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

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 20 May 2021
at 2pm via Microsoft Teams**

Present:

Professor Tina Harrison **(Convener)**	Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Brian Connolly	Academic Policy Officer, 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
Dr Jeni Harden	School Representative (School of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Dr Katherine Inglis	School Representative (Literatures, Languages and Cultures), College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Fizzy Abou Jawad	Vice President (Education), Students' Association
Nichola Kett	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team, Academic Services
Professor Linda Kirstein	Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture, College of Science and Engineering
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
Paula Webster	Head of Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling, Student Systems and Administration

Apologies:

Stuart Lamot	Edinburgh University Students' Association Representative
Professor Leigh Sparks	Deputy Principal, University of Stirling

1.   **Welcome and Apologies**

The Convenor noted that Fizzy Abou Jawad had reached the end of her term as Vice President (Education) and thanked her for all her work as the student member of the Committee.

2.   **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22 April 2021**

The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting.

3.   **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

For Discussion

4.   **Curriculum Transformation**

The Vice Principal Students discussed plans for the Curriculum Transformation (CT) Programme.

It was noted that an early priority for the CT Programme will be to develop a shared institutional vision for the Edinburgh Graduate. The purpose of this vision will be to describe the skills, values, knowledge and experiences the University aspires for its students which in turn will act as a key reference point of the future Edinburgh Curriculum.

Members discussed the potential tension between this standard Edinburgh Curriculum/Graduate and the unique, discipline specific, core content and skills. It was agreed that finding the right balance between these two educational outcomes would be vital to the success of the CT Programme.

Members also noted that the University has existing skills and experience in delivering complex joint degrees and interdisciplinary programmes (e.g. the medical intercalculated degrees) which should be utilized by the CT team. The Convenor noted that there was also a role for SQAC as the quality assurance processes could provide the CT team with a rich source of data on current good practice and issues in need of further development across the diverse range of disciplines at the University.

The Vice Principal Students noted that this was a rare opportunity to input into the future shape of teaching and learning across the University. The programme will be long-term and critical to its success will be input from across schools and colleges as well as participation from colleagues within professional services to ensure all aspects of transformation are fully considered. More information can be found on the Curriculum Transformation SharePoint site.

Action: SQAC to receive regular progress updates from the Curriculum Transformation team.

5.   **Student Voice Policy**

The Committee considered the revised Student Voice Policy, reflecting the move away from centrally managed to locally managed course feedback.

It was noted that the Committee had approved the principles embedded in the Policy at the previous meeting and the revised Policy had been informed by those discussions. The Policy encourages Schools to develop approaches to feedback collection that are appropriate and proportionate. However, the Committee agreed that Schools would require practical support and guidance (particularly in relation to the term 'co-creation' and the use of student feedback as supporting evidence for academic promotions) to develop a new approach to course level feedback. It was noted that a Toolkit and supporting guidance would be developed during the summer in consultation with Schools and Colleges.

Action: Student Systems to consult College Deans on the content of the Toolkit.

The Committee **approved** the Policy.

6.   **Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC): Guidance Update**

The Committee considered proposed changes to the recommended membership of Student-Staff Liaison Committees.

It was noted that the proposed changes would expand the recommended membership to include both Society Office Bearers and PLS Scheme Leaders. This in turn would increase the scale and scope of student feedback brought to SSLC meetings, enabling students and staff to work collaboratively to enhance the student experience, and ensuring the feedback loop was closed by sharing outcomes with as many students as possible.

The Committee **approved** the updated guidance.

7.   **Annual Monitoring and Internal Periodic Review Themes 2019/20: University Level Actions Update**

The Committee noted an update on University level actions agreed in response to issues identified as areas for further development in School Annual Quality Reports 2019-20 and themes that emerged from teaching/postgraduate programme reviews held in 2019-20.

8.   **Thematic Review: Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Students 2018-19 - Progress Update**

The Committee considered the progress update on actions remitted in response to the recommendations of the 2018-19 Thematic Review.

It was noted that in this year's annual quality reporting process will require Schools to specifically reflect on student progression and outcomes, focussing on the difference in attainment of groups of students.

9. **Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) Accreditation Committee: Annual Report 2019/20**

The Committee considered the annual report of the SRUC Accreditation Committee.

The Committee commended SRUC on the quality of the report and noted that SRUC plans to apply for Taught and Research Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP). The SRUC Board has endorsed a phased approach to the application process and an application for TDAP will be submitting in August 2021.

10. **Operation of Senate Standing Committees**

10.1 **Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees**

The Committee noted the draft annual report to Senate from the Senate Standing Committees: Education Committee; Academic Policy and Regulations Committee; and Quality Assurance Committee. The report highlighted activities in 2020-21 and proposed priorities for 2021-22.

10.2 **Themes for 2021/22 Senate Meetings**

The Committee was invited to suggest themes for next year's Senate meetings. The following suggestions were noted: the Curriculum Transformation; staff welfare (both academic and professional services) as an integral part of Adaptation and Renewal plans. Members were invited to send any further suggestions to the Committee Secretary by Thursday 27 May 2021.

10.3 **Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees**

The Committee noted the plans for the annual review of Senate Committees' effectiveness. Senate Committee members will be invited to respond to an online questionnaire during summer 2021 (managed by Academic Services). A report on responses will then be presented to Senate and the Senate Standing Committees in September / October 2021. 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.

For Information and Formal Business

11. **Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

12. **Meeting Dates**

The Committee noted that a meeting would be conducted via email correspondence in August to enable the approval of items which do not require substantial discussion in order to provide feedback to schools in a timeous manner.

The Committee also noted the following meeting dates for 2021-22 (all meetings to take place between 2-4pm via MS Teams):

- **Thursday 16 September 2021**
- **Thursday 9 December 2021**
- **Thursday 24 February 2022**
- **Thursday 28 April 2022**
- **Thursday 19 May 2022**