services. The overall process has become 'taken for granted' in some areas and sometimes confused with a policy position.

6. The use of adaptive release and quiz features in Learn are technical workarounds using teaching and learning tools rather than specific OWD features. Hiding the submission link by default until the student has completed an action constitutes a barrier towards submission at a very stressful point in a student's learning journey. These workarounds are applied in a variety of inconsistent ways and are prone to human error at point of setup, therefore increasing potential for a negative impact on student experience. They are also time consuming for teaching and teaching support staff to set up and support.
7. In the upgraded Learn Ultra Course View the adaptive release feature has been rationalised. It no longer supports the hiding of content items until a single radio button is checked. Since this is how many areas were implementing the OWD workaround there has been concern in some early adopter groups that Learn Ultra 'does not support OWD'. The ISG position is that Learn has never had an OWD feature and therefore this is not a deficit of the upgrade, rather it is a useful rationalisation of teaching and learning features.
8. Academic Services have confirmed that OWD is not mandatory and does not need to be applied to every assignment. The absence of an OWD would not prevent the University from taking action against a student who had submitted work which was not their own. Supporting a good understanding of academic integrity and reminding students that assignments should be their own work remains a recommendation of good academic practice as outlined in the expectations of students in the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities. Suggestions for OWD approaches provided by academic services include a single consent form at the start of the academic year with regular email reminders. However, currently there is no consistent recommendation.
9. Related to this, is the issue of supporting our students to be active, ethical members of our academic community. There is an 'Academic integrity' resource available within the 'Help and Support' function in Learn. This is a website (https://www.ems-its.mvm.ed.ac.uk/AcademicIntegrity/story_html5.html) developed by the Digital Education Unit in CMVM. The resource covers many of the core aspects of academic integrity, however it could be strengthened with additional content on group working and collusion which is an area students are struggling with. In addition, there are discussions underway about whether there should be University-wide courses which appear in all students' Learn course lists, and whether these courses should be compulsory or recommended.
10. There is significant concern among Schools about whether students are 'ready' for Higher Education, in particular issues around academic practise and time management. This relates to ongoing work elsewhere on a revised Extensions and Special Circumstances policy, and The Curriculum Transformation Project.
11. The authors propose different options for encouraging Schools to move away from reliance upon OWD, and also suggest ways to enhance support for academic good practice and advice to students.
12. We would ask SEC to agree that Schools should be encouraged to move away from inconsistent use of OWDs within individual Learn courses, and instead the University should replace this with an annual registration of OWD attached to a dedicated course

about academic good practice in Learn made available by default to all students. This course would be very short, and based on the 'Academic integrity' resource.

13. This would closely align the OWD with positive support resources about academic good practice which they would be asked/required to review before signing the annual declaration.
14. There are 5 suggested options for supporting good academic practice at a general level which would complement the use of an annual OWD. This will not replace the excellent work Schools already provide to their students. SEC is asked to identify which option should be taken forward:
 - A. Do nothing – assume Schools/Colleges will cover this fully
 - B. Re-package the current 'Academic integrity' website resource, and import it into a mini Learn course, add it as a University-wide course available to all students, annual update for broken links;
 - C. Adapt the course fully to Learn Ultra (removing reliance on commercial training package), add in content on collusion, develop case studies and activities, add it as a University-wide course, ongoing maintenance to update case studies and adapt materials;
 - D. Adapt the course fully to Learn Ultra, add in content on collusion, develop case studies and activities, add it as a University-wide course, ongoing maintenance to update case studies and adapt materials, moderate discussion boards for first three weeks of semester
 - E. Adapt the course fully to Learn Ultra, create an additional shortened version which would be visible to returning students; add in content on collusion, develop case studies and activities, add it as a University-wide course, ongoing maintenance to update case studies and adapt materials, moderate discussion boards for first three weeks of semester

Lowest	Usefulness to students	Resource requirements	Support for University priorities and strategy	Ongoing support overhead on wider University staff
	A	A	A	E
	B	B	B	D
	C	C	C	C
	D	D	D	B
Highest	E	E	E	A

Resource implications

15. Current resourcing in IAD, ISG and The Digital Education Unit in CMVM would allow for option B to be undertaken over summer 2023. Funding would be required to implement options D to E for start of academic year 2023/24. Rough estimates of costings required for each option are given below:

- Option C would be approximately 15 days effort = ~£5400;
- Option D would be approximately 25 days effort = ~£9000;
- Option E would be approximately 25 days effort = ~£9000 + ~£5k annual funding for moderators (PhD students).

16. Removing the OWD workaround would free up resource by lifting a burden from those who have to set up the workarounds in the VLE, often teaching office or academic support staff. It also has a positive support implication as time would not need to be spent unpicking support queries from students and staff when unsupported workarounds have been wrongly applied. This is reflected in the table under point 14 as the overall resource overhead decreasing for wider University staff with the increasing resource requirements of the options presented in this paper.

17. Resource implication for the options listed in 14 would need further analysis, rough tasks and input required given below. We would assume that these tasks are taken on by a cross-unit team including IAD, ISG and the MVM digital education unit.

- A. No additional central resource, however ongoing large overhead for wider University staff due to unsustainable and inconsistent practices;
- B. Low additional resource (moving SCORM package into Learn), however doesn't take advantage of the potential of the online environment (risk that the VLE course is not high quality);
- C. Medium additional resource: some instructional design input to translate course from commercial package to Learn and academic developer input to develop new content.
- D. Medium-high: instructional design and academic developer input plus moderation (p/t PhD student interns at start of term).
- E. Highest: a little more instruction design and academic developer input to develop the shorter course and set it up in Learn. Administration required for two courses, but moderation similar just split over the two.

Risk management

- 18. We have provided different options which vary in the amount of resource and time required. If options which require resources are chosen, then there must be a plan to provide these.
- 19. There is a risk if we do nothing that the upgrade to Learn Ultra in September will incur issues around the implementation of OWD and many areas will make the OWD workflows even worse by migrating them over to the upgraded VLE course instances; leaving the issue unresolved will make it harder to resolve after in future years and increase negative impact on student experience.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

- 20. Contributing to UNSDGs: Quality Education (4) and Reduced Inequalities (10).

Equality & diversity

- 21. The paper makes the case for a change in support and guidance that has the potential to have a positive impact on equality and diversity.

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

- 22. The change can be implemented and communicated as part of the Learn Ultra upgrade project in the short term and the curriculum transformation project in the longer term.
- 23. Evaluation and maintenance of the staff development course can be undertaken by a cross-University group coordinated by IAD, IAG and MVM DEU.

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SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

19 January 2023

Curriculum Transformation Update

Description of paper

1. This paper builds on discussions at Senate Education Committee on 10th November 2022 and provides an update on work in progress with the development of a proposed curriculum framework for consideration via the appropriate University governance channels, including Senate and other groups (e.g. relevant Standing Committees of Senate) in early 2023. This includes plans to work with Schools and Deaneries to develop short and medium term plans for change and investment, and proposals for a modification of the timescale for the implementation and phasing of curriculum transformation.

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

Action requested / recommendation

2. For discussion and to note formally.

Background and context

3. Curriculum Transformation is a major and long term change and investment project for the University. An initial scoping phase (April 2021 to December 2022) has been used to develop an institutional curriculum framework, readiness assessment and benefits case for consideration by Senate and through Standing Committees of Senate and other groups during early 2023.
4. This paper reports on the reactions to the latest iteration of the curriculum framework (undergraduate programme archetypes and curriculum design principles) discussed by this committee in November 2022¹.
5. One further iteration of the programme archetypes, along with case studies and additional information on the rules and guidance for how the Curriculum Framework would be used will be prepared for consideration by Senate, other Standing Committees of Senate, School, Deanery and College committees in early 2023.
6. Further information including plans and progress is at <https://edin.ac/curriculum-transformation> (open to external visitors) and the curriculum transformation hub: <https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation> (internal audience – staff and students).

¹ Documents based on the update provides to Senate Education Committee in November 2022 are available on the Curriculum Transformation Hub at [https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation/SitePages/Overview-and-Look-Ahead-\(November-2022\).aspx](https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation/SitePages/Overview-and-Look-Ahead-(November-2022).aspx)

Discussion

7. Reactions to the Curriculum Framework

The second iteration of the Undergraduate Programme Archetypes was presented to Senate Education Committee on 10th November 2022. This included proposals for four core undergraduate disciplinary archetypes (Single, Double, Combined and Single-Restricted Honours) along with further detail on how Challenge Courses, Experiential Learning and Enrichment Elements could work and be developed as part of the Curriculum Framework.

8. This has been shared and discussed with curriculum transformation workstreams, committees and groups around the University. There have also been productive meetings with a selection of Schools to start exploring and testing how the framework could be used in practice for their programmes and disciplines. The reaction to the framework has been encouraging, including thoughts on how the framework could be used productively, and proposals for potential challenge courses and enrichment elements.
9. There is a general sense that the second iteration of the undergraduate archetypes and design principles is a positive step forward (particularly the more flexible single honours archetype) and the fleshing out of thinking around challenge courses and experiential learning has been received positively.
10. While there remain questions around some aspects of the archetypes and their implementation Schools have generally been reassured by current thinking on how the archetypes will be used, including expectations around experiential learning.
11. The enrichment element concept as presented is too complex and will be simplified in the next iteration of the archetypes. We will also develop rules and guidance for the double/combined honours archetypes and provide further details on how the challenge and experiential elements are expected to be used.
12. Our aim for Senate will be to have these elements of the framework fleshed out and illustrated by specific case studies and examples from Schools.
13. The biggest concerns have been around capacity and timelines, and the need to test and develop thinking in Schools in more detail based on a firm and final version of the framework. This has been a key consideration in developing proposals for an adjustment of the timeline and phasing for curriculum transformation.

14. Phasing Curriculum Transformation

Concerns and questions around the timeline for the implementation and roll out of changes driven by Curriculum Transformation have been a frequent and understandable discussion point with colleagues. Over the last 6-9 months we have highlighted two key factors that need to be considered before committing to a September 2025 roll out (and the connected February 2024 deadlines for UCAS and degree finder). These are whether there is clear evidence that allowing extra time will deliver more ambitious and transformational change, and consideration of whether extra time is needed to make the necessary

underpinning changes to our systems and other infrastructure. Concerns around timelines and capacity (at all levels) have come into even sharper focus in recent months due to the impact (direct and indirect) of People and Money.

15. We had begun to explore the potential to introduce an element of phasing during the summer and autumn of 2022, particularly in response to discussions with Heads of College. An initial proposal for phasing and change to the timeline for implementation was discussed and supported by the Curriculum Transformation Board on 6th December 2022 and at the University Executive Away Day on 7th December.
16. This proposal for phasing pushes the full implementation of the curriculum framework for undergraduate programmes back one year to September 2026. The key consequence of this is to move the deadline for UCAS and degree finder to February 2025, thereby providing significantly more time for disciplines and Schools to develop more ambitious plans for curriculum transformation and reassurance on the timeline for introducing changes to regulations and systems.
17. Key elements of phasing include the potential for Schools and Deaneries to simplify current course and programme portfolios in advance of Academic Year 2025/26, and to pilot and scale up distinctive and new elements of the curriculum (challenge courses, experiential learning and enrichment elements) on an elective basis while we implement the necessary changes to systems and programme architectures and portfolios, ready for a universal and full launch from September 2026.
18. It is, however, important to note that there are risks, additional costs and negative consequences associated with phasing. We will therefore undertake a thorough review of these options for phasing and key dependencies before presenting a firm proposal to Senate and other University committees and groups.
19. **Next steps (academic year 2022/23)**
We are on track to present the curriculum framework and proposals for the next 3-5 years to Senate and other committees and groups in early 2023. This will include proposals for phasing and an update on what will be going into the planning round to secure future investment in development costs for Schools and at an institutional level.
20. The curriculum framework includes the requirement that all degree programmes would be designed using one or more of the programme archetypes (Single, Double, Combined or Single [Restricted] Honours for undergraduate degrees). All undergraduate programme archetypes include space in the curriculum for challenge courses and experiential learning as an integral part of the student learning experience.
21. We will use the remainder of this academic year to work with Schools and at University level to develop short and medium term plans for change and investment. Discussions have begun with the three College Deans on how best to progress this with the Schools and Deaneries in their College. Our intention is

to work with all Schools to develop short (<3 years) and medium (4-10 years) plans for Curriculum Transformation. This will include requirements for investment in Schools and priorities for University level investment and enhancement.

22. These discussions with Schools, Deaneries and other groups will be used to further test and validate the Curriculum Framework to identify areas where adjustments and further work are needed.
23. The remainder of Academic Year 2022/23 will also be used to prepare investment cases and implementation plans for areas identified by the Supporting the Curriculum Workstream and to develop initial guidance and resources to support the implementation of the curriculum framework.

Resource implications

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

Risk management

25. Key risks include the readiness and suitability of current University systems and support, along with concerns around capacity and timelines, particularly when considering the demands of running curriculum transformation alongside other major institutional change programmes and as we emerge from the pandemic. These risks are being monitored and ameliorating actions identified through the use of a risk log reported on to the Programme Board. This includes the development of plans for phasing and adjusting the timeline for full implementation described in this paper.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

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

Equality & diversity

27. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and will be reviewed periodically as we move from the scoping to the design and implementation phases of the programme in early 2023. Going beyond this, a commitment to

equity, inclusivity and diversity is a key element of the Student Vision and the prototype Curriculum Design Principles. This will be a major focus for the resources and guidance developed to support curriculum transformation. An Equality Impact Assessment for the Curriculum Framework is being undertaken now to inform discussions at Senate and elsewhere this semester.

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

28. The work in progress and next steps described in this paper will be discussed and evaluated through the Curriculum Transformation Board² reporting to the University Executive, through appropriate Senate Committees, Senate and Court. The programme team is continuing to work closely with Heads of School, Directors of Teaching, Schools and Deaneries on the development of the curriculum framework.

Authors

Professor Colm Harmon,
Vice Principal Students

Presenter

Dr Jon Turner
IAD

Dr Jon Turner

Institute for Academic Development (IAD)

January 2023

Freedom of Information

Open

² <https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation/SitePages/Who-is-working-on-CT.aspx>

Senate Education Committee

19 January 2023

Student Experience Update

Description of paper

1. This paper provides a brief update on Student Experience for January 2023.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. To note the update.

Background and context

3. Following discussion at a recent University Executive, the Vice-Principal Students and Deputy Secretary Students have been working with University colleagues including the Provost and Heads of College on mechanisms to improve student experience and to move us towards a more clearly articulated student experience charter with Schools.
4. Phase 1 roll out of the new Student Support model continues successfully, with planning for Phase 2 well underway.
5. Work towards the Curriculum Transformation Programme has been progressing with a dedicated update to be provided as a separate item on the SEC agenda.
6. Cost of living pressures continue to be a significant concern for our entire community. We have responded to this as an institution in a variety of ways and will continue to review the ways in which we support our students.

Discussion

Vice-Principal Students Portfolio

7. We have been progressing proposals to improve the student experience as presented at the SEC meeting on 8 September 2022, as follows:
 - Meetings underway with every Head of School by the end of the January 2023, taking a partnership approach to creating delivery plans for supporting improvements, with marked areas of focus, accountability and measures of success.
 - The creation of two Vice-Principal Students Portfolio groups to assist with developing and delivering enhancements to the student experience: A Leadership Group (convened by the Vice-Principal Students) and Management Group (convened by the Deputy Secretary Students). These groups will shape, direct and operationalise the student lifecycle to focus improvements to the student experience across the University, enabling coherence between various initiatives and priorities through the student portfolio of activity. Crucially they will also ensure alignment to key institutional priorities such as the Planning Round and the progress towards achievement of key KPIs.
 - The Student Lifecycle Group has identified a set of priority areas to start working on as part of our Continuous Service Improvement Programme, with a workshop that took place in December and task and finish groups set to commence early this year. The initial areas are: ESC; on-boarding and induction; academic planning (course

enrolments, timetabling, fees bursaries and scholarships); sense of belonging; space and place; student voice; and student communications.

Student Support Model

8. Phase 1 of the Model is well underway with broad success as per feedback received via College Implementation Groups.
9. Evaluation and monitoring, through surveys and focus groups with students (supported by EUSA) and staff, have taken place and will be reported to the forthcoming Project Board later in January. This will inform Phase 2 and a longer-term approach to continuous improvements when the Model moves from project to 'business as usual'.
10. Planning for Phase 2 to fully roll out for 2023/24 is well advanced with College leads, Schools and the Project Board. This will primarily focus on 1) improvements / learnings from Phase 1; 2) design and implementation; 3) Phase 2 readiness e.g. training, recruitment; 4) supporting structures e.g. communications, governance, policy and regulations, underpinning systems.
11. The second phase of Student Adviser recruitment has commenced with a view to having staff in post by April to ensure training and orientation takes place well in advance of the academic year 2023/24.

Cost of Living

12. Cost of living is a preoccupation for us all. We continue to work with EUSA and other student groups to assess support packages already in place and further initiatives.
13. This is chiefly driven through the work of the University Cost of Living Working Group which provides insight from across the University on how we can best support staff and students through this crisis.
14. In December, all students were provided with a communication outlining support to them over the Winter break, especially for those remaining in Edinburgh. This included emergency financial support and access to the Listening Service.
15. Universities Scotland are lobbying Scottish and UK Government and other stakeholders to support us and universities across the sector in this critical area.

Resource implications

16. There are no specific resource requests in this paper. We note the ongoing work of colleagues in Schools and central services towards the delivery of the major initiatives discussed.

Risk management

17. Failure to address student experience will mean we have not met our strategic ambitions as set out in Strategy 2030. It also carries reputational risk and continues to affect the University's standing in national league tables.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

18. This paper would support the SDG "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" as part the strategic objective to improve

student experience. The proposals would not hinder the achievement of any other UN SDGs or exacerbate the Climate Emergency.

Equality & diversity

19. Our work in student experience will support greater equality, diversity and inclusion for students within our community.

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

20. This paper presents an update to note. Many areas of the update have next steps built into them.

Further information

21. Author
Lucy Evans
Deputy Secretary Students

Presenter
Lucy Evans
Deputy Secretary Students

Freedom of Information

22. Open.

Senate Education Committee

19 January 2023

Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2023 Institutional Question

Description of paper

1. This paper presents the proposed institutional question for PRES 2023. This question, if approved, will be asked after the core questionnaire and specifically of postgraduate research students at the University of Edinburgh.
2. The data generated from PRES contributes to improving the quality of research and learning, the student experience and student satisfaction.

Action requested / recommendation

3. For approval. SEC is asked to consider and approve the proposed question to be included in PRES 2023.

Background and context

4. PRES takes place every 2 years at the University of Edinburgh and runs between March and May. The survey is administered nationally by AdvanceHE and locally, at institution level, by Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling.
5. The data from the survey provides University results as well as the opportunity for benchmarking against other institutions. In 2021, nearly 40,000 students from 94 institutions participated, including 1,025 from the University of Edinburgh.
6. PRES includes a set of core questions as well as the option to ask additional, institutional questions.

Discussion

7. In 2021 the University opted to include one institutional question:
 - ***If you have any additional comments about support for health and wellbeing, please write them here (open comment)***
8. The Doctoral College has been consulted on this and proposes asking the same question as in 2021.
9. By including this again, it allows for comparison to the 2021 results. It also allows for ongoing evaluation of student support – an area that has been highlighted for improvement at the University.

Resource implications

10. No additional resource implications

Risk management

11. Not included

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

12. This responds to Goal 4: Quality Education. The data from the PRES is used to improve the experience of students at the University.

Equality & diversity

13. Not included.

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

14. If agreed, the question will be included in PRES 2023. The process for including and reporting on this question will be overseen by Marianne Brown, Interim Head of Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling.

Author

Sarah-Jane Brown
11th January 2023

Presenter

Marianne Brown

Freedom of Information

Open

Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2023

Welcome

This survey invites you to share your experiences of your postgraduate research degree programme. The survey should only take around 15 minutes to complete. Please know that your participation is greatly appreciated. Your feedback will be combined with those of others to help improve the experience of postgraduate researchers like you.

Thank you for your time.

Data Protection

Before you start the survey, please read this privacy statement which tells you how any personal data you submit with your responses to this survey will be utilised and protected, and the rights you have in relation to it.

[Institution to insert here a hyperlink to your institution's privacy statement. We suggest that you seek advice in order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation as the data controller]

Your participation in this questionnaire is voluntary and you can stop at any point without your responses being included in the dataset.

1. In order to participate please tick below to confirm that you have read and understood the Privacy Notice and you consent to the use of your personal data as described

I consent

You can withdraw your consent at any time in the future by contacting ***[Institution to insert appropriate contact details]***

Notes for completion

The questionnaire should take **around fifteen minutes to complete**.

Where “programme” is used in the questionnaire, this refers to your whole programme of study at your institution, for example MRes in Sociology, PhD in Physics, etc.

After each section you will be asked for any further comments on the topics covered, to enable staff to gain a better understanding of what has gone well and what has worked less well. **Please do not identify yourself or other individuals (including staff) in your comments**. If you have a complaint or need support with any of the issues raised within the survey, please contact ***[the relevant service at your institution]***.

Supervision

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about supervision?

Note: Please note, all the scales in the survey range from Definitely disagree on the left-hand side to Definitely agree and not applicable on the right-hand side

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
2_1_a. My supervisor/s have the skills and subject knowledge to support my research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2_2_a. I have regular contact with my supervisor/s, appropriate for my needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2_3_a. My supervisor/s provide feedback that helps me direct my research activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2_4_a. My supervisor/s help me to identify my training and development needs as a researcher	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. If you have any additional comments about supervision, please write them in here:

Resources

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about resources?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not accessed/ Not applicable
4_1_a. I have a suitable working space when I am on campus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4_2_a. I have a suitable working space when I am studying remotely	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4_3_a. There is appropriate access to physical library resources and facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4_4_a. There is appropriate access to online library resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4_5_a. There is appropriate access to IT resources and facilities when I am on-campus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4_6_a. I have access to the specialist resources necessary for my research (for example, equipment, facilities, software, materials) when I am on campus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4_7_a. I have access to the specialist resources necessary for my research (for example, course materials, software, virtual learning environment) when I am studying remotely	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. If you have any additional comments about resources, please write them in here:

Research Culture

6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the research culture?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
6_1_a. I have access to a good range of seminars in my research area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6_2_a. I have frequent opportunities to discuss my research with other researchers including research students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6_3_a. The research community in my research area influences my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6_4_a. I am aware of opportunities to become involved in the wider research community, beyond my department	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. If you have any additional comments about the research culture, please write them in here:

Progress and Assessment

9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about induction, progression arrangements and assessment?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
9_1_a. I received an appropriate induction to my research degree programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9_2_a. I understand the requirements and deadlines for formal monitoring of my progress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9_3_a. I understand the required standard for my thesis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9_4_a. The final assessment procedures for my degree are clear to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. If you have any additional comments about induction, progression arrangements and assessment, please write them in here:

Responsibilities

11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about responsibilities?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
11_1_a. My institution values and responds to feedback from research degree students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11_2_a. I understand my responsibilities as a research degree student	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11_3_a. I am aware of my supervisors' responsibilities towards me as a research degree student	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11_4_a. Other than my supervisor/s, I know who to approach if I am concerned about any aspect of my degree programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. If you have any additional comments about feedback mechanisms and student/staff responsibilities, please write them in here:

Support

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about support at your institution?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not accessed/ Not applicable
13_1_a. The support for academic skills meets my needs (for example, support for your writing, language, subject-specific skills)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13_2_a. The support for using IT and accessing resources meets my needs (for example, support with accessing online journals and e-books, using digital learning tools/apps)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13_3_a. The support for my health and wellbeing meets my needs (for example, personal tutor, student support and counselling services)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14: If you have any additional comments about support, please write them in here:

Research Skills

15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about research skills development?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
15_1_a. My skills in applying appropriate research methodologies, tools and techniques have developed during my programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15_2_a. My skills in critically analysing and evaluating findings and results have developed during my programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15_3_a. My confidence to be creative or innovative has developed during my programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15_4_a. My understanding of 'research integrity' (e.g. rigour, ethics, transparency, attributing the contribution of others) has developed during my programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. If you have any additional comments about research skills development please write them in here:

Professional Development

17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about professional development?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
17_1_a. My ability to manage projects has developed during my programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17_2_a. My ability to communicate information effectively to diverse audiences has developed during my programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17_3_a. I have developed contacts or professional networks during my programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17_4_a. I have increasingly managed my own professional development during my programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. If you have any additional comments about professional development, please write them in here:

Opportunities

19. Please indicate which of the following opportunities (including virtual and in-person opportunities) you have experienced during your research degree programme (select all that apply):

- Q19_1 Agreeing a personal training or development plan
- Q19_2 Receiving training to develop my research skills
- Q19_3 Receiving training to develop my transferable skills
- Q19_4 Receiving advice on career options
- Q19_5 Taking part in a placement or internship
- Q19_6 Attending an academic research conference
- Q19_7 Presenting a paper or poster at an academic research conference
- Q19_8 Submitting a paper for publication in an academic journal or book
- Q19_9 Communicating your research to a non-academic audience
- Q19_10 Engagement with non-academic partners – e.g. in industry or elsewhere
- Q19_11 Coaching and/or mentoring

20. Please indicate whether you have undertaken paid (or equivalent) teaching work at your institution during your research degree programme (e.g. as a Graduate Teaching Assistant or Graduate Demonstrator)?

- Yes
- No (go to question 20)

20_a. If yes, to what extent do you agree that you have been given appropriate support and guidance for your teaching?

- Definitely disagree
- Mostly disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Mostly agree
- Definitely agree
- Not applicable

20_b. Did you receive formal training for your teaching? (e.g. teacher/lecturer training schemes or staff development classes run by your institution; a PG Cert. course)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

Overall experience

21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your experience?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
21_1_a. Overall, I am satisfied with the experience of my research degree programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21_2_a. I am confident that I will complete my research degree programme within my institution's expected timescale	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

22. What has been the one most positive aspect of your research degree programme so far?

23. What, if anything, is the one top area in which your experience of your research degree programme so far could be improved?

Optional: Covid-19 pandemic

26. Thinking about the Covid-19 pandemic to what extent to do you agree or disagree that...?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
26_1_a. Communications from my institution in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic were appropriate and clear	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26_2_a. I have received the support I need from my institution in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26_3_a. My institution has worked to ensure the quality of my academic experience during the Covid-19 pandemic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

27. If you have any additional comments about your institution's response to the Covid-19 pandemic please write them in here:

[Space for institutional questions]

You and your programme

28. I am registered as doing a:

- a. PhD (including DPhil)
- b. Professional doctorate (e.g. EdD, EngD, MD, DBA)
- c. PhD by published work
- d. Integrated or New Route PhD
- e. MPhil with transfer to PhD
- f. MPhil
- g. Master by research
- h. Other (please specify).....

29. How have you usually had contact with staff this term?

- a. Mostly or completely virtually/online
- b. A mixture of in-person and virtually/online
- c. Mostly or completely in-person

About yourself

30. I am:

- a. 25 years old or younger
- b. 26 – 30 years old
- c. 31-35 years old
- d. 36-40 years old
- e. 41-45 years old
- f. 46-50 years old
- g. 51-55 years old
- h. 56 years old or olds
- i. Prefer not to say

31. What is your sex?

- a. Female
- b. Male
- c. Prefer not to say

32. Are you trans or do you have a trans history?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

33. How would you describe your gender?

- a. Man
- b. Woman
- c. Non-binary
- d. In another way (specify, if you wish)
- e. Prefer not to say

34. Do you have an impairment, health condition or learning difference that has a substantial or long term impact on your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

34_a. If yes, please indicate which of the following apply (select all that apply):

- 34_a_1 Blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
- 34_a_2 D/deaf or have a hearing impairment
- 34_a_3 Development condition that you have had since childhood which affects motor, cognitive, social and emotional skills, and speech and language
- 34_a_4 Learning difference such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D
- 34_a_5 Long-term illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy
- 34_a_6 Mental health condition, challenge or disorder, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety
- 34_a_7 Physical impairment (a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, lifting or carrying)
- 34_a_8 Social/communication conditions such as a speech and language impairment or an autistic spectrum condition
- 34_a_9 Prefer not to say
- 34_a_10 An impairment, health condition or learning difference not listed above (specify, if you wish):

35. Please select which of the following most closely matches your primary discipline:

- Clinical Medicine
- Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care
- Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy
- Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience
- Biological Sciences
- Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science
- Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Mathematical Sciences
- Computer Science and Informatics
- Engineering
- Architecture, Built Environment and Planning
- Geography and Environmental Studies
- Archaeology
- Economics and Econometrics
- Business and Management Studies
- Law
- Politics and International Studies
- Social Work and Social Policy
- Sociology
- Anthropology and Development Studies
- Education
- Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism
- Area Studies
- Modern Languages and Linguistics
- English Language and Literature
- History
- Classics
- Philosophy
- Theology and Religious Studies
- Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory
- Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies
- Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management

36. I am currently registered as studying:

- a. Full-time
- b. Part-time

37. What year of your research degree programme are you in?

- a. Year 1
- b. Year 2
- c. Year 3
- d. Year 4
- e. Year 5
- f. Year 6
- g. Year 7
- h. Year 8
- i. Year 9
- j. Other (please specify)

38. I currently:

- a. Am in the taught stage of my programme
- a. Am planning or doing my research
- b. Am writing up my thesis
- c. Have submitted my thesis and I am awaiting my viva
- d. Am making amendments to my thesis following my viva
- e. Am awaiting to graduate
- f. Have graduated
- g. Other (please specify).....

39. Voluntary pre-population on whether the programme was intended to be in-person or distance learning (always hidden)

40. Where do you consider to be your permanent home? [Domicile list drawn from HESA domicile field]

41. Did you have free school meals in year 11 at school? (UK domicile only)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

42. Are you the first generation in your family to attend university (i.e. your parents or parental carers did not attend)?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

43. What is your ethnicity or ethnic group?

- a. Arab
- b. Asian - Bangladeshi or Bangladeshi British
- c. Asian - Chinese or Chinese British
- d. Asian - Indian or Indian British
- e. Asian - Pakistani or Pakistani British
- f. Any other Asian background
- g. Black - African or African British
- h. Black - Caribbean or Caribbean British
- i. Any other Black background
- j. Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White or White British and Asian or Asian British
- k. Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White or White British and Black African or Black African British
- l. Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White or White British and Black Caribbean or Black Caribbean British
- m. Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background
- n. White - English, Scottish, Welsh, Northern Irish or British
- o. White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- p. White - Irish
- q. White - Roma
- r. Any other White background
- s. Any other ethnic background
- t. Prefer not to say

44. Have you considered, for any reason, leaving your postgraduate research degree?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

45. (If yes) What was the main (or most recent) reason that led you to consider leaving?

- a. Difficulty balancing research and other commitments
- b. Financial difficulties
- c. Family or personal problems
- d. My physical health
- e. My mental/emotional health
- f. There is not enough support for personal issues
- g. There is not enough interaction with academic staff
- h. There is too much work
- i. There is not enough support for my research
- j. I have found this level of research difficult
- k. I don't feel connected to my fellow research students
- l. The content of the research programme is not what I expected
- m. The way I need to carry out my research programme is not what I expected
- n. I might have chosen the wrong institution
- o. The wider postgraduate researcher experience is not what I was hoping for
- p. Other (specify, if you wish)
- q. Prefer not to say

Thank you

Thank you very much for your time in completing this questionnaire. If you have a complaint or need support with any of the issues raised within the survey, please contact **[the relevant service at your institution]**.

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Senate Education Committee

19 January 2023

Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2023 Institutional Questions

Description of paper

1. This paper presents the proposed institutional questions for PTES 2023. These questions, if approved, will be asked after the core questionnaire and specifically of students at the University of Edinburgh.
2. The data generated from PTES contributes to improving the quality of teaching and learning, the student experience and student satisfaction.

Action requested / recommendation

3. For approval. SEC is asked to consider and approve the proposed questions to be included in PTES 2023.

Background and context

4. PTES is an annual survey of postgraduate taught students and takes place between April and June each year at the University of Edinburgh. The survey is administered nationally by AdvanceHE and locally, at institution level, by Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling.
5. The data from the survey provides University results as well as the opportunity for benchmarking against other institutions. In 2022, nearly 80,000 students from 91 institutions participated, including 3,298 from the University of Edinburgh.
6. PTES includes a set of core questions as well as the option to ask additional, institutional questions.

Discussion

7. In 2022 the University opted to include 3 institutional questions:
 - ***My School or Deanery has provided me with people and services to support me (Strongly agree – n/a)***
 - ***My School or Deanery has provided advice and guidance on how to access support where needed (Strongly agree – n/a)***
 - ***If you have any further comments on these issues then please provide them here (open comment)***
8. It is recommended that the University asks the same 3 questions in PTES 2023. By including these questions last year, this year and possibly in future years, it will allow for evaluation of student support before, during and after the implementation of the new Student Support Model.
9. The Deputy Secretary Students and Students' Association President have been consulted on this proposal.

Resource implications

10. No additional resource implications

Risk management

11. Not included

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

12. This responds to Goal 4: Quality Education. The data from PTES is used to improve the experience of students at the University.

Equality & diversity

13. Not included.

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

14. If agreed, the questions will be included in PTES 2023. The process for including and reporting on these questions will be overseen by Marianne Brown, Interim Head of Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling.

Author

Sarah-Jane Brown
11th January 2023

Presenter

Marianne Brown

Freedom of Information

Open

Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2023

Welcome

This survey invites you to share your experiences of your postgraduate taught degree. The survey should only take around 15 minutes to complete. Please know that your participation is greatly appreciated. Your feedback will be combined with those of others to help improve the learning experience of students like you.

Thank you for your time.

Data Protection

Before you start the survey, please read this privacy statement which tells you how any personal data you submit with your responses to this survey will be utilised and protected, and the rights you have in relation to it.

[Institution to insert here a hyperlink to your institution's privacy statement. We suggest that you seek advice in order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation as the data controller]

Your participation in this questionnaire is voluntary and you can stop at any point without your responses being included in the dataset.

1. In order to participate, please tick below to confirm that you have read and understood the Privacy Notice and you consent to the use of your personal data as described:

I consent

You can withdraw your consent at any time in the future by contacting ***[Institution to insert appropriate contact details]***

Notes for completion

The questionnaire should take **around fifteen minutes** to complete.

Where “course” is used in the questionnaire, this refers to your whole programme of study at your institution e.g. MA Archaeology, MSc Scientific Measurement, PGCE, Diploma in Democracy.

After each section you may be asked for any further comments on the topics covered, to enable staff to gain a better understanding of what has gone well and what has worked less well. **Please do not identify yourself or other individuals (including staff) in your comments.** If you have a complaint or need support with any of the issues raised within the survey, please contact *[the relevant service at your institution]*.

Teaching and Learning

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding teaching and learning on your course?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
2_1_a. Staff are good at explaining things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2_2_a. Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2_3_a. The course is intellectually stimulating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2_4_a. The course has enhanced my academic ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2_5_a. The learning materials provided on my course are useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2_6_a. There is sufficient academic contact time (in-person or virtual/online) between staff and students to support effective learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2_7_a. I am happy with the support for my learning I receive from staff on my course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. If you have any further comments on these topics then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible:

Engagement

4. Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding engagement on your course?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
4_1_a. I am encouraged to ask questions or make contributions in taught sessions (in-person or virtual/online)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4_2_a. The course has created sufficient opportunities to discuss my work with other students (in-person or virtual/online)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4_3_a. My course has challenged me to produce my best work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4_4_a. The workload on my course has been manageable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4_5_a. I have appropriate opportunities to give feedback on my experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. If you have any further comments on these topics then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible:

Assessment and feedback

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding assessment and feedback on your course? (Feedback includes oral and written feedback given in both formal and informal contexts)

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
7_1_a. The criteria used in marking have been made clear in advance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7_2_a. Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7_3_a. Feedback on my work has been prompt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7_4_a. Feedback on my work (written or oral) has been useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. If you have any further comments on these topics then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible:

(9. Hidden routing question to take students around dissertation section. Default is to display dissertation section)

Dissertation or major project

If you are unsure what Dissertation or Major Project refers to, it could include a long-essay, independent research project, laboratory project, or other major supervised assessment task that forms an important part of your overall course.

10. Are you currently planning, undertaking, or have completed, a dissertation or major project as part of your course?

- a. Yes
- b. No [students are routed to Section E]

11. What stage of your dissertation or major project are you currently at?

- a. Planning
- b. Currently doing
- c. Completed

12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your dissertation / major project? (If you have not had experience of an item then please select 'Not applicable or Too soon to say')

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable or Too soon to say
12_1_a. I understand the required standards for the dissertation / major project	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12_2_a. I am happy with the support received for planning my dissertation / major project (topic selection, project outline, literature search, etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12_3_a. My supervisor has the skills and subject knowledge to adequately support my dissertation / major project	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12_4_a. My supervisor provides helpful feedback on my progress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. If you have any further comments on these topics then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible:

Organisation and management

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the organisation and management of your course?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
14_1_a. The timetable fits well with my other commitments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14_2_a. Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14_3_a. The course is well organised and is running smoothly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14_4_a. I was given appropriate guidance and support when I started my course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14_5_a. I am encouraged to be involved in decisions about how my course is run	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. If you have any further comments on these topics then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible:

OPTIONAL SECTION

Resources

16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the learning resources at your institution?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not accessed/ Not applicable
16_1_a. There is appropriate access to physical library resources and facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16_2_a. There is appropriate access to online library resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16_3_a. There is appropriate access to IT resources and facilities when I am on-campus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16_4_a. I have been able to access subject specific resources (for example: equipment, facilities, software, materials) necessary for my studies when I am on-campus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16_5_a. I have been able to access subject specific resources (for example: course materials, software, virtual learning environment) necessary for my studies when I am learning remotely	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. If you have any further comments on these topics then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible:

OPTIONAL SECTION

Support

18. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about support at your institution?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not accessed/ Not applicable
18_1_a. The support for academic skills meets my needs (for example, support for your writing, language, subject-specific skills)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18_2_a. The support for using IT and accessing resources meets my needs (for example: support with accessing online journals and e-books, using digital learning tools / apps)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18_3_a. The support for my health and wellbeing meets my needs (for example: personal tutor, student support and counselling services)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19 If you have any further comments on these topics then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible:

OPTIONAL SECTION

Skills development

20. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the development of skills on your course?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
20_1_a. As a result of the course I am more confident about independent learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20_2_a. My confidence to be innovative or creative has developed during my course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20_3_a. My research skills have developed during my course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20_4_a. My ability to communicate information effectively to diverse audiences has developed during my course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20_5_a. I have been encouraged to think about what skills I need to develop for my career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20_6_a. As a result of the course I feel better prepared for my future career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21 If you have any further comments on these topics then please provide them here. Please be as specific as possible:

Overview

22. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement about your overall experience of your course?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
22_1_a. Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. Please comment on one thing that has been most enjoyable or interesting on your course:

.....

24. Please comment on one thing that would most improve your experience of your course:

.....

[Space for institutional questions]

About yourself

To help us understand whether provision at this institution and across the sector is meeting the needs of all postgraduates, we would now like to ask some questions about you and your course. As with the rest of the survey, all reporting will be anonymous and your responses will be treated confidentially.

25. What is your age?

- 25 years old or younger
- 26-30 years old
- 31-35 years old
- 36-40 years old
- 41-45 years old
- 46-50 years old
- 51-55 years old
- 56 years old or older
- Prefer not to say

26. What is your sex?

- a. Female
- b. Male
- c. Prefer not to say

27. Are you trans or do you have a trans history?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

28. How would you describe your gender?

- a. Man
- b. Woman
- c. Non-binary
- d. In another way (specify, if you wish)
- e. Prefer not to say

29. Do you have an impairment, health condition or learning difference that has a substantial or long term impact on your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

29_a. If yes, please indicate which of the following apply (select all that apply):

- 29_a_1 Blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
- 29_a_2 D/deaf or have a hearing impairment
- 29_a_3 Development condition that you have had since childhood which affects motor, cognitive, social and emotional skills, and speech and language
- 29_a_4 Learning difference such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D
- 29_a_5 Long-term illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy
- 29_a_6 Mental health condition, challenge or disorder, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety
- 29_a_7 Physical impairment (a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, lifting or carrying)
- 29_a_8 Social/communication conditions such as a speech and language impairment or an autistic spectrum condition
- 29_a_9 Prefer not to say
- 29_a_10 An impairment, health condition or learning difference not listed above (specify, if you wish):

30. Where do you consider to be your permanent home?

[Domicile list drawn from the HESA Domicile field]

31. Did you receive free school meals in year 11 at school?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

32. Are you the first generation in your family to attend university (i.e. your parents or parental carers did not attend)?

- d. Yes
- e. No
- f. Prefer not to say

33. What is your ethnicity or ethnic group?

- a. Arab
- b. Asian - Bangladeshi or Bangladeshi British
- c. Asian - Chinese or Chinese British
- d. Asian - Indian or Indian British
- e. Asian - Pakistani or Pakistani British
- f. Any other Asian background
- g. Black - African or African British
- h. Black - Caribbean or Caribbean British
- i. Any other Black background
- j. Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White or White British and Asian or Asian British
- k. Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White or White British and Black African or Black African British
- l. Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White or White British and Black Caribbean or Black Caribbean British
- m. Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background
- n. White - English, Scottish, Welsh, Northern Irish or British
- o. White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- p. White - Irish
- q. White - Roma
- r. Any other White background
- s. Any other ethnic background
- t. Prefer not to say

About your course

For these questions, please respond in relation to the taught postgraduate course you are currently studying.

34. I am registered (currently studying at this institution) for the qualification of:

- Taught Masters (for example MBA, LLM, MSc, MEng)
- Postgraduate Certificate (including PGCE)
- Postgraduate Diploma
- Other (please specify).....

35. HECOS discipline question - PRE-POPULATED

36. I am currently registered as studying

- Full-time
- Part-time

37. How have you usually had contact with staff this term?

- u. Mostly or completely virtually / online
- v. A mixture of in-person and virtually / online
- w. Mostly or completely in-person

38. Voluntary pre-population on whether the course was intended to be in-person or distance learning (always hidden)

39. Have you considered, for any reason, leaving your postgraduate course?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

40. (If yes) What was the main (or most recent) reason that led you to consider leaving?

- Difficulty balancing study and other commitments
- Financial difficulties
- Family or personal problems
- My physical health
- My mental/emotional health
- There is not enough support for personal issues
- There is not enough interaction with teaching staff
- There is too much work
- There is not enough support for my learning
- I have found this level of study difficult
- I don't feel connected with my fellow students
- The content of the course is not what I expected
- The way the course is delivered is not what I expected
- I might have chosen the wrong institution
- The wider student experience is not what I was hoping for
- Other (specify, if you wish)
- Prefer not to say

Thank you

Thank you very much for your time in completing this questionnaire. If you have a complaint or need support with any of the issues raised within the survey, please contact **[the relevant service at your institution]**.

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Senate Education Committee

19 January 2023

Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) - Edinburgh University Students' Association Community Volunteering Proposal

Description of paper

1. This paper proposes adding a new 'additional recognised activity' to the HEAR : ***EUSA Community Volunteering***.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Senate Education Committee (SEC) is asked to approve the recommendation that the new activity is added to the HEAR.

Background and context

3. Section 6.1 of the HEAR records students' wider achievements whilst matriculated students. It records:
 - Additional awards (in Edinburgh's case, 'The Edinburgh Award')
 - Additional recognised activities
 - University, Students' Association and Sports Union prizes and awards

A list of the additional recognised activities that are currently recognised on the HEAR can be found at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/order-documents/transcripts/hear>.

4. Proposals for new, additional recognised activities are initially considered by the HEAR Recommendation Panel. SEC is then asked to consider and, where appropriate, approve the recommendation made by the Recommendation Panel.

Discussion

5. The proposal form for the 'EUSA Community Volunteering' role is attached.
6. The Recommendation Panel considered the proposal and agreed that the role was substantial and worthwhile and should be recognised under section 6.1 of the HEAR. **Senate Education Committee is asked to approve this recommendation.**

Resource implications

7. There will be workload implications for the Students' Association staff responsible for managing and verifying the activity. Some development work by Student Systems will be required to add the new activity to the HEAR.

Risk management

8. N/A

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

9. N/A

Equality & diversity

10. The proposed activity is open to all taught students. As noted in the proposal form, it aims to increase the inclusivity of recognised community volunteering opportunities by broadening the pattern of commitment required and the providers engaged.

Author

Philippa Ward
11 January 2023

Presenter

Philippa Ward

Freedom of Information *Open*



HEAR: Proposal for Adding Categories of Achievement to Section 6.1 (or Amending Existing Categories)

Section 6.1 of the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) covers achievements by students that are not directly related to their degree result. These achievements must be verified by the University of Edinburgh.

This form should be completed if you wish to propose a new achievement or activity for inclusion in Section 6.1 (or to amend an existing achievement). The proposal will be considered by Senate Education Committee (SEC), which will ensure that the category adheres to the following principles:

All activity recognised in Section 6.1 of the HEAR should be undertaken **whilst a matriculated student**, and should fit under 1 of 3 headings:

1. **Additional Awards** – in Edinburgh’s case, the [‘Edinburgh Award’](#) is the only ‘Additional Award’ recognised.
2. **Additional Recognised Activities** – including volunteering, leadership and representative roles, and other significant, verifiable roles. (See page 2 for details of the additional activities that are currently recognised.)
3. **University, Students’ Association and Sports Union Prizes and Awards** – both academic and non-academic.

In addition, all activity should be:

- **Substantial** – the activity has impact, encourages reflection, and provides opportunities for learning development and ‘stretch’. It is likely to involve a substantial time commitment.
- **Verifiable** – the activity can be verified and is endorsed by the University.
- **Equitable** – the activity is available on an equal basis to a clearly defined group of students, and should be available to students on an ongoing basis eg. in successive years.
- **Factual** – information included is factual and non-evaluative.
- **Additional** – the activity is not required as part of the academic, credit-bearing curriculum.



HEAR: Proposal for Adding Categories of Achievement to Section 6.1 (or Amending Existing Categories)

The following ‘**Additional Recognised Activities**’ (heading 2 above) are currently approved by the University of Edinburgh:

<p style="text-align: center;">Students’ Association Roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edinburgh University Students’ Association Activities Position • Edinburgh University Students’ Association Elected Office Bearer • Peer Support – PALS Student Leader and Peer Support Leader • Student Representative 	<p style="text-align: center;">Sports Union Roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edinburgh University Sports Union Representative or Office Bearer • Edinburgh University Sports Union Sports Club – Official Position
<p style="text-align: center;">University / College / School Roles</p> <p>University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student member of University Internal Review team (Internal Periodic Review and Thematic Review) • Student Representative <p>School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History, Classics and Archaeology (HCA) Student Research Room Volunteer • Moray House School of Education and Sport (MHSES) Community Champion 	<p style="text-align: center;">Roles Within Other University-Affiliated Bodies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Student Centre Committee Member • Edinburgh Nightline Committee Member • Edinburgh Students’ Charities Appeal Executive Committee Member

Further information on the University of Edinburgh’s approach to the HEAR is available here: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration/other-info/hear>



HEAR: Proposal for Adding Categories of Achievement to Section 6.1 (or Amending Existing Categories)

1. What is the name of the proposed category of achievement?*

Edinburgh University Students' Association Community Volunteering

2. Please give a brief description of the category of achievement*

University of Edinburgh students are already volunteering beyond the campus and contributing positively to local communities and the University's relationship with them. While hundreds will choose to do so independently of the Students' Association, we currently support three main ways for students to get involved:

- Community Volunteering organised by one of our Volunteering Societies.
- Volunteering through community opportunities promoted through the Students' Association's Employability Hub
- Volunteering in one of Student Opportunities' partnership programmes, i.e. the Language Outreach Programme

Their contribution is very often equivalent to that of our other volunteers who receive HEAR for their volunteering across the student community and, we feel, of equal value.

3. Which students are eligible for this achievement?*

(For example, is it open to all undergraduate and taught postgraduate students, or restricted to a specific group?)

There is no restriction on which students can be supported in their community volunteering as long as they participate in an eligible activity.

The planned development of Community Volunteering is also aiming to increase the inclusivity of the opportunities by broadening the pattern of commitment required and the providers we engage. For example, partaking in several one-off projects as and when a student has availability rather than committing to regular year-round hours.



HEAR: Proposal for Adding Categories of Achievement to Section 6.1 (or Amending Existing Categories)

4. What does the student need to do to gain this achievement?*

(For example, if the achievement involves representation, is there a minimum number of meetings that must be attended or hours completed?)

This achievement should have a lower attainment requirement than the Leadership in Student Opportunities Edinburgh Award. Therefore we would recommend, a requirement to complete the basic Volunteer Induction training Sway and to log 35 hours of volunteering across the academic year, between September & April. This would be equivalent to a week of work.

5. Verification*

(Please describe **in detail** how the achievement will be verified.)

Confirmation of eligibility for HEAR

The Employability Hub via the EUSA website supports the verification of the eligibility of the community volunteering activity by recording placements.

The student groups can verify volunteering participation in their activities either through recorded membership or volunteer recruitment records.

The Community Volunteering Team within the Student Opportunities Department can confirm participation in any partnership programmes.

Record of hours attained

The hours logging system managed by the Students Association via their membership database system (SUMs) will allow students to record their volunteering hours throughout the year and data from this can be used to verify individual student attainment.

6. When will the verification be complete each academic year?*

Verification will be completed in May/June in line with the HEAR verification for the rest of the Student Opportunities activities.



HEAR: Proposal for Adding Categories of Achievement to Section 6.1 (or Amending Existing Categories)

7. Is there any other information you wish to supply in support of your application?

Often these students are undertaking similar activities to students in other Student Opportunities roles that are already eligible for HEAR however rather than focussing on the student community, they connect with local communities and organisations, and represent the University of Edinburgh students beyond the campus. This category offers an equivalent level of recognition to students volunteering in the local community.

The flexibility of the volunteering pattern across the year allows for students who would not normally be able to achieve the HEAR through the roles it is currently offered for, to be acknowledged for their contribution.

CONTACT INFORMATION

8. Name of proposer*

Dan Doyle

9. Email address of proposer*

10. Proposing School / Department*

Edinburgh University Students' Association – Community Volunteering Team, Student Opportunities Department

11. Date*

November 2022

Please return this form to the Secretary to Senate Education Committee:

philippa.ward@ed.ac.uk



HEAR: Proposal for Adding Categories of Achievement to Section 6.1 (or Amending Existing Categories)

Once received, the form will be passed to Student Systems who will ensure that the proposing School or Department holds appropriate, robust data in a suitable format for uploading to the Student Record.

Following vetting by Student Systems, the form will be passed to a Recommendation Panel for initial consideration and subsequently to Senate Education Committee for final approval.

The HEAR Recommendation Panel meets annually in late October / early November, and proposals are signed off by Senate Education Committee at its November meeting. (This schedule allows Student Systems sufficient time to make required Systems changes and to ensure that any new or changed categories can be included in the HEARs of students graduating the following summer.)

ALL PROPOSAL FORMS SHOULD THEREFORE BE SUBMITTED TO THE SECRETARY TO SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE BY 15 OCTOBER EACH YEAR.

For Student Systems use only:

I confirm that the data that will be provided for this category of achievement is relevant, robust and available in a suitable format for upload to the Student Record.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Role: _____