<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

**Meeting to be held on Thursday 19 May 2022
at 2pm in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House
and via Microsoft Teams**

A G E N D A

1.	**Welcome and Apologies**	
2.	Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28 April 2022	SQAC 21/22 5A
3.	**Matters Arising**	
	For Discussion	
4.	**Sector Developments:**	SQAC 21/22 5B
	– Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Review of Coherence and Sustainability	
	– External Examiner Principles	
	– UK Quality Code for Higher Education	
	– Subject Benchmark Statements	
5.	**Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR):**	
	– Draft Follow-on Report	SQAC 21/22 5C
	– Assessment and Feedback	SQAC 21/22 5D
6.	**Thematic Review:**	SQAC 21/22 5E
	– 2018-19 Review Progress Update	
7.	**Student Support Services Annual Review:**	SQAC 21/22 5F
	– 2022-23 Reporting Process	
8.	**Terms of Reference:**	SQAC 21/22 5G
	– Academic Collaboration	
9.	**Annual Monitoring and Internal Periodic Review Themes 2020-21:**	SQAC 21/22 5H
	– University Level Actions	
10.	**Operation of Senate Standing Committees:**	
	– Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees	SQAC 21/22 5I
	– Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees	SQAC 21/22 5J
	– Senate Presentation and Discussion Themes for 2022-23	SQAC 21/22 5K
11.	**Proposed Review of the Doctoral College**	SQAC 21/22 5L
	For Information and Formal Business	
12.	**Enhancement Themes:**	
	– Year Two Update	SQAC 21/22 5M
13.	**Internal Periodic Review:**	
	– Reports and Responses	SQAC 21/22 5N

14. **Any Other Business**

15. Provisional meeting dates 2021-22 (all meetings take place between 2-4pm, venue TBC):
  - **Thursday 15 September 2022**
  - **Thursday 8 December 2022**
  - **Thursday 23 February 2023**
  - **Thursday 27 April 2023**
  - **Thursday 18 May 2023**

<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28 April 2022
at 2pm via Microsoft Teams**

Present:

Professor Tina Harrison **(Convener)**	Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Marianne Brown	Co-opted member with expertise in Student Systems
Brian Connolly	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team (Interim), Academic Services
Dr Gail Duursma	School Representative (Engineering), College of Science and Engineering
Olivia Eadie	Assistant Director and Head of Operations and Projects, Institute for Academic Development
Tara Gold	Vice President (Education), Students' Association
Dr Katherine Inglis	School Representative (Literatures, Languages and Cultures), College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Professor Linda Kirstein	Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture, College of Science and Engineering
Stuart Lamont	Edinburgh University Students' Association Representative
Dr Paul Norris	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Dr Claire Phillips	Dean of Quality Assurance, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Professor Leigh Sparks	Deputy Principal, University of Stirling

Apologies:

Dr Jeni Harden	School Representative (School of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

In attendance:

Professor Sarah Cunningham Burley	Convenor, University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC)

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

2. **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 24 February 2022**

   The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting.

3. **Matters Arising**

   3.1 Senate Comments

   The Convenor reported that there had been a comment from a Senate member, in response to the paper circulation, suggesting that Senate could be made more aware of quality processes both internal and external to the University. The Committee noted that the Convenor had responded to the comment.

   For Discussion

4. **Undergraduate Degree Outcomes: Degree Awarded Analysis**

   The Committee discussed the annual report on degree classification data. The report included an analysis of the proportion of First class and higher classification degrees awarded by the University of Edinburgh in the 2020-21 academic year. The statistics were presented by school, including attainment gaps for key student groups, and benchmarked against the Russell Group at subject group level. Whilst trends were considered the Committee agreed that it was important to note that both 2019-20 and 2020-21 were exceptional years and so trend data should be interpreted in that light.

   It was noted that nearly all Russell Group members saw an increase in the proportion of First class degrees awarded for 2019-20, and this pattern continued for 2020-21 although with generally smaller increases. For both sessions there were smaller changes in the proportion of high classification degrees awarded. The increase in first class awards at Edinburgh was again greater than the Russell Group average (5.8 percentage points between 2019-20 and 2020-21 compared with 2.8 percentage points), so that Edinburgh's proportion of Firsts was 50.5% and the 5th highest in the Russell Group. Prior to 2019-20 Edinburgh's proportion of Firsts broadly matched the Russell Group average.

   Action: In next year's report Strategic Planning/Student Systems to include 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.

The Committee agreed that subject areas with a significantly higher (or lower) proportion of Firsts than comparator institutions or those with the greatest uplift (or reduction) during the pandemic should be invited to reflect in detail on the possible causes (for example, changes to assessment, the application of Special Circumstances, academic misconduct etc.) in their annual quality assurance (QA) reports. It was agreed that the outcomes of these reflections should be passed onto the Curriculum Transformation Programme for further consideration, particularly in relation to assessment design which is vital to ensuring the quality of Edinburgh qualifications.

Action: Academic Services to share the Degree Awarded Analysis with schools and invite significant data outliers to provide a more in-depth reflection on the issues in their annual quality assurance reports.

The Committee noted that the UK black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) attainment gap for First class degrees (-10.3 percentage points) widened markedly for 2019-20 but for 2020-21 had returned to a smaller though still material gap (-4.0). It was also noted that disabled students continued to be less likely to achieve a First class degree but the gap was also narrowing. In regard to gender, male students continued to be less likely to achieve a First class degree and that gap was widening.

5. **Awarding Gap Monitoring**

The Convenor of the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) joined the meeting to discuss the roles of SQAC and EDIC in addressing the awarding gaps across the institution.

It was noted that SQAC has driven work to identify awarding gaps across the University via the Thematic Review process (and the Data Task Group established to progress the recommendations of recent reviews) and the annual QA processes. Schools and Deaneries have increasingly engaged with widening participation (WP) and equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data to identify any gaps in attainment for different groups of students. However, they have struggled to understand the underlying causes of these gaps or what good practice should be encouraged and cultivated to address them.

The Convenor of EDIC reported that work is being undertaken to understand the underlying causes of awarding gaps and that the EDIC is seeking linkages with areas of similar activity across the University, in particular the Curriculum Transformation Programme (CTP). The Convenor of EDIC, supported by the co-convenors of the EDIC Race Equality and Anti-Racist (REAR) subcommittee, is in discussions with Strategic Planning to review the collection of data for black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) students to provide more granular and accessible data. The Convenor of EDIC suggested that the CTP is fundamental to addressing the underlying causes of the

awarding gaps. It was noted that the CTP will host a secondment post focused on mainstreaming decolonising the curriculum within the curriculum.

The Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture in the College of Science and Engineering (CSE) reported that a task group had been established to drive forward work related to rewarding gaps across CSE. The group will hold focus groups with students to seek to understand what the underlying issues are and the group will also explore linkages between entry qualifications and attainment. It was noted that similar work will be undertaken in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences in an effort to address awarding gaps. The Committee was in agreement that the University needs to establish a set of expectations or baselines in relation to WP and EDI data (based on the findings of the EDIC work to understand the causes of gaps and share good practice) to allow schools to gauge their relative performance. These expectations/baselines should in turn be monitored by the SQAC as part of the annual QA reporting processes. It was also noted that schools and deaneries want help to identify and share good practice and more granular EDI data (e.g. who is applying/what applications convert into places/who is progressing/where do they go after Edinburgh?) to fully understand the issues and address awarding gaps.

Action: The Convenor of SQAC and the Convenor of EDIC to determine the work streams for each committee to help address the awarding gaps across the University.

6. **Annual Monitoring: Reporting Templates**

The Committee noted that the Convenor, College Deans and Academic Services met in March 2022 to consider plans for the next QA reporting cycle. It was agreed that the light touch, interim approach would be maintained for a further year, with the same streamlined reporting templates.

The Committee noted that there had been minor changes to the reporting templates to reflect the following key institutional reporting priorities: the new Student Voice Policy (including consideration of the approach and effectiveness of student voice activities in line with the move to locally managed course level feedback), student progression and outcomes (focussing on the difference in attainment of groups of students with in year, rather than comparing against other years); and student support (in relation to the current Personal Tutor system and wider support for students). Also, whether the industrial action has impacted the quality of provision and student experience, and, if so, how this has been mitigated. It was noted that the

amended templates had been discussed at the School Directors of Quality Network on Monday 4 April 2022.

The Committee approved minor changes to the annual monitoring, review and reporting templates for 2021-22 to reflect the decision to extend the interim reporting process and amend the key reporting priorities.

7. **Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) Accreditation Committee: Annual Report 2020-21**

The Committee considered the annual report of the Accreditation Committee of Scotland's Rural College (SRUC).

The Committee commended SRUC on the quality of the report and noted that the Accreditation Committee had affirmed continued accreditation of its programmes. It was noted that SRUC's application for Degree Awarding Powers (DAP) had been approved to progress to the scrutiny stage by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Advisory Committee. SRUC has now entered a period of scrutiny which will continue for a minimum of a full year, and there may be an indication of the outcome in Summer 2023.

The Committee noted that SRUC Students' Association (SRUCSA) had been commended on the Gender Based Violence Project, aiming to raise awareness of what forms gender-based-violence takes, increase reporting of incidences and highlight support available to students. The Committee agreed that this initiative should be implemented across the whole King's Buildings campus.

Action: University of Edinburgh Students' Association to liaise with SRUCSA in order to coordinate the gender-based-violence initiative across the whole King's Buildings campus.

It was noted that the report included an action for the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance to explore options for baring access from the University network to essay mill websites. The Committee noted that this was in relation to SRUC blocking student access to essay mill websites from its campus network after increasing instances of plagiarism. The Committee discussed the implications, noting possible unwanted impacts such as filters inadvertently blocking access to legitimate academic sites and infringement of Civil Liberties as currently the sites are not illegal in Scotland. However, it was also noted that plagiarism has been identified as the main driver in the growth of academic misconduct cases and that students are increasingly vulnerable to the poor practices of essay mill organisations.

Action: The Convenor to explore options for addressing the impact of essay mill websites with the University's Chief Information Officer and the QAA.

8. **Senate Committee Planning: SQAC Priorities 2021-22**

The Committee discussed and agreed the following priorities for the 2022-23 academic year:

- Oversee the implementation of a plan of action in response to the 2021 Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR).

- Implement the recommendations from the Digital Maturity report and consider how quality processes and the data that they produce can support the Curriculum Transformation Programme and other areas.

- Continue to examine data and methodological options for the systematic monitoring of retention, progression, and attainment data.

- Continue to monitor the implementation of the Student Voice Policy via annual quality assurance processes.

- Engage with the QAA and Universities UK review focused on strengthening the external examining system.

Action: Committee Secretary to submit the Committee's priorities for 2021-22 to Senate.

For Information and Formal Business

9. **Internal Periodic Review: Reports and Responses**

The Committee confirmed that it was content with progress in the year-on response given the context of the pandemic. However, it was agreed that, as the University and wider society emerges from the pandemic, expectations of the speed of progress with IPR recommendations will need to be reassessed.

10. **Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

11. **Date of Next Meeting:**

Thursday 19 May 2022 at 2pm in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House and via MS Teams.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

19 May 2022

Sector Developments

Description of paper
1. Presents an update on sector developments.

2. This paper does not contribute to the Strategy 2030 outcomes. It relates to regulatory requirements.

Action requested / recommendation
3. The Committee is asked to note and discuss the developments. Further information will be presented to the Committee as it becomes available.

Background and context
4. There are a number of sector developments which relate to the quality framework for which the Committee is responsible on behalf of Senate.

Discussion

Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Review of Coherence and Sustainability

5. The review was published in June 2021 Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability (sfc.ac.uk) and the Scottish Government responded in October 2021 Supporting documents - Tertiary education and research - Scottish Funding Council review: Scottish Government response - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

6. Summary report:

Key recommendations for system change
- "**Ensure the interests of current and future students are protected and promoted** in the development of standards, outcomes, blended and digital learning opportunities, equality and inclusion actions, participation frameworks, investment and approaches to accountability."

Surviving and thriving with commitment and impact
- "A new overarching **National Impact Framework** for the sector should be developed by SFC, collaboratively with the sector, students and key stakeholder, to provide a more direct line of sight to Scotland's National Performance Framework and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and the government's strategic intent. This would provide greater clarity about expected outcomes for students, research impact, economic and social renewal, and leadership for the climate emergency, equalities and fair work. It would provide the overarching context for a more targeted Outcome Agreement negotiation between SFC and institutions. SFC is the first public body in Great Britain to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with the

Equality and Human Rights Commission to increase scrutiny of the progress being made by colleges and universities to advance quality, diversity and inclusion, and to bring coherence to equalities reporting. This work will also inform the outcomes we should expect in the development of a National Impact Framework for all institutions and how best to report progress."

Protecting and promoting students' interests
- "While there is widespread support for external scrutiny of quality, the current bifurcated approach for colleges and universities no longer provides the oversight needed for a more integrated tertiary system. **We recommend the development of a single framework for quality for colleges and universities, to uphold academic standards and secure enhancement of the learning experience of students.** This framework should have at its heart making Scotland the best place to be a student within a college or university and sharing good practice across tertiary education. **We will work with partners to develop a national level standard for online and blended learning**, to ensure students and quality assessment frameworks are clear about expectations and effective practice."

Frameworks for the future
- "We will operationalise the Scottish Government's strategic intent and the proposed National Impact Framework through four inter-linked and mutually reinforcing activities – investment; quality assurance; impact and accountability; and analytics and insight – across tertiary education, research and knowledge exchange, and our investment in related infrastructure."

7. [Full report](#):

- Pages 69-71 – under the heading "Securing Quality in Learning and Teaching for Students" provides more detail on the recommendation for a single framework for quality.

- Page 71 "A new framework would focus on enhancing quality and delivering excellence in the student learning experience both now and long into the future. It would connect to wider impact and accountability processes, with a clearer connection between quality processes and the National Impact Framework and Outcome Agreements. It would build on Scotland's track record in this space and would embrace the sharing of effective practice across our tertiary system."

- Page 135 [National Impact Framework] "In practical terms, the NIF would set the overarching context for a more targeted annual Outcome Agreement (OA) negotiation between SFC and institutions; and reduce the need for OAs to cover everything; help guide the activities of other quality assurance processes; and form the basis for SFC enhancement and improvement activity, undertaken in the spirit of collective leadership and collaboration for improvement."

- P140-1 [Outcome Agreements] "While there is better alignment now between the OA process and an institution's planning process, we could do more to

draw from and align with an institution's existing performance reporting systems and quality assurance activity."

8. From The Quality Forum Bulletin Spring 2022 (update on the development of the tertiary quality framework): "Following consultation through sector quality and learning and teaching networks, work is underway to pull what SFC have heard together into one document outlining a draft framework. The draft will be for further discussion with the sectors. Priorities included the recognition of existing sector strengths, identifying synergies across the UK nations, and aligning with the European Standards and Guidelines. The framework would be enhancement-led with emphases on self-evaluation and student engagement, and would have an increased focus on the impact on learners. A transition period was planned, with work taking place to identify activities that might be trialled during that time."

External Examiner Principles

9. QAA are working alongside Universities UK (UUK) and GuildHE to undertake a review of external examining practice within UK higher education. The review, which commenced in October 2021, explores the use of external examiners as a core component of institutional processes for assuring academic standards in UK higher education. The aim is to develop a set of principles for effective external examining with the intention of these being agreed by the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assurance (UKSCQA) and appended to the Statement of Intent on Degree Classifications. Feedback has indicated that there are ways in which the system could be enhanced. Visit the website to see the initial recommendations. The agreed principles on external examining will be published later this academic year.

UK Quality Code for Higher Education

10. Following a consultation and changes to the conditions of registration, the UK Quality Code for Higher Education is not part of Office for Students regulatory requirements. The UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment is working on producing a document to summarise the regulatory and quality landscape in the UK.

Subject Benchmark Statements

11. 14 Subject Benchmark Statements have been revised and published QAA launches first suite of revised Subject Benchmark Statements Subject Benchmark Statements describe the nature of study and the academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas. They show what graduates might reasonably be expected to know, do and understand at the end of their studies.

12. This suite of Subject Benchmark Statements is the first which will incorporate consideration of how practice within disciplines addresses wider social goals, comprising:
   - equality, diversity and inclusivity
   - education for sustainable development
   - the requirements of disabled students
   - enterprise and entrepreneurship.

Resource implications

13. There are no resource implications identified in the report at this stage.

Risk management

14. The report does not identify any risks at this stage.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

15. This paper does not contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. It relates to regulatory requirements.

Equality & diversity

16. There are no equality and diversity implications identified at this stage.

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

17. Further updates will be provided to the Committee as they become available. The Quality Team and the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance regularly communicate with colleagues in quality roles across the University and will continue to provide updates on aspects of the quality framework as appropriate.

Author
Nichola Kett
12 May 2022

Presenter
Tina Harrison

Freedom of Information
Open

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

19 May 2022

Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR)
Draft Follow-up Report

Description of paper

1. This paper provides a progress summary of the University's Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) Action Plan.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. Discuss and comment on progress and activities in response to the ELIR recommendations.

Background and context

3. ELIR is the method used by the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland (QAAS) to review and assess the effectiveness of higher education institutions' approaches to securing academic standards and the quality of the student experience.

4. Our review was conducted in a series of online meetings with students and staff in February and March 2021. QAA Scotland published the outcome of the review online in July 2021: [University of Edinburgh (qaa.ac.uk)](#). A shorter "outcome report" provides the formal outcome of the review and an overview of the commendations and recommendations; the longer "technical report" provides further information on the background and findings from the review, providing context to the commendations and recommendations.

5. An Action Plan setting out the University's response to the ELIR was approved by Senate in October 2021 and an ELIR Oversight Group established to progress activities in response to the ELIR recommendations. The ELIR Oversight Group is comprised of: VP Students; Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance; Deputy Secretary Student Experience; Director of IAD; Director of Strategic Change; and Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Academic Services.

6. The Vice Principal Students and the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance held a series of consultative meetings with each School/Deanery (between November 2021 and March 2022) during which the School/Deanery Heads and key staff were invited to discuss the ELIR recommendations and share any related issues or activities.

Discussion

7. The University is required to provide a follow-up report to QAA Scotland on actions taken or in progress to address the outcomes of the review one year after the publication of the ELIR reports (due July 2022).

8. The attached paper represents the first draft of the follow-up report, capturing updates from each of the action leads. It will be developed over the next couple

of months in response to comments from University Executive (10 May meeting) and Senate (an update on ELIR actions will be presented to the 25 May meeting).

9. The ELIR Oversight Group will approve the final version of the follow-up report before it is submitted to QAA in July 2022 (with the proviso that it will need to be endorsed by University Court in October 2022 before the final version can be published).

Resource implications
10. Oversight of the ELIR Action Plan does not have overt resource implications, but some of the recommended actions may have implications in regard to staff time.

Risk Management
11. The approach to responding to ELIR is designed to mitigate the risks associated with a poor outcome in the next review and is monitored as part of the University Risk Register - Strategic Risk 5 "Continued or worsening of NSS or other measures of student experience".

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
12. Relates to SDG 4: Quality Education, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education. The overall focus of the recommendations is aimed at improving the quality of education and the student experience. There is a specific recommendation aimed at address equality and diversity in relation to student achievement and attainment gaps.

Equality & Diversity
13. No new or revised policies are currently being proposed, but some of the recommendations and actions will give rise to new or revised policies and practices. Equality impact assessments will be carried out at the point when a new or revised policy or practice is proposed. Equality and diversity is a key focus of one of the main recommendations.

Next steps/implications
14. The ELIR Oversight Group will play a formal role in monitoring progress against the recommendations and, together with Senate Quality Assurance Committee, will advise University Executive of progress and any concerns.

Further information
13. Authors   Presenter
Professor Colm Harman,   **Professor Tina Harrison,**
Vice Principal Students   Assistant Principal,
Professor Tina Harrison,   Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Assistant Principal,
Academic Standards and Quality
Assurance
ELIR Action Leads

Freedom of Information
14. This paper is open.

| **The University of Edinburgh** |
| **Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2020/21** |
| **Follow-up Report – First Draft (May 2022)** |

Introduction

The University of Edinburgh welcomed the ELIR reports and communicated the successful outcome widely to staff and students.

The Action Plan, setting out the University's response to the ELIR recommendations, was approved by Senate in October 2021 and an ELIR Oversight Group established to provide direction and oversight of the actions. The ELIR Oversight Group is convened by the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance and the membership comprised of: Vice Principal Students; Edinburgh Students Association Vice President Education; Deputy Secretary Student Experience; Director of the Institute of Academic Development; Director of Strategic Change; and Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Academic Services. The ELIR Oversight Group formally reports to the University Executive, advising on progress and any concerns, and also provides regular updates to Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC).

The Action Plan takes a themed approach to the implementation of the ELIR recommendations in order to ensure alignment with existing learning and teaching priorities. Actions are grouped as follows:
- strategy, growth and planning (encompassing the oversight and planning for growth of student numbers, and the strategic approach to the enhancement of learning and teaching);
- change management (and the pace of change);
- monitoring consistency of implementation of strategy, policy and practice (encompassing oversight and implementation of policy and practice, and training for postgraduate research (PGR) students who teach);
- student support (the personal tutor system);
- assessment and feedback;
- developing and promoting teaching excellence (encompassing the recognition and support for academic staff development, and promotion of academic staff based on teaching); and,
- attainment gap monitoring.

The Vice Principal Students and the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance held a series of consultative meetings with each School/Deanery (between November 2021 and March 2022) during which the School/Deanery Heads and key learning and teaching staff were invited to discuss the ELIR recommendations, the Action Plan, and any related issues or activities.

1. Theme: Strategy, growth and planning

1.1 Oversight and planning for growth of student numbers

ELIR Recommendation:
"… implement an approach to facilitate institutional oversight and the effective planning and monitoring of student numbers, in order to ensure that appropriate and timely actions can be taken where increases in student numbers impact on arrangements for learning and teaching and student support."

The Vice Principal Students and the Director of Strategic Planning & Insight are leading actions and activities related to the oversight and planning of student numbers.

The need for "institutional oversight and the effective planning and monitoring of student numbers" is fully recognised and aligned with the University's own intentions. A range of actions have been/are being taken, including:
- Sep 2021: Planning Round approach re-set to focus on a 5 year timeframe.
- Oct 2021: Strategic Performance Framework to drive and demonstrate delivery of Strategy 2030 developed and approved by Court in October 2021, including two KPIs focused on student population:
  - KPI1 - Widening participation: Number (and proportion) of undergraduate entrants from an SIMD0-20 area. Baseline (2020/21): 190 (9.3%)
  - KPI2 - International student diversity: Ratio of largest overseas market to 5th and 10th largest overseas markets. Baseline (2020/21): Ratio to 5th: 20:1, Ratio to 10th: 37:1
- Nov/Dec 2021: Intake targets for 2022 set within context of cross-University 'parameters' for key intake groups, discussed with Senior Leadership Team and Colleges in November 2021, and agreed by University Executive in December 2021. 'Side target' proposed for SIMD0-20.
- Dec 2021/Feb 2022: Intake targets supplied by Colleges for 2022-2026.
- Feb/Mar 2022: Strategic Planning review of intake targets for 2022 against agreed parameters, with some follow-on discussions to understand divergences.
- Feb 2022: Update provided to Student Recruitment and Fees Strategy Group, aligned with discussion on fees strategy and agreement of Strategic Enrolment Plan (six key objectives, which encompass enhanced use of data and collaborative working around recruitment).
- Mar 2022: Briefing session on recruitment and admissions held with College office staff, Heads of School and Directors of Professional Services.
- Ongoing:
  - Close engagement throughout with SFC and Scottish Government on controlled subject expectations and non-controlled undergraduate places expectations, as well as upskilling.
  - Weekly review of UCAS data on applications, offers for Edinburgh vs our peer group.
  - Embedded planning for annual Clearing Operation: Clearing provides an important mechanism to mitigate the risk of potential under-recruitment, particularly in RUK and OVS intakes. This is particularly relevant in the

context of continued uncertainty about the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on international travel, which might otherwise suppress intakes at a late stage in the recruitment cycle.

- Underway: Work to 're-set' previous 'Size and Shape' work – in progress.

For 2022 entry, working within constraints of current systems, processes and resourcing, the continuing high demand in terms of application numbers, set against priority given to managing the intake to target, has resulted in greater caution in offer-making, and some delays to admissions decision-making until relatively late in the cycle. There is evidence this is impacting on applicant experience. All options are under consideration to improve the process and timeliness of offer-making.

In terms of ensuring "that appropriate and timely actions can be taken where increases in student numbers impact on arrangements for learning and teaching and student support", over the course of 2021-22 to date, in addition to previously agreed budget allocations, the University has deployed additional resources in-year, including investments totalling £5.5m to support the increase in teaching and professional costs associated with our additional students in 2021-22, as well as up to £4.7m investment across a range of areas including Curriculum Transformation, managed isolation and other initiatives to support the student experience. Recruitment of Wellbeing Advisors and Student Support Advisors is underway as a key milestone in relation to the Student Support Project.

Context

It is worth highlighting that several of the factors driving above-target intakes in 2021 (and 2020), particularly for undergraduates, related to the external context and hence impacted many institutions, but were acutely felt by Edinburgh due in particular to our mix of applicants/students. Rates of application, and rates of conversion, of applicants for University level study in almost all intake groups varied significantly compared to historic norms.

Whilst initial forecasts early in the pandemic were for a potentially significant negative impact on recruitment of international students, the relaxation of restrictions in autumn 2020, and again in autumn 2021, resulted in international student numbers holding up and in many cases exceeding targets (though incoming and outgoing visiting student numbers continue to be lower than pre-pandemic). The unprecedented Scottish Higher and A level results in 2021 saw high numbers of Scotland Fee Rate and Rest of UK undergraduate applicants meeting the conditions of their offer. The reintroduction of post-study visas is an additional driver influencing international student choice of the UK, with particular impact on certain institutions, including Edinburgh.

Many of the external conditions impacting on student recruitment and admissions will prevail in 2022, and undergraduate application figures are again high and increased on 2021. An overarching aim for 2022-23 is to deliver an intake population which is closer to target than was achieved in 2021-22, and hence to minimise risks associated with unplanned over- or under-recruitment. In terms of process, we are aiming to set clear agreed intake targets as early as possible, to then enable all involved to focus efforts and deploy strategies to deliver these targets, using all of

the levers which are available as part of the recruitment and admissions process. This will be underpinned by enhanced use of data and analytics on conversion, supported through work being progressed by Strategic Planning, working with SRA and recruitment leads in Colleges. In contrast to last cycle, in the context that we know the status of EU and ROI entrants; have more clarity on total funded places; have clear public statements on examination intentions; and have an expectation of multi-year Scottish Government funding horizon, this gives us a much more certain platform for planning Scotland Fee Rate (SFR) and RUK UG intakes than was the case in the previous cycle. However, a number of inherent risks remain linked to: varying retention rates of continuing students; differing patterns of demand; changed behaviour of applicants; provision of additional places for SFR which don't account for re-categorisation of EU; and ongoing uncertainty around potential Scottish and UK Government responses to the pandemic over the coming months, including remaining moderate potential risks of disruption to plans for school exams. Against this backdrop, Colleges and SRA have undertaken careful planning work to ensure we have in place a set of levers to enable achievement of targets. As part of the approach, and to help with expectation management, a short article setting out how we are approaching the 2022 entry admissions cycle was published in November 2021: [How we are approaching the 2022 entry admissions cycle | The University of Edinburgh](#)

Looking ahead, in line with Strategy 2030, we will work towards delivering on the following commitments: "We will not grow for growth's sake. We will improve our student experience while aiming to keep our undergraduate community at a stable size. In reshaping our teaching for the future, we expect to expand interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary, postgraduate and digital education." Over the medium term, our total student population may therefore change more in composition than in overall size.

1.2 Strategic approach to the enhancement of learning and teaching

ELIR Recommendation:
"… in view of the current transition between the Learning and Teaching Strategy 2017 and future plans, the University should provide institutional oversight, and ensure clarity for staff, on the strategic direction underpinning current learning and teaching developments."

Vice Principal Students is leading actions and activities related to the strategic enhancement of learning and teaching.

The current "strategic direction underpinning current learning and teaching developments" is being driven through the Curriculum Transformation Programme (CTP). The present stage of the CTP is setting the vision for the Edinburgh Student and the principles and architecture for the curriculum. When finalised, following a number of co-design workshops with staff and students, it is envisaged that a new Learning and Teaching Strategy will be developed to drive the implementation of the curriculum. A task group of Senate Education Committee (SEC) will take forward the development of a new Learning and Teaching Strategy during the first half of academic year 2022-23.

2. Theme: Change management

ELIR Recommendation:
"… develop an effective approach to the strategic leadership and management of change that will ensure more immediate and timely implementation of identified solutions in order to support staff and enhance the student experience."

The Director of Strategic Change is working with senior managers from across the University to take work forward in relation to this recommendation. The ELIR observation plays into broader activity regarding the approach to change at Edinburgh and is understood as an important issue for the University to address.

Some immediate steps are being taken and the student experience initiatives are included in this exercise, as are other non-student facing initiatives. Improving visibility of current 'change' initiatives and projects is key (i.e. purpose, ownership, governance, key timeline) including impact on business as usual activities and an estimation the size and where we can expect that effort to land. Better co-ordination of the current initiatives is also important. Working with the leadership of current initiatives and business areas will enhance our chances of successful implementation.

We recognise that the above will only get us so far, so to enhance our collective capability and capacity there are some further steps on our planning, management, governance and capabilities we are starting to review. Utilising the move to a fiveyear planning horizon by developing a clearer pipeline of strategic initiatives/projects (a small, clear, prioritised list) and building this into resource planning. We will ensure greater co-ordination in the scheduling of these activities, impact on operational area, and understanding of the period to embed and refine initiatives. We will also review and enhance how we best structure strategic change capacity and capability in the longer term as well as a number of areas such as developing compelling narrative; project capabilities; lessons learned.

In addition, we have utilised our engagement with an external consultant on a brief piece of work helping us to establish a strategic framework to manage our enhancements to the student experience and deliver these in a more effective manner. As part of this work we asked for input into enhancements we can make to the way we approach change in the organisation. There are some areas of process we can focus on, such as the establishment of a student experience framework and roadmap with both short and longer term deliverables and initiatives. There are common attributes of successful change that we will seek to enhance/embed in our practice: be clear on objectives and measure as we go; leaders must be visible and engaged; listen and communicate (in that order); and maintain momentum and don't take too long. There are also leadership behaviours that will drive success: prioritise experience of students in design of policies, operations, procedures and ways of working; drive accountability; empower staff to commit to strategic improvements; acknowledge that strategic trade-offs may need to be made; and embed a commitment to continuous improvement.

Finally, we are seeing some of this change of approach in action. In particular in the implementation of the student support model. We have set out from the start with a

different delivery and implementation model which specifically drives accountability for the delivery from the Board and through the Colleges and the Professional Service Group that will implement and own the changes.

3. Theme: Monitoring consistency of implementation of strategy, policy and practice

3.1 Oversight and implementation of policy and practice

ELIR Recommendation:
"… recognising the decentralised nature of university structures, the institution should establish a systematic approach to enable effective institutional oversight and evaluation of the implementation of policy and practice. As part of this, the University is asked to increase the range and use of institutionally determined baseline requirements to ensure consistency and accountability. The institution should ensure that mechanisms are put in place to adequately evaluate the consistency of implementation of strategic objectives across the institution and act when Schools deviate from institutional expectations."

Activities related to the oversight and implementation of policy and practice are being taken forward by the Vice Principal Students; Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance; and Interim Deputy Secretary Student Experience (with support from Director of Strategic Change).

Some policies have a more direct impact on learning and teaching and the student experience, and we will focus on those priority areas (and associated policies and practices) to ensure consistent implementation, develop a set of associated indicators from which to measure and evaluate, and establish a clear approach for monitoring consistency of implementation. Immediate priority areas of work include student support, assessment and feedback, training and support for PGR tutors and academic staff development. Much of this work is being taken forward as part of the other ELIR recommendations and reported elsewhere.

Stakeholder discussions have taken place (facilitated by Nous Consulting) around the student experience priority and will help refine our institutional planning.

3.2 Training for postgraduate research (PGR) students who teach

ELIR Recommendation
"… ensure effective implementation of its policy for the training and support of postgraduates who teach and ensure all PGR students are trained before engaging in teaching activities."

Training for PGR students who teach is being taken forward by the Doctoral College leads.

A Tutor and Demonstrators (T&D) Network has been formed with representatives from all Schools, and HR. It will be expanded to include other services as well as UCU representation. So far it has 94 members from all Schools and Deaneries. These include School managers and academic leaders as well as the trainers and

those involved with administration of T&D. The forum will act as a sounding board for policies, enable exchange of good practice, share problems and liaise better with the services. A senior oversight group has been convened as a formal body and has met once. The group includes representatives from the Doctoral College, the three Colleges, the Institute for Academic Development (IAD), Human Resources, and Academic Services. Tutor and Demonstrators representatives will join the group once identified. This group will meet a small number of times each year and report to the ELIR oversight group and Senate Quality Assurance Committee and act as a governance body for the network.

A working group has also been formed to look specifically at training led by the IAD and consisting of a selection of those involved with training in the Schools. The remit of the group is to:
- map the training provided to Tutors and Demonstrators throughout the University;
- understand who has responsibility for Tutor and Demonstrator training throughout the University and propose a structure to ensure oversight of T&D in each School/Deanery;
- gauge awareness of the Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators at School level;
- make recommendations to the Oversight Group. It will use the established T&D Network to consult all Schools.

4. Theme: Student Support

ELIR Recommendation:
"…make significant progress in implementing plans to ensure an effective approach to offering personal student support. In doing so, and recognising the extended period of time that the University has been developing its approach to personal tutoring, it is asked to reflect on whether the current timescale for implementation of the institutional Student Support and Personal Tutor Plan in 2023-24, is sufficiently ambitious. The University should make demonstrable progress within the next academic year in respect of ensuring parity of experience for students and effective signposting to support services and delivery of an agreed and consistent baseline level of provision. As part of its approach, the University is asked to develop an effective mechanism to monitor consistency of implementation and allow it to evaluate the impact of these changes on the student experience."

The Interim Deputy Secretary Student Experience is leading work to address the recommendation on student support.

Governance
Work continues on the implementation of the new student support model. Full implementation of the model is on target for September 2023, with some variation in implementation across the University in September 2022. The Student Support Project Board has been established and terms of reference agreed back in November 2021. A number of the key responsibilities of the Board are directly relevant to service quality, and there has already been a commitment that the Board will continue for an agreed period post implementation in September 2023. Key responsibilities are set out below and these will remain an ongoing focus for Board agenda, discussions and decisions:

a. Responsible for the overall operating model of student support being implemented, including the services delivered to students (functional perspective), the policies, business processes (and where relevant systems) and the interface between School and centrally provided services;

b. Responsible for agreeing School implementation plans, roadmaps, support required and any proposed variation from the preferred model due to recognised local needs/requirements; and

c. Responsible for agreeing measures/outcomes expected from the service/model and establish a governance approach for the ongoing measurement, evaluation and improvement of the service model.

Roles

Job and role descriptions have been developed for the key professional service roles and cohort leads. An important milestone has been reached with recruitment, voluntary moves or transition now underway for both the student adviser and well-being adviser roles to ensure the phase one adopters are ready to implement the new model by September 2022. A single recruitment approach has been agreed across the three Colleges for student advisers and with the Director of Student Well-being for the well-being advisers.

An early draft of the training plan for Wellbeing Adviser and Student Advisers has been shared with College leads. Work on the training plan began with an inventory of training available within the University and has included detailed analysis of what the various courses cover. The project team also held meetings with other HEIs running Wellbeing Services in order to learn from their experiences.

For the Cohort lead role, the model moves away from a single point of individualised support to an eco-system of support where the cohort lead has an exciting opportunity through the group aspect to build community. A Cohort Lead design document has been developed to provide clarification on the role within Schools and Deaneries.

Developing student journey maps: A student lens

For each stage of the journey, we need to articulate the expected experience, touch points and the likely forks in the road where students will take different pathways. For example, there will be additional pre-arrival and settling in tasks for international students, there will be students who join us with complex needs, there will be students who need help being ready to study, there are students who don't think they need any help but with a bit of support could achieve more. That expanded Student Journey map can then be developed into a Support Timeline which can help students visually to understand how they interact with the ecosystem of support within each segment, how and where they access support (the roles within the model should be seamless to them, this is the fault of the current model, where students need to know how the University works to get help from the right service or individual). Key deliverables:

- Student support ecosystem – An overview of the support network for students, both static and animated/interactive
- Support Timeline – An expansion of the "Student Journey" to show students where support available as they progress, identifying likely support needs for each stage. This needs to be in a format that can be used by project team

preparing case studies/personas, so they can relate those to the Support Timeline

Student journey maps: A staff lens
For staff delivering within the model, does their training and understanding of the eco-system match the student lens? How can we articulate how the roles within the organisational chart deliver seamlessly to students removing the barriers of the institutional hierarchy? Key deliverable:
- Organisation Explainer - An interactive/animated tool, which can be included in general communications and staff induction materials, to explain where new roles fit within the wider support ecosystem.

In preparation for the new academic year policy revisions will be presented to the relevant Senate committee for approval during semester 2. Consistent implementation and use of policy and regulations will be a pivotal aspect of training for new roles.

The new student approach in being phased in, starting with a number of pilot schools in academic year 2022-23 and starting with new incoming students. The Personal Tutor system will remain in the short-term for continuing students and student experience of the current Personal Tutor system will continue to be monitored. The February Student Pulse Survey asked a series of questions about students' experience of the personal tutor and student support systems as they are run within their School or Deanery. This was a repeat of the questions from April 2021. The findings of these surveys were discussed at a meeting of the Senior Tutor Network in semester two, along with the plans for the transition to the new system of student support (the meeting was led by the Vice Principal Students and Assistant Principal Student Support).

5. Theme: Assessment and feedback

ELIR Recommendation:
"… 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."

An Assessment & Feedback Task Group (co-convened by Professor Tina Harrison, Assistant Principal, and Dr Sabine Rolle, Dean for Learning and Teaching CAHSS, and reporting to the Curriculum Transformation Board) was established to take forward this work.
The Task Group has set out plans for a "*holistic and strategic approach to the design and management of assessment and feedback"* which were discussed at the 10th March 2022 Senate Education Committee. The Committee endorsed the direction of travel and made some comments for further refinement to be taken back to the May meeting of the committee for final approval. The overall approach comprises:

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

    i. Fit for purpose
    ii. Inclusive, equitable and fair
    iii. Reliable, robust and transparent
    iv. Proportionate to amount and level of credit
    v. Constructive, developmental and timely
    vi. Make appropriate use of learning technologies
    vii. Developed and implemented in conversation with students
    viii. Overseen at programme level (to ensure adherence to the above)

b. **Assessment and Feedback Priorities.** The principles set the baseline expectations, but we should also strive for creativity and enhancement of our assessment practice. Feeding in to the Curriculum Transformation Programme, the Task Group is also producing a set of strategic priorities for assessment. These will be forward-looking and aspirational, encouraging greater creativity in assessment practice including, but not limited to, the following areas: greater emphasis on authentic assessments; increased formative assessment and feedback; increased assessment for learning; increased student partnership in assessment and student agency in assessment.

c. **Support/guidance for staff.** To support colleagues in implementing the assessment and feedback principles, and strategic priorities, we propose to curate a series of Teaching Matters blogs that address each of the core principles and priority themes, drawing on insight and best practice from within the university and further afield and establish an Assessment and Feedback network to share and enhance practice.

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

Work is progressing on a recommendation for a single Common Marking Scheme with a preferred approach identified. However, further scoping work is required to explore the implications for students systems of a revised marking schema on APT (Assessment and Progression Tool). Consultation with staff is planned throughout

the rest of the year. The aim is to agree a new marking schema by the end of the year, but implementation will depend on any system changes required.

6. Theme: Developing and promoting teaching excellence

6.1 Recognition and support for academic staff development

ELIR Recommendation:
"… take action to remove barriers which exist that prevent some academic staff from fully engaging with its existing suite of development opportunities for the professionalisation of teaching."

This work was paused in March 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19 however the University is exploring the potential to restart this work in spring/summer 2022.

This would align with the Curriculum Transformation Programme and the desire to enhance support for the professional development in teaching we are seeing in several Schools. It has also been flagged in recommendations from our last ELIR and is likely to be a topic of interest to the new Provost. The University will arrange to have this embedded into the annual quality reports, with Schools required to report on progress on an annual basis.

A final decision on how and when to progress this may need to wait for the arrival of the new Provost.

6.2 Promotion of academic staff based on teaching

This is an area that the new Provost (with the Vice Principal Students) can drive thinking and planning.

The University has made changes to the Exemplars of Excellence (extending to grade 8 and updating) and to policies and procedures (including developments this year focussed on those in hybrid roles).

The University is exploring the potential benefit of commissioning an external evaluation of the policies and procedures introduced over the last 5 years relevant to this topic. This includes the introduction and updating of the Exemplars of Excellence, introduction of the requirement to assess teaching when recruiting new academic staff, outcomes and experience of promotion system for individual staff, changes in policy and procedure around academic promotions. We hope to initiate the evaluation work before the end of the current academic year and have it completed by the end of 2022.

7. Theme: Attainment gap monitoring

ELIR Recommendation:
"…consider how to address attainment gaps in student performance through the oversight, coordination and monitoring at an institutional level of school-level actions."

Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance (Convenor of Senate Quality Assurance Committee) and the University Lead, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Convenor of the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee) are leading work to monitor and address attainment/awarding gaps.

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

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

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

Summary

This follow-up report outlines the actions taken by the University of Edinburgh to address the areas for development identified in the ELIR reports. The significant progress made is detailed and planning for areas still to be addressed is outlined. We are confident that our approach over the next three years will deliver enhancements to the student experience and that we will be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of these actions by the time of the next ELIR.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

19 May 2022

**Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR):
Assessment and Feedback**

Description of paper

1. The revised and updated 'holistic and strategic approach to the design and management of assessment and feedback' in response to the recent ELIR recommendation.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is invited to discuss the paper in relation to the University's Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) Action Plan (noting that the paper was approved by Senate Education Committee at the meeting held on Thursday 12 May 2022).

Background and context

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

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

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

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

    a. The overall approach to Assessment and Feedback

      b. Assessment and Feedback Principles

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

network/community of practice to discuss and share insight on assessment and feedback practice.

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

9. An initial draft of the Assessment and Feedback Principles was presented to the Directors of Teaching Network and the Curriculum Transformation Programme Reference Group. A series of small group discussions were held with Directors of Teaching. Detailed comments were received from a number of colleagues which have been taken into account in the version of the principles attached to this paper. The comments received to date have been positive and supportive of the broad principles. Some colleagues felt that the principles are appropriate but challenging to meet, whereas other colleagues felt they were not aspirational enough, hence the development of priorities. Comments have been very helpful in improving the expression and clarity of some of the principles and challenging others. A sense of the comments and changes made to the principles as a result is provided in the comments/notes boxes at the end of each of the key principles, as well as an indication of the feedback made at the last SEC and how these comments have been reflected in this current draft.

10. SEC approved the assessment and feedback principles and priorities at the meeting held on Thursday 12 May 2022.

Discussion

11. See attached paper.

Resource implications

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

Risk management

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

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

14. N/A

Equality & diversity

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

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

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

Authors

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

Dr Sabine Rolle *(Dean of Undergraduate Studies, CAHSS)*

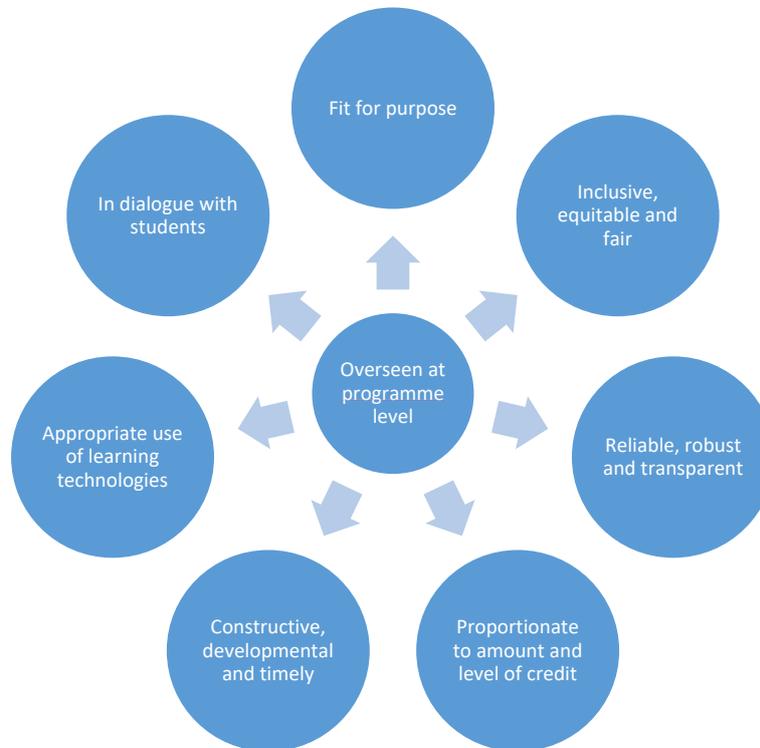**Dr Ian Glen** *(Curriculum Transformation Partner)*

Date 6th May 2022

Presenter

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

Freedom of Information *Open*

University of Edinburgh

Assessment and Feedback Principles

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

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

    b. Assessment shall be for and of learning;

    c. Assessment shall contribute towards the Edinburgh Student Vision;

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

Comments/notes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

    Comments/notes

    - *This principle was added following discussion at the last SEC and with helpful input from Cathy Bovill.*

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

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

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

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

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

    Comments/notes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

  a. Feedback shall be provided on all assessed work;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

    c. Variety in assessment across a programme;

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

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

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

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

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

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

Assessment and Feedback Priorities

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

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

Increased use of authentic assessment

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

Students as partners / co-creators in assessment

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

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

Assessment and feedback inclusive by design

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

Academic integrity in assessment design

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

Increased opportunity for formative assessment and feedback

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

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

Increased use of technology for innovation and creativity in assessment

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

Development of programme level assessments

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

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

19 May 2022

Thematic Review 2018-19:
Black and minority ethnic (BME) students' experiences of support at the University

Report on Recommendations/Remitted Actions

Description of paper:
1. The progress update of the implementation of the recommendations of the Thematic Review 2018-19: Black and minority ethnic (BME) students' experiences of support at the University.

Action requested / recommendation:
2. For discussion.

Background and context:
3. At the meeting held on Wednesday 18 September 2019, Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) approved the final report of the Thematic Review 2018-19: Black and minority ethnic (BME) students' experiences of support at the University. The individuals and areas remitted actions have been asked to provide a year-on response to each, noting expected timescales for completion and highlighting potential barriers to progress.

Discussion:
4. Committee is asked to consider the responses and determine if sufficient progress has been made to implement the recommendations.

Resource implications:
5. Resource implications were considered as part of the review.

Risk management:
6. Risks were considered as part of the review.

Equality & diversity:
7. Equality and diversity was an integral part of the review.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action:
8. Committee Secretary will feedback comments to relevant areas.

Author	**Presenter**
Dr Emily Sena & Johanna Holtan	**Brian Connolly,**
Co-convenors, University of Edinburgh's Race Equality and Anti-Racist sub-committee (REAR)	Academic Services

Freedom of Information: Open

<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

Thematic Review 2017-18:
Black and minority ethnic (BME) students' experiences of support at the University

Update on Recommendations/Remitted Actions

Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC), at the meeting held on Wednesday 18 September 2019, approved the final report of the Thematic Review 2018-19: Black and minority ethnic (BME) students' experiences of support at the University. The recommendations of the review were then remitted to the individuals and areas identified in the report, in particular Professor Sarah Cunningham-Burley the Convenor of the University's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee (EDIC) and the Race Equality and Anti-Racist (REAR) subcommittee, to drive forward the recommendations. SQAC is required to oversee progress on the implementation of the report recommendations, via an initial 14 week report and then subsequent annual reports, until all outstanding actions have been resolved.

Recommendation	Timescale for completion	December 2021 Update	Current Update
The Review Panel **recommends** that the University work with the student BME Liberation Campaign, BME Staff Network, and the Race Equality Working Group (see section 4.1.5) to identify mechanisms for reporting racial micro-aggressions and racism.	September 2022 - ongoing	One Pusumane (a PhD intern) completed research to understand the prevalence of hate crimes, racial harassment and microaggressions on campus and investigate current reporting structures and other institutional approaches. The final report will be shared with Gavin Douglas and Sarah Cunningham-Burley. The findings of the report were also shared at EDIC in November 2021.	Supported by Deputy Secretary Lisa Dawson and Rebecca Shade, the extension of Report and Support on racism will be launched in the new academic year with adequate staffing resource. The team will support communications out to students and wider University community before the new academic year begins.

The Review Panel **recommends** that the University work with the student BME Liberation Campaign, BME Staff Network and the Race Equality Working Group (see section 4.1.5) to identify mechanisms that address BME staff-student experiences.		Through work described below to address the attainment gap a need has been identified for a specific Student BAME support person to oversee this work more broadly. Progress is currently slow as it relies on efforts additional to existing workloads. The REAR co-convenors are in discussions with others to identify the feasibility of this. The Institute for Academic Development has created a SharePoint site to support decolonising the curriculum across the institution. You can find it here. REAR are assisting IAD in gathering case studies from Schools. The podcast series is still ongoing and staff continue to request opportunities to participate.	Feeding in Mohini Gray's research on the attainment gap, the Curriculum Transformation Project will support a short-life working group from across the institution to address the attainment gap. Curriculum Transformation Project will host a secondment post focused on mainstreaming decolonising the curriculum within the curriculum.

The Review Panel **recommends** that University Leadership recognise the need to improve knowledge and upskill in the area of developing racial literacy.		Caroline Wallace is leading ongoing work to identify and implement appropriate anti-racist training for staff.	REAR has identified racial literacy as a priority for the new action plan (currently in consultation based on input from key stakeholders, REAR members and action owners). Details will follow and REAR will continue to collaborate with HR on this.
The Review Panel **recommends** that the Principal leads a conversation on 'race' in higher education and the implications for the University of Edinburgh.		There was a Race Equality Action Court Seminar in July 2021. Details of the action plan and REAR's strategy were shared with members of court, including the Principal, and were well supported. This includes advocating for the "data collection person" described below.	REAR Co-Convenors spoke at the University's Senior Leadership Forum on the action plan and key priorities, chaired by the Principal.
The Review Panel **recommends** that the University provide each Head of College, School, and Professional Service area with a copy of 'Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race'.		An e-book link was sent to all service and school leads. However, it is unclear whether recently in-post service and school leads continue to receive the link to this book.	No update
The Review Panel **recommends** that the University reapplies for the Race Equality Charter Mark (RECM).		There is still uncertainty about whether the University will apply for the RECM. REAR co-convenors and staff and student networks have expressed a desire to do so but conversations are ongoing about whether this is	There are ongoing conversations whether the University will apply for the RECM. REAR will continue to advocate for application.

		the most effective use of limited resources.	
The Review Panel **recommends** that the University conduct a benchmarking of approaches to supporting BME students across the UK. The findings of this exercise must be implemented at a level above the benchmarked basic level of provision.		The REAR action plan consultation is ongoing and the co-convenors are seeking input from key stakeholders on the most appropriate strategy to take this forward.	REAR does not have the resource to conduct a benchmarking exercise.
The Review Panel **recommends** that the EDMARC Report receives a high profile communication upon publication and that each College, School, and Professional Service is systematically required to provide a formal response each year.		Not progressed but data is available so this is a matter of workload.	No update
The Review Panel **recommends** that the University review the collection of data for BME students to provide more granular data, accessible via the PowerBI Data dashboards.		Sarah Cunningham-Burley, supported by REAR co-convenors, is in conversations with Strategic Planning regarding 6 months of resource for 1.0 FTE to support this data collection – "data collection person". There is also need for some consultation to ensure the data are for purpose.	No update
The Review Panel **recommends** that the University requires Colleges, Schools, Deaneries, and Professional Services to respond to BME data as part of annual review processes.		In the school QA reports this year there was a significant increase in engagement with and reflection on EDI data and attainment gaps in particular. SQAC will consider	Colleges, Schools, Deaneries, and Professional Services continue to be required to reflect on BME data, particularly in relation to awarding gaps, as part of annual review processes.

		how the University can move from reflection to action on the issues at the Committee's next meeting in September 2021.	The Convenor of EDIC attended the April 2022 meeting of SQAC to consider the roles both committees will have in overseeing the work to determine the underlying causes of the awarding gaps with the aim of establishing and sharing good practice with Schools and Deaneries to help them address these gaps. The Convenors of SQAC and EDIC agreed to take an action forward to determine the work streams for each committee to help address the awarding gaps across the University.
The Review Panel **recommends** that the Sense of Belonging strand of the Student Experience Action Plan consider ways of specifically improving the experience of community and belonging for BME students.		This work has been delayed due to difficulties in recruiting a PhD intern on the PTAS grant and competing demands due to workloads. These challenges have highlighted the need to embed and appropriately resource such work. Led by Mohini Gray, REAR are convening a short-life working group to look at attainment gap and recommendations based on findings from the research described above.	The attainment gap working group will now be supported by the Curriculum Transformation Project. Mohini Gray's attainment gap PTAS research project has received additional funding from Deputy Secretary Lisa Dawson.

The Review Panel **recommends** that the University recognise and celebrate the contributions of BME staff and students.		REAR is currently undergoing a consultation of the Action Plan to gather ideas of how to implement actions. This will likely be available early in 2022.	Consultation on the action plan is ongoing.
The Review Panel **recommends** that the University recruit a new BME Outreach Officer to work with BME communities. The Review Panel encourages the University to use positive action to diversify staffing.		Funding is in place and SRA have approval to recruit. A Job description has been drafted.	No update
The Review Panel **recommends** that the University commit to increase the percentage of BME staff, both academic and professional services, with immediate priority in the professional services areas. The Review Panel encourages the University to use positive action to diversify staffing.		The plan is to focus on professional services, REAR co-convenors are working with Sarah Cunningham-Burley to work with HR and the People Strategy on identifying what success looks like, who does this well, and useful next steps in addressing this area. Appointment of the "data collection person" will support this action.	USG now has an EDI committee with a commitment to increase the percentage of BME staff in the professional services. REAR co-convenors are working with Caroline Wallace in HR on staff data with a small working group.
The Review Panel **recommends** that Student Recruitment and Admissions consult with the Students' Association and the student BME Liberation Campaign to explore how the pre-arrival information can be enhanced to better meet the needs of BME students.		The Students' Association continually updates their BME student guide for new students that is included in their Welcome Week information. SRA have commissioned two pieces of research from Moray	The REAR committee is due to receive an update on the research in our June meeting.

		House that will support this action: 1. Review of data and literature to understand the application rates/barriers/issues regarding BAME applicants to UoE. The work is completed and report drafted. 2. Interviews of S5/S6 BAME students (with a focus lower socioeconomic backgrounds) to understand what barriers might exist for these students in terms of applying to the University of Edinburgh. The work is in its final stages.	
The Review Panel **recommends** that the Sense of Belonging strand of the Student Experience Action Plan consult with the Students' Association and the student BME Liberation Campaign to agree how best to target funding for BME groups, societies and networks.		There has been no further action and it seems that the Sense of Belonging strand of the Student Experience Action Plan no longer exists.	The Sense of Belonging group is no longer active.
The Review Team **recommends** that the Service Excellence Programme ensure that a systematic staff training programme is an integral part of the final recommendations of		Conversations are happening with those leading on the Student Support Team review. The work by the team has been paused due to the pandemic.	Lisa Dawson has expressed interest in linking REAR actions with the Student Support Team. This conversation is ongoing.

the current Personal Tutor and Student Support Team Review.			
The Review Panel **recommends** that the Student Counselling Service use positive action to diversify its staffing.	Completed	This work is completed – see comments above re counselling.	Completed
The Review Panel **recommends** that the Student Counselling Service should ensure that it has a Service Level Agreement is in place with any organisation that it uses to support University of Edinburgh students.	Completed	This work is completed – see comments about re counselling.	Completed
The Review Panel **recommends** that the Student Counselling Service conduct a benchmarking of approaches to supporting BME students across the UK. The findings of this exercise must be implemented at a level above the benchmarked basic level of provision.		Our priority was to recruit Black and minority ethnic counsellors and this is now completed. It is likely the Benchmarking exercise is redundant for now.	Not applicable
The Review Panel **recommends** that the proposed Curriculum Review enables BME students to be involved in diversifying content, including the co-design of curricula and assessments. Academic staff must collaborate with BME students to understand their experiences in the design, implementation and evaluation of their access, progression, and employability activities.		See above comments on Decolonising the curriculum which in part relates to this item.	See above regarding comments on Curriculum Transformation Project and decolonising the curriculum.

The Review Panel **recommends** that the University address the attainment/awarding gap. The action plan should include targets to reduce the attainment gap.		As above. However, REAR co-convenors are of the view this activity requires protected time and resources to complete effectively. Additionally, a proposal from Laura Cattell to the Student Recruitment & Fees Strategy Group was accepted to introduce PGT scholarships from 2023 with BAME students as a proposed target group. This includes a plan for a wider programme of support – advice and guidance about funding more general, more investment in scholarships management/administration, and a programme of support for current UG students and PGT students to nurture and support talent.	See above regarding comments on Curriculum Transformation Project and the attainment gap.
The Review Panel **recommends** that Senate Quality Assurance Committee implement systematic monitoring of retention, progression and degree outcome data for BME students and, if appropriate, recommend interventions where there are clear and consistent patterns of divergence between BME students and white students.		SQAC has established a Data Task Group to progress this action. The Committee considered an enhanced set of student data papers at the April 2021 meeting. The Data Task Group continues to explore options for an enhanced system for monitoring	The Data Task Group will take this work forward in 2022-23 in partnership with EDIC and the Curriculum Transformation Project short life working group on the attainment gap.

		retention, progression and degree outcome data for different student groups.	

<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

19 May 2022

Student Support Services Annual Review:
2022/23 Reporting Process

Description of paper
1. Proposal to continue with the streamlined process of the Student Support Services Annual Review (SSSAR) and continue the use of the revised reporting template for 2022/23, which includes explicit reference to both Covid-19 disruption and Industrial Action disruption.

Action requested / recommendation
2. For approval.

Background and context
3. Student Support Service review assures the quality of the student experience with regard to services. It is part of the University's annual quality monitoring processes.

Discussion
4. Since March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic and varying levels of Government restrictions, alongside Industrial Action following the gradual return to on campus activities, has meant that the University has continued to experience disruption on its operation and significant impacts on the University's Student Support Services' operations.

5. Quality Assurance Agency Scotland's expectation is that the sector will still carry out its annual quality monitoring process but recognises that these may be different.

6. Academic Services proposes that SSSAR reporting for 2022/23 should continue with the streamlined approach adopted in the previous two Academic Years to focus on impacts of industrial action and Covid-19. This will reduce the reporting burden on services and also fulfil expectations for compliance.

7. Reporting template
   The reporting template is attached as Appendix 1. Academic Services proposes that this is circulated to services before the end of May with a reporting deadline in mid-November. As with previous years, reports will focus on the impacts of Covid-19 and Industrial Action and run to a five page maximum.

   Reviewing reports
   Academic Services proposes that there is no formal reader reporting for this year. Instead, Academic Services will review all reports and the SSSAR sub-committee external member and the Students' Association Vice-President Education will also be invited to review the reports to highlight areas of good practice for

sharing. This will ensure expectations on externality and student voice set out in the UK Quality Code are met.

Meetings
As above and in keeping with the previous two years, it is proposed that there will be no formal SSSAR sub-committee meetings for this reporting cycle.

Resource implications
8. The streamlined reporting process will mean less work for service heads and also for sub-committee members.

Risk management
9. Academic Services has not identified any risks in the proposed approach.

Equality & diversity
10. Services are not specifically asked to consider impacts of changes to their services on different groups of students as part of the reporting process this year. The Committee should consider equality and diversity during their discussions.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed
11. Academic Services will communicate with Student Support Services and implement agreed changes to reporting for this cycle. Academic Services will evaluate the impact of changes for this year to inform any future review of the SSSAR process.

Author
Stuart Fitzpatrick,
Academic Services
May 2022

Presenter
Brian Connolly
Academic Services

Freedom of Information
The paper is open.

Student Support Services Annual Review

THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Service Value Assessment: Academic Year 2021/22

Completing the report

- The report should be the output of a reflective process, focusing on
  - activities **over the past academic year,**
  - the student experience and
  - activities that relate to student use of the service.

- The report should be brief, **no longer than 5 pages** and should reflect on specific changes implemented in response to disruption during industrial action and Covid-19. Focus on what worked well, what worked less well and what you might continue going forward.

Text in *italics* is for guidance; please replace it with your own content.

The Student Support Services Review Policy contains an overview of the process.

Service:	
Submitted by:	
Date:	

Reflection on 2021/22

Summarise the impacts of industrial action and Covid-19 on how the Service operated in 2021/22.
1. *A brief outline of and reflection on any new developments in response to industrial action/Covid-19 and their impact on service delivery (doing new things).*   2. *A brief outline of and reflection on changes made to activities, processes, practices or policies, in response to industrial action/Covid-19 (doing the same things in a new way).*   3. *What has worked well (include any partnership working activity):*   4. *What worked less well:*   5. *What changes might you continue going forward:*

Terms of Reference 2022-23

Description of paper:
1. This paper notes the Committee's Terms of Reference 2022-23.

Action requested / recommendation:
2. For approval.

Background and context:
3. The Academic Collaborations Advisory Group (ACAG, formerly the Virtual Collaborations Group), is a group of professional services staff from Edinburgh Global, Colleges, Academic Services, Legal Services, and the Doctoral College. The Group provide scrutiny and advice regarding the development of agreements relating to academic collaborations with partner institutions. The Group does not have a formal governance role, but are a required point for consultation about academic collaborations, and have oversight of guidance and processes relating to their development. Academic collaborations are also subject to the normal processes for the approval of programmes and courses.

4. Historically, the Group would send a report annually to Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC), providing details of any new or renewed collaborative agreements from the preceding year. Where collaborative programmes may require deviation from the University's academic regulations and policies, these issues are also considered by APRC.

Discussion:
5. Managing collaborative provision is a particular focus of the Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) process. ACAG has asked for SQAC to take on a formal role to provide greater oversight of the processes and guidance relating to the approval of academic collaborations. SQAC would also be asked to review information relating to the University's portfolio of academic collaborations, and data regarding the quality and student experience on these programmes. This additional scrutiny would help to mitigate risks relating to the University's management of academic collaborations, and to identify any gaps or areas for improvement. In view of this, ACAG has requested that the following be added to SQAC's Terms of Reference:

    "In relation to academic collaborations with partner institutions: maintain oversight of development, approval, monitoring and review / renewal processes; receive annual reports on activity and identify any areas where action is required to maintain academic standards and the quality of the student experience."

6. Where academic collaborations in development may require deviations from University regulations or policies, this would continue to be considered by APRC.

7. ACAG will send a paper to SQAC in due course, which will outline the proposed timing and content for the annual report on collaborations.

Resource implications:

8. The proposed addition to the Terms of Reference should have only minor implications for the workload of the Committee.

Risk management:

9. The proposed addition to the Terms of Reference is intended to mitigate existing risks relating to the University's management and oversight of academic collaborations.

Equality & diversity:

10. Equality and diversity will be integral to the Committee's work.

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

11. Committee Secretary will feedback comments to relevant areas.

Author
Adam Bunni,
Brian Connolly,
Academic Services
May 2022

Presenter
Brian Connolly,
Academic Services

Freedom of Information: Open

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Quality Assurance Committee
Terms of Reference

1. Purpose and Role

1.1 The Quality Assurance Committee is responsible, on behalf of Senate, for the framework which assures standards and enhances the quality of the student learning experience.

2. Remit

2.1 Oversee the delivery and enhancement of the University's quality assurance framework, ensuring that it meets external requirements.

2.2 In partnership with Edinburgh University Students' Association, ensure effective student engagement and representation of student voices in the University's quality framework.

2.3 Maintain oversight of the outcomes of the quality assurance framework, ensuring that actions are addressed, and support the sharing of good practice.

2.4 Promote the quality assurance framework as an important part of the University's activities and ensure that the outcomes inform relevant University business.

2.5 Support the University's engagement with external quality requirements and activities, including: Enhancement-Led Institutional Review, the UK Quality Code, and responses to consultations and initiatives.

2.6 Identify areas for innovation and enhancement of the student experience and ensure that these inform Senate Education Committee's policy development.

2.7 Consider the implications of the Committee's work and its decisions in the context of external initiatives and compliance and legal frameworks, particularly in relation to equality and diversity.

2.8 In relation to academic collaborations with partner institutions: maintain oversight of development, approval, monitoring and review / renewal processes; receive annual reports on activity and identify any areas where action is required to maintain academic standards and the quality of the student experience.

3. Operation

3.1 The Committee reports to Senate, acting with delegated authority to take decisions in the area of quality assurance and academic standards.

3.2 The Committee may bring matters to the attention of the University Executive as required.

3.3 The Committee has the following sub-committees:

- Student Support Service Sub-Committee - with delegated authority for monitoring the quality assurance of student support services in relation to the student learning experience
- School Annual Quality Report Sub Group - with delegated authority to review reports and prepare recommendations for consideration by the Committee

3.4 The Committee will meet at least four times each academic year and will interact electronically as necessary.

3.5 The Committee will follow a schedule of business set prior to the start of the academic year which is agreed through consultation with Senate, the Conveners of the other Senate Committees, and other

relevant members of the community.

3.6 From time to time, the Committee will establish working groups or commission individuals to carry out detailed work under the Committee's oversight.

4. Composition

Role	Term
Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance	
An external member from within the Scottish Higher Education sector with experience in quality assurance	3 years (with no reappointment until 4 years has elapsed)
College Deans of Quality (or equivalent)	
1 x member of staff from each College with experience of and an interest in quality assurance at a School level	
1 x Edinburgh University Students' Association sabbatical officer	
1 x member of the Edinburgh University Students' Association permanent staff	
1 x member of staff from the Institute for Academic Development	
1 x member of staff from Academic Services	
Up to 3 co-options chosen by the Convenor	Up to 3 years

4.1 The Convenor can invite individuals for specific meetings or agenda items.

4.2 Substitutions of members (i.e. due to inability to attend) will be at the discretion of the Convenor of the Committee.

5. Responsibilities and Expectations of Committee Members

5.1 Be collegial and constructive in approach.

5.2 Attend regularly and participate fully in the work of the Committee and its task / working groups. This will involve looking ahead and consulting / gathering input in order to provide the broad spectrum of thoughts and opinions which are necessary for proper consideration of the area being discussed.

5.3 Take collective and individual ownership for the issues under the Committee's remit and for the discussion and resolution of these issues. In taking ownership of the work of the Committee, members must take steps to ensure that they are empowered to take decisions on behalf of academic and managerial colleagues.

5.4 Be committed to communicating the work of the Committee to the wider University community.

May 2022

Annual Monitoring and Internal Periodic Review Themes 2020-21:
University Level Actions

Description of paper

1. This paper updates the Committee on University level actions agreed in response to issues identified as areas for further development in School Annual Quality Reports 2020-21 and themes that emerged from teaching/postgraduate programme reviews held in 2020-21.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For information.

Background and context

3. Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) approved actions at University level in response to issues identified as areas for further development in School Annual Quality Reports 2020-21 (at the September 2021 SQAC meeting) and themes that emerged from teaching/postgraduate programme reviews held in 2020-21 (at the September 2021 SQAC meeting).

4. A report on these issues was submitted to the University Executive (March meeting) and a response requested from each of the individuals and areas with remitted actions.

Discussion

5. See paper below.

Resource implications

6. Resource implications are considered as part of each action.

Risk management

7. Ensuring that students and staff are confident that the University listens to and acts on their comments and feedback is essential to ensuring their engagement with quality processes. This report represents an element of the feedback loop from the central University level to the local School and College levels.

Equality & diversity
8. The actions encompass equality and diversity issues.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed
9. Academic Services will inform relevant areas.

Author
Brian Connolly
Academic Services

Presenter
Brian Connolly
Academic Services

Freedom of Information
Open

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

Annual Monitoring and Internal Periodic Review Themes 2020/21: University Level Actions

The following responses were received in relation to issues raised in the reports and reviews 2020-21:

Area for Further Development	Remitted Action	Response

Staff and Student Welfare There are ongoing concerns that the pandemic has exacerbated existing issues in relation to staffing and workload pressures, particularly as the University admitted an exceptionally large number of students in 2020-21. This year's reports raised concerns that these may now be impacting the student experience.
 	
The Committee noted that the recent Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) recommended the University 'implement an approach to facilitate institutional oversight and the effective planning and monitoring of student numbers, in order to ensure that appropriate
	ELIR Oversight Group	The Vice Principal Students and the Director of Strategic Planning & Insight are leading actions and activities related to the oversight and planning of student numbers.
		
		The need for "institutional oversight and the effective planning and monitoring of student numbers" is fully recognised and aligned with the University's own intentions. A range of actions have been/are being taken, including:
		• Sep 2021: Planning Round approach re-set to focus on a 5 year timeframe.
		• Oct 2021: Strategic Performance Framework to drive and demonstrate delivery of Strategy 2030 developed and approved by Court in October 2021, including two KPIs focused on student population:
		  – KPI1 - Widening participation: Number (and proportion) of undergraduate entrants from an SIMD0-20 area. Baseline (2020/21): 190 (9.3%)
		  – KPI2 - International student diversity: Ratio of largest overseas market to 5th and 10th largest overseas markets. Baseline (2020/21): Ratio to 5th: 20:1, Ratio to 10th: 37:1

and timely actions can be taken where increases in student numbers impact on arrangements for learning and teaching and student support.'		- Nov/Dec 2021: Intake targets for 2022 set within context of cross-University 'parameters' for key intake groups, discussed with Senior Leadership Team and Colleges in November 2021, and agreed by University Executive in December 2021. 'Side target' proposed for SIMD0-20. - Dec 2021/Feb 2022: Intake targets supplied by Colleges for 2022-2026. - Feb/Mar 2022: Strategic Planning review of intake targets for 2022 against agreed parameters, with some follow-on discussions to understand divergences. - Feb 2022: Update provided to Student Recruitment and Fees Strategy Group, aligned with discussion on fees strategy and agreement of Strategic Enrolment Plan (six key objectives, which encompass enhanced use of data and collaborative working around recruitment). - Mar 2022: Briefing session on recruitment and admissions held with College office staff, Heads of School and Directors of Professional Services. - Ongoing: - Close engagement throughout with SFC and Scottish Government on controlled subject expectations and non-controlled undergraduate places expectations, as well as upskilling. - Weekly review of UCAS data on applications, offers for Edinburgh vs our peer group. - Embedded planning for annual Clearing Operation: Clearing provides an important mechanism to mitigate the risk of potential under-recruitment, particularly in RUK and OVS intakes. This is particularly relevant in the context of continued uncertainty about the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on international travel, which might otherwise suppress intakes at a late stage in the recruitment cycle.

| | | • Underway: Work to 're-set' previous 'Size and Shape' work – in progress.

For 2022 entry, working within constraints of current systems, processes and resourcing, the continuing high demand in terms of application numbers, set against priority given to managing the intake to target, has resulted in greater caution in offer-making, and some delays to admissions decision-making until relatively late in the cycle. There is evidence this is impacting on applicant experience. All options are under consideration to improve the process and timeliness of offer-making.

In terms of ensuring "that appropriate and timely actions can be taken where increases in student numbers impact on arrangements for learning and teaching and student support", over the course of 2021-22 to date, in addition to previously agreed budget allocations, the University has deployed additional resources in-year, including investments totalling £5.5m to support the increase in teaching and professional costs associated with our additional students in 2021-22, as well as up to £4.7m investment across a range of areas including Curriculum Transformation, managed isolation and other initiatives to support the student experience. Recruitment of Wellbeing Advisors and Student Support Advisors is underway as a key milestone in relation to the Student Support Project.

Context

It is worth highlighting that several of the factors driving above-target intakes in 2021 (and 2020), particularly for undergraduates, related to the external context and hence impacted many institutions, but were acutely felt by Edinburgh due in particular to our mix of applicants/students. Rates of application, and rates of conversion, of applicants for University level |

study in almost all intake groups varied significantly compared to historic norms.

Whilst initial forecasts early in the pandemic were for a potentially significant negative impact on recruitment of international students, the relaxation of restrictions in autumn 2020, and again in autumn 2021, resulted in international student numbers holding up and in many cases exceeding targets (though incoming and outgoing visiting student numbers continue to be lower than pre-pandemic). The unprecedented Scottish Higher and A level results in 2021 saw high numbers of Scotland Fee Rate and Rest of UK undergraduate applicants meeting the conditions of their offer. The reintroduction of post-study visas is an additional driver influencing international student choice of the UK, with particular impact on certain institutions, including Edinburgh.

Many of the external conditions impacting on student recruitment and admissions will prevail in 2022, and undergraduate application figures are again high and increased on 2021. An overarching aim for 2022-23 is to deliver an intake population which is closer to target than was achieved in 2021-22, and hence to minimise risks associated with unplanned over- or under-recruitment. In terms of process, we are aiming to set clear agreed intake targets as early as possible, to then enable all involved to focus efforts and deploy strategies to deliver these targets, using all of the levers which are available as part of the recruitment and admissions process. This will be underpinned by enhanced use of data and analytics on conversion, supported through work being progressed by Strategic Planning, working with SRA and recruitment leads in Colleges. In contrast to last cycle, in the context that we know the status of EU and ROI entrants; have more clarity on total funded places; have clear public statements on examination intentions; and have an expectation of multi-year Scottish Government funding horizon, this gives us a much more certain platform for planning

<table>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scotland Fee Rate (SFR) and RUK UG intakes than was the case in the previous cycle. However, a number of inherent risks remain linked to: varying retention rates of continuing students; differing patterns of demand; changed behaviour of applicants; provision of additional places for SFR which don't account for re-categorisation of EU; and ongoing uncertainty around potential Scottish and UK Government responses to the pandemic over the coming months, including remaining moderate potential risks of disruption to plans for school exams. Against this backdrop, Colleges and SRA have undertaken careful planning work to ensure we have in place a set of levers to enable achievement of targets. As part of the approach, and to help with expectation management, a short article setting out how we are approaching the 2022 entry admissions cycle was published in November 2021: <u>How we are approaching the 2022 entry admissions cycle | The University of Edinburgh</u>

Looking ahead, in line with Strategy 2030, we will work towards delivering on the following commitments: "We will not grow for growth's sake. We will improve our student experience while aiming to keep our undergraduate community at a stable size. In reshaping our teaching for the future, we expect to expand interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary, postgraduate and digital education." Over the medium term, our total student population may therefore change more in <u>composition</u> than in <u>overall size</u>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)**
Increasingly Schools/Deaneries have engaged with student data and reflected on the gaps in attainment of different groups of students within their local area and across the University.</td>
<td>**ELIR Oversight Group**</td>
<td>The Committee has driven work to identify awarding gaps across the University via the Thematic Review process (and the Data Task Group established to progress the recommendations of recent reviews) and the annual quality assurance (QA) processes. Schools and Deaneries have increasingly engaged with widening participation (WP) and equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data to identify any gaps in attainment for different groups of students. However, they have struggled to understand</td>
</tr>
</table>

Concerns were raised in a number of reports about the University's support of students with protected characteristics, particularly in relation to the impact of the pandemic. The issues have been widely discussed and Schools/Deaneries would now like support from the University to address the underlying causes. The Committee noted that this was also the focus of an ELIR recommended encouraging the University to 'consider how to address attainment gaps in student performance through the oversight, coordination and monitoring at an institutional level of school-level actions'.		the underlying causes of these gaps or what good practice should be encouraged and cultivated to address them. The University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) is now undertaking work to determine the underlying causes of awarding gaps and share good practice with Schools to help them address these gaps. The EDIC will explore options to establish a set of expectations or baselines in relation to WP and EDI data (based on the findings of the work to understand the causes of gaps and good practice) to allow Schools to gauge their relative performance. These expectations/baselines will in turn be monitored by the SQAC as part of the School annual reporting process. The Convenor of EDIC attended the April 2022 meeting of SQAC to consider the roles both committees will have in overseeing the work to determine the underlying causes of the awarding gaps with the aim of establishing and sharing good practice with Schools and Deaneries to help them address these gaps.
Tutors and Demonstrators (seven recommendations across three reviews). Recommendations covered training, the provision of information, allocation of work, and support. and funding) and their welfare (e.g. due to the isolation from	**Doctoral College**	A Tutor and Demonstrators (T&D) Network has been formed with representatives from all Schools, and HR. It will be expanded to include other services as well as UCU representation. So far it has 94 members from all Schools and Deaneries. These include School managers and academic leaders as well as the trainers and those involved with administration of T&D. The forum will act as a sounding board for policies, enable exchange of good practice, share problems and liaise better with the services. A senior oversight group has been convened as a formal body and has met once. The group includes representatives from the

their social and academic communities).		Doctoral College, the three Colleges, the Institute for Academic Development (IAD), Human Resources, and Academic Services. Tutor and Demonstrators representatives will join the group once identified. This group will meet a small number of times each year and report to the ELIR oversight group and Senate Quality Assurance Committee and act as a governance body for the network. A working group has also been formed to look specifically at training led by the IAD and consisting of a selection of those involved with training in the Schools. The remit of the group is to: • map the training provided to Tutors and Demonstrators throughout the University; • understand who has responsibility for Tutor and Demonstrator training throughout the University and propose a structure to ensure oversight of T&D in each School/Deanery; • gauge awareness of the Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators at School level; • make recommendations to the Oversight Group. It will use the established T&D Network to consult all Schools.
Student Support and Personal Tutor (PTSS) Review Schools/Deaneries reported concerns that consideration must be given to how the new system will be will be resourced. The proposed evolved model of student support will require additional resources for Schools/Deaneries in order to recruit sufficient professional	**Deputy Secretary Student Experience and the ELIR Oversight Group**	**Governance** Work continues on the implementation of the new student support model. Full implementation of the model is on target for September 2023, with some variation in implementation across the University in September 2022. The Student Support Project Board has been established and terms of reference agreed back in November 2021. A number of the key responsibilities of the Board are directly relevant to service quality, and there has already been a commitment that the Board will continue for an agreed period post implementation in September 2023. Key responsibilities are set out below and these will remain an ongoing focus for Board agenda, discussions and decisions:

services staff for the new system. It is fundamentally important that the new system of student support is aligned and thoroughly linked to the ESC system. The Committee again noted that the PT system was also the focus of an ELIR recommended.		a. Responsible for the overall operating model of student support being implemented, including the services delivered to students (functional perspective), the policies, business processes (and where relevant systems) and the interface between School and centrally provided services; b. Responsible for agreeing School implementation plans, roadmaps, support required and any proposed variation from the preferred model due to recognised local needs/requirements; and c. Responsible for agreeing measures/outcomes expected from the service/model and establish a governance approach for the ongoing measurement, evaluation and improvement of the service model. **Roles** Job and role descriptions have been developed for the key professional service roles and cohort leads. An important milestone has been reached with recruitment, voluntary moves or transition now underway for both the student adviser and well-being adviser roles to ensure the phase one adopters are ready to implement the new model by September 2022. A single recruitment approach has been agreed across the three Colleges for student advisers and with the Director of Student Well-being for the well-being advisers. An early draft of the training plan for Wellbeing Adviser and Student Advisers has been shared with College leads. Work on the training plan began with an inventory of training available within the University and has included detailed analysis of what the various courses cover. The project team also held meetings with other HEIs running Wellbeing Services in order to learn from their experiences. For the Cohort lead role, the model moves away from a single point of individualised support to an eco-system of support where the cohort lead

has an exciting opportunity through the group aspect to build community. A Cohort Lead design document has been developed to provide clarification on the role within Schools and Deaneries.

Developing student journey maps: A student lens
For each stage of the journey, we need to articulate the expected experience, touch points and the likely forks in the road where students will take different pathways. For example, there will be additional pre-arrival and settling in tasks for international students, there will be students who join us with complex needs, there will be students who need help being ready to study, there are students who don't think they need any help but with a bit of support could achieve more. That expanded Student Journey map can then be developed into a Support Timeline which can help students visually to understand how they interact with the ecosystem of support within each segment, how and where they access support (the roles within the model should be seamless to them, this is the fault of the current model, where students need to know how the University works to get help from the right service or individual). Key deliverables:

- Student support ecosystem – An overview of the support network for students, both static and animated/interactive
- Support Timeline – An expansion of the "Student Journey" to show students where support available as they progress, identifying likely support needs for each stage. This needs to be in a format that can be used by project team preparing case studies/personas, so they can relate those to the Support Timeline

Student journey maps: A staff lens
For staff delivering within the model, does their training and understanding of the eco-system match the student lens? How can we articulate how the roles within the organisational chart deliver seamlessly to students removing the barriers of the institutional hierarchy? Key deliverable:

		• Organisation Explainer - An interactive/animated tool, which can be included in general communications and staff induction materials, to explain where new roles fit within the wider support ecosystem. In preparation for the new academic year policy revisions will be presented to the relevant Senate committee for approval during semester 2. Consistent implementation and use of policy and regulations will be a pivotal aspect of training for new roles. The new student approach in being phased in, starting with a number of pilot schools in academic year 2022-23 and starting with new incoming students. The Personal Tutor system will remain in the short-term for continuing students and student experience of the current Personal Tutor system will continue to be monitored. The February Student Pulse Survey asked a series of questions about students' experience of the personal tutor and student support systems as they are run within their School or Deanery. This was a repeat of the questions from April 2021. The findings of these surveys were discussed at a meeting of the Senior Tutor Network in semester two, along with the plans for the transition to the new system of student support (the meeting was led by the Vice Principal Students and Assistant Principal Student Support).

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

19 May 2022

Draft Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees

Description of paper
1. This is the draft annual report to Senate form the Senate Standing Committees: Education Committee; Academic Policy and Regulations Committee; and Quality Assurance Committee. It reports on the Committees' achievements and use of delegated powers in 2021-22. It also proposes outline priorities for 2022-23.

Action requested
2. The Committee is invited to comment on the draft report, in particular the major items of committee business from 2021-22 and the proposed plans of the Committee for the next academic year.

Background and Context
3. The Senate Standing Committees provide an annual report setting out progress on activities in the past year and seeking Senate approval for their general strategic direction and priorities for the next academic year.

5. The draft report provides an opportunity for Senate Standing Committee members to feed into the annual review and planning process.

Resource implications
4. The proposed plans for 2022-23 will have some resource implications relating to time spent by members of the Committees and Policy Officers in Academic Services or staff invited to participate in working groups. Some of the resource requirements for wider work of the Committees will be met through existing resources or have agreed funding in place.

Risk Management
5. Each individual strand of proposed activity will be subject to risk assessment as appropriate.

Equality and Diversity
6. Where required, Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out for individual work packages completed next year.

Next steps / implications
7. Comments from the Committee will be fed into the final version of the report. The report will be presented to Senate for noting and approval on 25 May 2022. The approved report will be highlighted in the Senate Committees' Newsletter. The Senate Committees will progress the agreed strategic approach during 2022-23 as set out in the report. This report will also be shared with the University Court for information.

Authors

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

May 2022

Freedom of Information
 Open

Annual Report of the Senate Committees 2021-22

1.	Executive Summary

This report summarises the achievements of the Senate Committees, and their use of the powers delegated to them by Senate, for academic year 2021-22, along with their proposed plans for 2021-22.

2.	Introduction

The three Standing Committees of Senate (hereafter referred to as the Senate Committees) are the Senate Education Committee (SEC), Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC), and Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC).

Senate has delegated to these Committees a range of its powers, and these powers are set out in the Committees' Terms of Reference. Links to the Terms of Reference and memberships of the Senate Standing Committees are below:

- Education Committee
- Academic Policy and Regulations Committee
- Quality Assurance Committee

Sections 3, 4 and 5 below provide information on the Standing Committees' activities in 2021/22.

Section 6 sets out proposals for future work. These proposals have arisen from Committee discussions, and discussion at the Senate Committee Conveners' Forum. The proposals are designed to assist the University in pursuing its Learning and Teaching agenda and wider goals and laid out in the University Strategy 2030:

- Strategy 2030

3.	Key Committee and Task Group Activities in 2021-22*

Name of Committee	No. of meetings
Senate Education Committee	5 (one electronic)
Academic Policy & Regulations	7 (two additional, special meetings)
Senate Quality Assurance Committee	5

Name of Task Group	Task Group of:
Personal Tutor System Oversight Group	SQAC
Student Support Services subcommittee	SQAC
Data Task Group	SQAC
Exams Sub-Group	SEC

*Includes meetings scheduled for the remainder of the session.

The remits and memberships of any task groups are available within the relevant Committee pages at: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees

4. Senate Committees' Progress in 2021/22

Section 4 provides information on progress against the activities proposed in last year's report to Senate. Section 5 provides information on other committee activity in 2021/22.

4.1 Education Committee

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

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

- Academic integrity
- Ongoing input into academic year planning in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (capacity planning, exam diet planning etc.)

4.2   Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

Activity
1. **Input as required into Curriculum Transformation project (led by Education Committee, carried forward from 2019/20).**   The Committee has not yet been required to provide detailed input to this project, although the Committee's experience with regards to the diversification of PGT degree models has been fed into the discussions of the Curriculum Transformation Project. The Committee expects to have greater involvement as at the detailed design and implementation stages, as these are where interaction with academic regulations will occur.
2. **Review of Enhancement-Led Institutional Review outputs and take appropriate action as required. (Carried forward from 2019/20).**   The committee has not yet been asked to consider any policy or regulation changes as a result of this work. Discussions with relevant colleagues have occurred when the regular work of the Committee has overlapped with points of the ELIR action plan. For instance, APRC discussions around possible changes around coursework extensions and the ELIR response on assessment and feedback
3. **Monitor any requirement for longer term regulatory and policy changes as a result of Covid-19 and take appropriate action as required. (Continued from 2020/21).**   The Committee has not needed to make any regulatory or policy changes as a result of Covid-19 in 2021-22. The Committee continues to monitor the requirement for longer term regulatory and policy changes as a result of Covid-19.
4. **Other matters considered during the year**   Other key items considered by Academic, Policy and Regulations Committee during the year included: - The potential impact of industrial action   - Changes of terminology due to the implemtation of the new model of student support   - Short-term adjustments to the policy around extensions and special circumstances

- Minor updates to the Support for Study Policy - Arrangements for awarding credit to UG students who have a single semester overseas - Mechanisms for approving courses and programmes offered by EFI

4.3   Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

Activity
1. **Develop and oversee the implementation of a plan of action in response to the 2021 Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR).** The Committee continues to receive regular updates on the ELIR Action Plan. The University is required to provide a follow-up report to QAA Scotland on actions taken or in progress to address the outcomes of the review one year after the publication of the ELIR reports (15 July 2022). A first draft of the report has been submitted to the University Executive (10 May 2022 meeting), and an update on ELIR actions will be presented to Senate (25 May 2022 meeting). The report will be developed in response to comments from the University Executive and Senate and the ELIR Oversight Group will approve the final version before it is submitted to QAA (with the proviso that it will need to be endorsed by University Court in October 2022 before the final version can be published).
2. **Implement the recommendations from the Digital Maturity report and consider how quality processes and the data that they produce can support the Curriculum Transformation programme.** The Committee is working with Academic Services to develop a SharePoint site to optimize the presentation of quality data/evidence to Schools/Deaneries and encourage greater engagement and traction with quality processes.
3. **Continue to examine data and methodological options for the systematic monitoring of retention, progression, and attainment data in response to the recommendations from Thematic Reviews.** The Committee has driven work to identify awarding gaps across the University via the Thematic Review process (and the Data Task Group established to progress the recommendations of recent reviews) and the annual quality assurance (QA) processes. Schools and Deaneries have increasingly engaged with widening participation (WP) and equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data to identify any gaps in attainment for different groups of students. However, they have struggled to understand the underlying causes of these gaps or what good practice should be encouraged and cultivated to address them. The University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) is now undertaking work to determine the underlying causes of awarding gaps and share good practice with Schools to help them address these gaps. The EDIC will explore options to establish a set of expectations or baselines in relation to

WP and EDI data (based on the findings of the work to understand the causes of gaps and good practice) to allow Schools to gauge their relative performance. These expectations/baselines will in turn be monitored by the SQAC as part of the School annual reporting process.

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

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

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

5   Other Committee Activity in 2021/22

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

- The attached Annex sets out any new strategies / regulations / policies / codes that the Committees have approved (the more substantive of which are covered in Section 4 above), along with changes to existing documents.

6   Senate Committees' Priorities for 2022/23

6.1   Planning Context

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

6.2   Education Committee

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

6.3   Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

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

6.4   Quality Assurance Committee

Activity
Oversee the implementation of a plan of action in response to the 2021 Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR).
Implement the recommendations from the Digital Maturity report and consider how quality processes and the data that they produce can support the Curriculum Transformation programme and other areas.
Continue to examine data and methodological options for the systematic monitoring of retention, progression, and attainment data.
Continue to monitor the implementation of the Student Voice Policy via annual quality assurance processes.
Engage with the QAA and Universities UK review focused on strengthening the external examining system.

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

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

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

APRC	Protection of Children and Protected Adults	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.
APRC	Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure	Reviewed to take account of changes to the Student Support model.

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

19 May 2022

Annual review of effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees

Description of paper
1. This paper notifies Committee members of plans for the annual review of Senate Committees' effectiveness.

Action requested / recommendation
2. Committee members are asked to **note and provide comments on the plans for the review, and to engage with opportunities to provide feedback on the committees' functioning and effectiveness.**

Background and context
3. The 2017 version of the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance states that institutions are expected to review the effectiveness of their Senate and its committees annually and to hold an externally-facilitated review every five years: "49. The governing body is expected to review its own effectiveness each year and to undertake an externally facilitated evaluation of its own effectiveness and that of its committees, including size and composition of membership, at least every five years. As part of these processes or separately, the effectiveness of the academic board (also known as Senate, Senatus Academicus or academic council) is expected to be reviewed similarly. These reviews should be reported upon appropriately within the Institution and outside. Externally facilitated reviews should be held following any period of exceptional change or upheaval (allowing suitable time to see the effects of changes made), the usual timetable for externally facilitated review being brought forward if necessary in these circumstances."

4. In line with the requirements of the Code, during Spring/Summer 2022, Academic Services is conducting an annual review of the three Senate Standing Committees. The outcomes of this review will be reported to Senate in September / October 2022.

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

Discussion

6. The review process is intended to gather information on and evaluate effectiveness in terms of the:
    a. Composition of the committee
    b. Support and facilitation of committee meetings
    c. Engagement of members and knowledge and understanding of their roles and committee remits
    d. Impact and strategic relevance of Senate Committees' work

7. The review process will be primarily self-reflective and will gather information as described below:
    a. **Quality and Assurance Committee members are asked to submit written comments to Brian.Connolly@ed.ac.uk**
    b. Senate Committee members will also be invited to respond to an online questionnaire during summer 2022 (managed by Academic Services). Draft questions are appended below.
    c. The Committee Convener and Secretary will review committee coverage of Postgraduate Research Student business.

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

Resource implications
9. The review will be conducted by Academic Services and any resource requirements will be met from existing budgets. The resource implications of any actions identified in response to the outcomes of the review will be considered at that stage.

Risk management
10. The annual effectiveness review process assists the University in ensuring that its academic governance arrangements are effective and enables the University to manage a range of risks associated with its academic provision.

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

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed
12. The report will be presented to Senate and the Senate Standing Committees in September / October 2022. If the review identifies required actions or enhancement opportunities, these will be taken forward by Academic Service (if directly related to the functioning and support of the Senate Committees) or referred to the appropriate body for consideration.

Author
Academic Services
10 May 2022

Freedom of Information
Open

Appendix 1

Senate Standing Committees: Internal Effectiveness Review 2021-22

Draft questions for Summer 2022 survey

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

1. **Committee remit**
   1.1. Is the Committee's remit clear? If not, what improvements would you suggest?
   1.2. Is the scope of the remit appropriate?
   1.3. Has the Committee adapted effectively to the challenges or changes in priority?
   1.4. Are you happy with your Committee's use of task groups?
2. **Governance and impact**
   2.1. Do you have a clear understanding of how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University?
   2.2. Do you feel that the Committee makes the desired impact based on its remit and priorities?
   2.3. Are there clear links between Committee business and University strategic priorities?
3. **Composition**
   3.1. Do you think that the current composition of the Committee enables it to fulfil its remit?
   3.2. Is the size of the Committee appropriate in order for it to operate effectively?
4. **Equality and Diversity**
   4.1. Is the composition of the Committee suitably representative of the diverse University population?
   4.2. Are you satisfied that equality and diversity considerations are adequately addressed when discussing Committee business?
5. **Committee members – Role clarity and participation**
   5.1. Are you clear on your role and responsibilities as a Committee member?
   5.2. If this is not clear, do you have any suggestions on how to improve this?
   5.3. If you were a new member in 2019/20, were you satisfied with the induction you were given to the Committee and its business?
   5.4. Is lack of engagement by members ever an impediment to the Committee?
   5.5. Does anything create a barrier to your engagement with the Committee?
6. **Stakeholder Engagement and Communications**
   6.1. Does the Committee engage and communicate effectively with stakeholders? (For example, is the Senate Committees' Newsletter an effective vehicle?)
   6.2. Do you have a clear understanding of your role on the Committee as a representative of your College or Group?
   6.3. Do you have a clear understanding of your role in cascading information from the Committee to your College or Group?
7. **Committee support**
   7.1. Do you feel that the Committee is supported effectively by Academic Services?
   7.2. Does the information provided to the Committee (in format and volume) support effective decision-making by the Committee?
   7.3. Do papers provide you with appropriate levels of detail on the background of issues brought to the Committee, and on how Committee decisions will be implemented?

Appendix 2

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

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

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

19 May 2022

**Senate Presentation and Discussion Themes
for 2022-23**

Description of paper
1. A request to the Committee to suggest themes for the presentation and discussion section of next year's Senate meetings, and a note of recently presented topics.

Action requested / recommendation
2. The Committee is invited to make suggestions for themes for the presentation and discussion sections for Senate 2022/23.

Background and context
3. Senate meetings are divided into two sections: an open presentation and discussion section, and a section for formal business open to Senate members only.

4. All members of staff are invited to attend the presentation and discussion section of the Senate meetings and this is an opportunity to hold open discussions on a key strategic theme.

5. From 2018/19, Senate also began to receive 'year-on updates' on selected topics presented in the previous year. In 2020/21 and 2021/22, these updates were incorporated into the main presentation topics.

6. Suggestions for themes are being sought from the Senate Education Committee, the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee, the Senate Quality Assurance Committee, and the Research Policy Group.

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

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

2020/21
- Adaptation and Renewal: Students
- Adaptation and Renewal: Research and Innovation
- Adaptation and Renewal: Reshaping and Estates & Digital Infrastructure

2019/20

Main topics:
- Support for Early Career Researchers
- Student Support and Wellbeing: Review of Personal Tutoring and Student Support, and update on the Student Mental Health Strategy
- Enhancement-Led Institutional Review
- Curriculum Reform

Year-on updates:
- Student Experience Action Plan
- Research Excellence Framework

2018/19

Main topics:
- Teaching and Academic Careers
- Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy
- Enhancing the Student Experience – Approach and Action Plan
- Refreshing the University's Strategic Plan
- Research Excellence Framework
- Student Experience Action Plan
- Widening Participation

Year-on update:
- Careers and Employability

Resource implications

8. None relevant

Risk management

9. None relevant

Equality & diversity

10. Committees are encouraged to consider equality and diversity as a factor in their selection of suggestions, and equality and diversity implications will be considered in the final selection of presentation themes.

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

11. Committee secretaries will collate suggestions and pass these to the Senate Clerk.

12. Collated themes will be passed to the Principal, who will make the final selection of presentation and discussion themes for 2022/23. Selected themes will be advertised via the Senate website and in advance of each meeting.

Author

Brian Connolly
Academic Services
May 2022

Freedom of Information

Open

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

19 May 2022

Proposed Review of the Doctoral College

Description of paper
1. This paper sets out a proposal for an institutional review of the University Doctoral College (DC). It details the review aims, proposed structure and timeline. This will contribute to the following Strategy 2030 outcome: *We will have more user-friendly processes and efficient systems to support our work.*

Action requested / recommendation
2. SQAC is requested to comment on the plans and approve the proposed plan for a review of the Doctoral College.

Background and context
3. The Doctoral College was set up in March 2020. It comprises a staff team of around 250 members, drawn from Graduate Schools, Colleges, services and Doctoral Training centres. It has a management group which reports to Research Strategy Group and an operations group which reports to Senate Education Committee. The work of the DC is structured around six main themes (experience and development, research strategy, wellbeing, administration, scholarships and fees and communities) and each of these is led by a member of the DC Management Group. It was not set up as a service nor was it set up as an academic unit and so it does not obviously fit onto our current Quality Assurance systems.

Discussion
4. The Doctoral College was established in 2020 and has developed steadily since that time. There are a number of possible drivers for taking a proactive approach to review and evaluation of the Doctoral College.
   - To review the management and operational structure of the Doctoral College and identify enhancements
   - To strengthen the link between quality assurance and enhancement and the activities of the Doctoral College
   - To support preparation for the next ELIR
   - To raise the profile of the Doctoral College, both internally and externally
   - To identify and share good practice

5. We would suggest that the review would have three stages.
   i.   Preparation of a reflective report structured around the themes of the DC and the management structure.
   ii. A review meeting which includes external input and student representation.

iii.   The publication of the review report which would be used as a basis to structure the work of the DC going forward.

6. It is proposed that this review would take place in the second half of Academic Year 2022/23 but given the unusual circumstances of the first two years of the Doctoral College, there would also be an argument to make it later than this to give time for the Doctoral College to operate in more normal times.

7. It is proposed that following the initial review the DC would be reviewed on a frequency of five year intervals.

Resource implications

8. We expect that the process would be resourced by the Doctoral College in the usual way through donated time. The direct costs associated to step (ii) would need to be found.

Risk management

9. As a matter of principle, there are generically no risks to carrying out quality assurance practices and indeed, there are risks in avoidance.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

10. There is no direct bearing on sustainability except possibly in (ii) where there may be travel involved.

Equality & diversity

11. We will ensure that the panel is suitably diverse but otherwise there are no direct risks and an EIS is not required.

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

12. The DC has a built-in communication mechanism and this will be used for internal circulation to all those who would be key stakeholders.

Author   **Presenter**
Fiona Philippi   Antony Maciocia
May 2022

Freedom of Information
OPEN

<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>
Senate Quality Assurance Committee
19 May 2022

Enhancement Themes: Year 2 Update

Description of paper
1. Provides the Committee with an update on Year 2 Enhancement Theme activity.

2. This paper does not contribute to the Strategy 2030 outcomes. It is a regulatory requirement.

Action requested / recommendation
3. The Committee is asked to note the update.

Background and context
4. The Enhancement Themes are a programme of activity involving the whole higher education sector in Scotland. Staff and students collaborate on one or more topics to improve strategy, policy and practice. The current Theme (2020 to 2023) is Resilient Learning Communities. Engaging with the Enhancement Themes is part of the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework.

Discussion
5. The Year 2 Plan was presented to the Committee in December 2021 where it was reported that activity would focus around:
   - Appointing PhD Interns to support Theme work;
   - Sharing examples and supporting new activity; and
   - Progressing specific recommendations from the 2020/21 PhD Internships.

   PhD Interns and supporting activity

6. Two PhD Building Community Interns have been appointed from March to July 2022. Their work builds on the findings of the 2020/21 PhD Internships. Support is being provided to the Health in Social Science project to support students with disabilities, regular discussions are being held with Moray House School of Education and Sport to follow up on their community building practices, and a discussion has been held with the Director of the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program about holding student focus groups.

   Sharing good practice

7. Examples of good practice in community building have been identified from school annual quality reports and Student Partnership Agreement projects. From these examples, the PhD Interns have been working with the Editor of Teaching Matters to curate a series of blog posts for the May/June theme and/or meeting with staff and students to discuss the good practice. A blog post was also written for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Teaching Matters theme: Prioritising

[equality, diversity and inclusion activities through the Enhancement Themes – Teaching Matters blog (ed.ac.uk)](#)

8. Building community is a theme at the University's Learning and Teaching Conference in June. There will be many sessions on community building throughout the conference and an exhibit stand on day 1.

Progressing specific recommendations

9. In terms of progressing specific recommendations from the 2020/21 PhD Internships, the student feedback guide is being updated. Through this update, the need to create a separate guide for postgraduate research students was identified. Additionally, a postgraduate research representative roundtable will be held.

Theory of Change model

10. A theory of change model is being used to support our work on and develop our understanding of the opportunities and challenges within community building at the University. The model identifies root causes (as identified by the 2020/21 PhD Interns), needs, activities (with an overall activity of developing an understanding of 'what works' for students and staff), and short-, medium- and long-term outcomes. An overarching impact statement – to improve community building practice across the University – is accompanied by inputs and possible measurements of impact.

Sector level

The University and Students' Association are involved in a postgraduate research student project by sparqs (Student Partnership in Quality Scotland) to gather positive learning experiences and explore diverse representation models across all Higher Education Institutions in Scotland.

The PhD Interns will be presenting with the staff Theme Leaders' Group member at the Enhancement Themes conference in June on "Building Community and Developing a Sense of Belonging through PhD internships".

The completed and current projects operating at sector level (with accompanying resources) can be found at:
[Resilient Learning Communities (enhancementthemes.ac.uk)](#)

End of year 2 report

11. The Institutional Team meeting on 20 May will focus on the end of Year 2 report, due to be submitted to the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland by the end of June. The report will be presented to the Committee at a future meeting. Committee.

Enhancement Themes Conference 8 and 9 June 2022

12. [Registration is open](#) for the two-day hybrid event, Resilient Learning Communities: Inclusive, Flexible and Accessible.

Resource implications

13. There are no resource implications identified in the report.

Risk management

14. The report does not identify any risks. Risks are considered as part of individual activities/projects.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

15. This paper does not contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a regulatory requirement.

Equality & diversity

16. Equality and diversity will be considered as part of individual activities/projects.

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

17. Enhancement Themes activity is communicated through a variety of mechanisms, including websites, SharePoint sites, emails, network meetings, and Teaching Matters.

<u>**Author**</u>
Nichola Kett
12 May 2022

<u>**Presenter**</u>
Tina Harrison can provide clarification/further information if required

Freedom of Information
Open

<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

19 May 2022

Internal Periodic Review

Description of paper
1. Final report and responses from Internal Periodic Review (IPR).

Action requested / recommendation
2. The Committee is invited to approve the final report and confirm that it is content with progress in the 14 week response.

Background and context
3. The following final reports and responses are published on the Committee wiki (https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SQAC/Thursday+19+May+2022):
   - School of School of Health in Social Science – 14 Week Response;
   - School of Law – 14 Week Response;
   - School of History, Classics and Archaeology Undergraduate provision – Final Report.

Discussion
4. See wiki.

Resource implications
5. No additional resource implications.

Risk management
6. No risk associated.

Equality & diversity
7. An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the IPR process.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed
8. Comments will be reported back to the School/Subject Area and the responses published on the Academic Services website.

<u>Author</u>   **<u>Presenter</u>**
Brian Connolly   Brian Connolly,
Academic Services   Academic Services

Freedom of Information - Open