

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Periodic Review

1-year response report (incorporating the previous 14-week response report)

**PPR of (School):** Edinburgh College of Art  
**Date of review:** March 2019  
**Date of 14 week response:** 25/10/2019  
**Date of year on response:** February 2021 (delayed due to impact of Covid-19 pandemic)

The School/Subject Area is responsible for reporting on progress with all recommendations, including those remitted to other areas of the University for action. If any recommendation has been fully addressed please record the action taken and date completed. Any barriers to progress should be highlighted on this report.

<b>Rec. Number</b>  (or sub-number)	<b>Recommendation</b> (Note that in preparing this document a number of key staff members, noted in brackets, have been added by ECA as they will play an important supporting role in implementing the relevant recommendations.)	<b>Timescale for completion</b>	<b>14-week response</b>  <b><u>Comment on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion</u></b>	<b>1-year response</b>  <b><u>(including where relevant a note of the “completion date”, and anything important that relates to what was said in the 14-week response)</u></b>
1	The review panel <b>strongly recommends</b> that ECA take immediate steps to ensure all postgraduate tutors and demonstrators receive a contract of employment before they commence any teaching duties. Teaching planning and allocation deadlines should be created in consultation with HR and firmly adhered to so that there is sufficient time for HR to process contracts for tutors and demonstrators before they begin teaching.	Initial policy setting already complete at ECA level. Will have full effect School-wide by:  August 2020	At the time of its PPR, ECA had made good progress in implementing the relevant contractual aspects of the University of Edinburgh’s <a href="#">Policy for the Recruitment, Support and Development of Tutors and Demonstrators</a> (web link). More recently, the new <a href="#">Collective Agreement</a> (web link) with the UCU has re-enforced ECA’s resolve to address the causes of contract delays.  We recognise that teaching planning plays a key role in these issues. Since the PPR, ECA has implemented a new School-wide policy that requires earlier teaching planning by all 5 of ECA’s Subject Areas, which will ensure that ECA is able to issue offers and contracts in good time. Specifically, ECA has taken steps to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Implement more robustly a previously-agreed CAHSS GH timeline and process which requires Subject Areas to define and agree teaching plans in February;</li> <li>(ii) Offer contract hours to continuing GH by May/June;</li> <li>(iii) Ensure that the majority of contracts are issued between June – August.</li> </ul>	<b>Date of completion: November 2020 (but with some ongoing issues due to P&amp;M system)</b>  Since the 14-week report ECA considers that the issues identified by the PPR panel around the timely creation of contracts for tutors and demonstrators, and associated issues of timely payment, have been resolved. This progress is as a result of the plans outlined in said 14-week response.  The only caveat ECA would note is that, as with other areas of the University, ECA is now managing contracts and related issues through the new People & Money system. A significant number of issues have been identified with the practical operation of this system, which have been discussed extensively at University-level. ECA notes that these issues <u>have</u> had a negative effect on the positive progress made in this area, and as with other parts of the University is keen to see all issues with P&M ironed out as soon as possible.

	<p><b>Who:</b> Director of Professional Services and ECA Senior Management Team</p>		<p>These improvements are set in a context where ECA is simultaneously implementing earlier overall planning in a number of areas, with clearly defined and observed timelines and deadlines across a wide range of interdependent planning processes.</p> <p>To support the reforms in teaching planning and GH contract processes, alongside the noted wider reforms, ECA has recently appointed a brand new admin post (effective 1<sup>st</sup> Oct 2019). Part of the remit for this new post is to support the DoPS in working with the 5 Heads of Subject, and other administrators involved in teaching planning and GH contract and offer making, to better understand and implement solutions to the barriers that result in late teaching planning. This work will directly support ECA’s adherence to the agreed CAHSS timelines and activities.</p> <p>These tasks are complex and involve contributions to wider cultural shifts, bound up as they are in matters of planning culture, workload concerns, availability of information/data, and adequate systems and resource. Supporting a shift to earlier teaching planning will, however, have the immediate effect of ensuring that the majority of our tutors receive contracts and offers in good time. ECA Planning &amp; Resources Committee (P&amp;RC) will oversee, and be accountable for, the successful implementation of these changes.</p> <p>N.B. ECA recognise that, although there may be a small number of legitimate reasons for contracts or offers of additional hours to be issued at shorter notice than noted above, such cases will need to be justifiably exceptional in future, and comprise only a small minority of the overall number of contract offers.</p>	
2	<p>The panel note that change will continue with the new estates strategy and in-coming head of ECA but <b>recommend</b> that early consideration be given</p>	<p>August 2020 for direct changes to curriculum approval timelines.</p> <p>2021-2023 for implementation of</p>	<p>A number of initiatives and changes are already in progress to support development of a more sustainable and attractive suite of postgraduate programmes and courses, that will together demonstrate a clearer overall postgraduate strategy (see also Recommendation 4). Of particular note:</p>	<p><b>Date of completion: August 2020 + February 2021 (but aspects will be ongoing indefinitely)</b></p> <p>Further to the 14-week response, ECA notes that major steps have been made towards a more strategic approach to estates and facilities utilisation and prioritisation in regards to all learning, teaching,</p>

	<p>to enhancements to postgraduate provision, and enhancements carried out expeditiously, to allow curricular developments to inform decisions on physical estate.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> ECA Principal and ECA Senior Management Team</p>	<p>the new ECA strategic plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building on the achievement of the £5.5m AHRC Creative Informatics grant, led by ECA in October 2018, we are developing further links and collaborations with and within EFI. ECA is a key contributor to the ongoing development of EFI PG programmes and courses, with 6 of our staff partially funded to develop new curriculum, and a number of further staff likely to contribute in the coming months. Some of these staff members will continue to actively contribute to EFI over the coming years.</li> <li>• ECA’s Recruitment and Admissions Strategy Group, chaired by the ECA Principal, is currently implementing changes in timeline and process for vetting and supporting the development of new and significantly revised programmes and other curriculum changes. A crucial component of these new processes will be the assessment of such proposals against clearly defined criteria, which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contribution of the proposal towards achieving the overall PG profile and recruitment strategy for ECA;</li> <li>▪ Consideration of areas of synergy and collaboration with other taught programmes within and beyond ECA;</li> <li>▪ The value of any areas of joint teaching or collaboration;</li> <li>▪ Contribution to any new and/or innovative areas of teaching and research that we wish to grow and/or develop.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Within the current planning round, covering the period 2020-23, ECA will reiterate its strategic objective to engage with the wider University through offering courses, collaborations, and other linkages. Together these engagements will strengthen ECA’s visibility within the University, and broaden the scope of its contributions.</li> <li>• ECA has established a short-term “Size and Shape Group”, which has met monthly since May 2019 to consider, articulate, and plan for the desired size and distribution of its student population over the</li> </ul>	<p>and research matters (including UG, PGT, and PGR disciplines, courses, and programmes). Chief amongst these developments has been the solidification of the ECA Space Strategy Group (incorporating as it does participation from all areas of ECA, and both academic and Prof Service representatives). This Group (which reports to ECA Planning and Resources Committee) is tasked with ensuring that spaces and facilities are both represented clearly in the appropriate audit trails, and are prioritised for usage in ways that are informed by the ECA Plan (and associated L&amp;T, research, and Subject Area strategies).</p> <p>As noted in the 14-week response, a new degree programme development process has recently been introduced, to ensure that all future programme developments have a clearer and stronger articulation of the ways in which estates and associated facilities are to be used and supported. This process will be of great benefit to the ECA Recruitment and Admissions Strategy Group in ensuring that only the most soundly-conceptualised programmes, which have a clearly articulated vision for estates and facilities usage (where relevant), progress forward to the formal proposal stage, and that if/when they do, the appropriate shared understanding amongst all stakeholders will already be in place.</p> <p>Furthermore, ECA has very recently amalgamated the previously-separate key areas of Learning and IT support, and Technical Services support, into a singular Professional Service structure. The Head of this new service was appointed on 17 February 2021, and will be a key leader in helping to ensure that all our estates-related facilities are conceptualised, supported, and delivered in ways that are strategically informed, sustainable, and which ensure appropriate parity across key stakeholders.</p> <p>See also Recommendation 6.</p>
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			<p>next 10 years. The work of this Group has been informed by all of the interdependent discussions and plans described above, and is actively feeding in to the wider estates planning work within the School.</p> <p>In short, ECA is thinking hard about what curriculum it should offer, the size and distribution of student population that should engage with this curriculum, and how the future estate should be configured to optimally support this. ECA is undertaking this work with an eye on the farther future, 10 years away and beyond, accepting that any forward-thinking School will always be in a state of ongoing change. The apparently high estate demands required by many of ECA's diverse set of disciplines make this a particularly important moment for careful consideration, with a view to future student demand, developing pedagogical approaches, and the future shape of these disciplines.</p>	
3	<p>The review team notes that many students and staff members do not feel themselves to be part of a wider ECA community, identifying most clearly with their subject area. The panel <b>recommends</b> that the ECA leadership team work with colleagues at all levels and across all subject areas to collectively articulate a shared vision and sense of purpose in terms of the culture and identity of ECA.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> ECA Principal and ECA Senior Management Team</p>	August 2020	<p>Through the current planning round (see also Recommendation 2) and through the work we are doing to inform our estate development, ECA P&amp;RC will work and consult with staff and students to collectively understand and articulate our shared values, vision, and purpose. Indeed, a major driving factor for the ongoing estates development plans, which ECA hopes will lead to the majority of academic colleagues and students being based in or around the Lauriston campus, is to foster a more cohesive sense of academic, physical, and social community.</p> <p>In the nearer term, ECA will look carefully at whether there are practical steps that can be taken to further develop the sense of an ECA community for students and staff. Such steps may include aiming to deliver more disciplinary and interdisciplinary teaching, currently dispersed across the central area, within the existing Lauriston estate. ECA will also look carefully at the extensive existing portfolio of PG-focussed research seminars, looking for any potential areas of synergy or overlap that might be leveraged to bring such communities closer together.</p>	<p><b>Date of completion: Summer 2020 (+ ongoing)</b></p> <p>ECA recruited a new Principal (Prof Juan Cruz) in the autumn of 2019. A key area of work for the ECA Principal over the past year, despite the massive impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on all aspects of day-to-day operations in our School, has been to undertake a significant package of work to consider the value proposition of ECA as a whole, a significant part of which relates directly to the issues of community and identity which form the basis of this recommendation.</p> <p>Key progress made over the past year includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular ECA-wide 'staff forum' events (conducted via Teams since March 2020), nearly all of which have attracted the largest staff participation levels since the ECA-UoE merger;</li> <li>• An extensive series of value proposition workshops, conducted by an expert external company (NOUS), attendance at which has been drawn from across ECA (with both</li> </ul>

academic and Prof Service colleagues well represented);

- Regular, twice-per-semester ECA-wide student-staff liaison committee (SSLC) meetings (which build upon and link into the many local Subject Area SSLCs already in place).

As a result of the NOUS workshops, in particular, ECA is heading towards a much more widely understood and shared sense of identity, the first articulations of which are now incorporated into the latest ECA Plan & Vision document – though of course this will be an ongoing process, subject to refinement and distillation as ECA's staff base evolves, and our programme offer develops. Naturally, there is also a strong interaction here with University-level developments (for example, the forthcoming curriculum transformation project).

On a more practical front, ECA would draw attention to the major success of the ECA café refurbishment, now fully operational (until Covid-19) since the PPR was conducted on-campus in 2019. This has become a major centre of community focus for ECA, and on a regular (pre-pandemic) weekday is a hive of cross-ECA activity (for both staff and students). ECA understands that a number of other areas of the University are drawing inspiration for their own community-building plans from the successes of the ECA café.

Further issues relating to the shape and structure of our physical campus presence and distribution remain on the table, focussed to a significant extent through the ECA Space Strategy Group. But the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our previously-established estates (re)-development plans will be significant – and a full resumption of these conversations depends upon a wider and prolonged return to on-campus occupancy for staff and students.

<p>4.0 (Overall finding, with sub-points listed separately below)</p>	<p>The panel further <b>recommends</b> the articulation of a clear postgraduate strategy.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> <i>PGR and PGT Programme Directors and Boards of Studies (ECA PGT Director &amp; ECA PGR Director)</i></p>	<p>August 2020 (combined UG/PG L&amp;T strategy)</p>	<p>ECA acknowledges that it needs to develop a formal PG strategy that sets key School-wide objectives, and describes the strategic steps needed to achieve them. However, this strategy cannot and should not be framed in isolation; rather, it needs to tessellate sensibly with ECA’s UG offerings.</p> <p>In this 14-week response ECA has addressed a number of identified sub-Recommendations, noted below. The work to fit them together to form a singular, cohesive, integrated UG/PG strategy, is ongoing. A number of focussed meetings have already taken place, involving the ECA Directors of L&amp;T (UG, PGT, PGR) and other senior colleagues. Over the current academic year this work will crystallise into a single ECA L&amp;T Strategy, which will include components that speak specifically to PGT and PGR.</p>	<p><b>Date of completion: ongoing (but with caveats as noted)</b></p> <p>As noted in the 14-week update, ECA is currently working on producing a single L&amp;T strategy, which includes components devoted specifically to PGT and PGR. This document remains in active development.</p> <p>It should also be noted that as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, ECA produced an extensive (~60 pages) “Hybrid Teaching Strategy” document, focussed on supporting ECA’s rapid adaptation to online/hybrid teaching for its several hundred courses. This document singularly integrated UG and PGT areas, to help support academics and Prof Service teams across the School to prepare for a/y 2020-21. The document is available to all ECA staff via: <a href="https://edin.ac/eca-hybrid">https://edin.ac/eca-hybrid</a></p> <p>The Hybrid Teaching Strategy document will be updated ahead of a/y 2021-22.</p> <p>Beyond then, if the University can assume a return to something more like “normal”, ECA’s plan is to further evolve the Hybrid Teaching Strategy document to become a singular ECA Learning &amp; Teaching Strategy (integrating UG and PGT together), which will be integrated within the wider ECA Plan &amp; Vision.</p> <p>As noted elsewhere in the 1-year response to Recommendations 4.7 and 4.8, the Covid-19 pandemic had led to an enormous range of challenges for many areas of the University, and particularly for ECA – especially in the domain of L&amp;T. In Spring 2020, and in direct response to the huge uncertainties created by the pandemic, ECA made the decision to suspend a significant number of PGT programmes with historically low recruitment numbers (a range of other factors were also considered in this process, but student intake data was the most important consideration) – this process was conducted following prompts from the wider University for Schools to</p>
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4.1	<p>The panel further <b>recommends</b> that the postgraduate strategy recommended in Section 1.5 take greater account of the specific challenges for students undertaking practice-based research.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> PGR Programme Directors (ECA PGR Director)</p>	<p>Initial work in Semester 1/2 of 2019-20.</p> <p>Then, August 2020 for Subject Area actions, with further, longer term outcomes in capital development and programmes</p>	<p>A working group of Subject Area PGR Directors has reported on this, and the report has been discussed more widely with ECA management. We will run a workshop with students this year (a/y 2019-20) to garner responses and to foster further discussion of the issues. The outcomes will be discussed at the ECA PGR Committee in the current academic year, with a view to agreeing actions in Subject Areas/programmes. There will also be input to the ECA capital plan in terms of enhancing practice-based provision and identity, and in discussions of new courses and programmes associated with EFI.</p> <p>In parallel, ECA will seek to learn from identified examples of good practice in external organisations and events. There are ongoing discussions with a number of such external groups that may lead to the development of an ECA-hosted event, initially as a one off, focussed on Practice as Research. Such an event would draw in a range of ECA PGR-, and potentially PGT-oriented, students and staff.</p>	<p><b>Date of completion: March 2021 (+ ongoing)</b></p> <p>The PGR-focussed workshop noted in the 14-week update had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This event has recently been discussed within the ECA PGR Committee, and has been rescheduled for Semester 2 (a/y 2020-21), to take place in March 2021.</p>
4.2	The panel <b>recommends</b> that future		During academic year 2018-19 the PGR Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) discussed the need for	<b>Date of completion: Summer 2021 (+ ongoing)</b>



	<p>postgraduate strategies put together by ECA should incorporate opportunities for ECA students and staff members to socialise and share their research outside of their specific subject areas. Specifically, they <b>recommend</b> establishing an ECA-wide PGR forum to be attended by both students and staff members. This should be an annual opportunity for all PGR students to present their work to a wider audience than their own supervisory team and subject area colleagues.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> PGR Programme Directors (ECA PGR Director)</p>	<p>May/June 2020 (initial pilot event)</p> <p>August 2020 (complete planning of the new PGR Forum)</p> <p>August 2021 (delivery + evaluation of the PGR Forum)</p>	<p>opportunities to present work to peers outside Subject Area and disciplinary boundaries. There is recognition that research groups and the Research Successes Forum provide opportunities for interaction, but that exchanges of research ideas, practice, and findings across ECA's PGR community could be more fluid than at present.</p> <p>The PGR Team supported an event run by and for students during Semester 2 of 2018/19. However, there is a clear need for further development and fostering of staff engagement. PGR students feel that this is important for a sense of research community, and that it is an area of PRES evaluation that shows room for improvement.</p> <p>Development of a new event, with a working title of "ECA PGR Forum", will be done in consultation with the 5 Subject Area PGR Directors and the PGR SSLC during Semester 1/early Semester 2 2019-20, and also through engaging the support of the ECA RKEI Director so as to foster wider research staff engagement. There will be a pilot event, run by the PGR SSLC with Subject-Area PGR Director support in May/June 2020, and a roll-out of a minimum of 2 events per year in 2021-22. Barriers to success include the ongoing pressure on research staff to engage with REF in the period, securing appropriate facilities, and budget availability.</p> <p>In parallel, and directly related the comment on Recommendation 3, ECA will explore the potential to involve PGR students more directly in framing and running research seminars, a practice that is well known in other institutions. An idea currently being explored is to develop tiered mentorship programmes involving PGR students at various stages of their studies, with oversight from more experienced academic(s). Such an approach has the potential synergic benefit of giving PGR students experience in leadership and management, a valuable area in which to demonstrate competence when seeking later employment.</p>	<p>In addition to the PGR-focussed comment in 4.1, discussions are taking place at the moment about a larger PGR/Research "festival of research" type event, potentially due to take place in summer 2021. This event was discussed during the November 2020 ECA PGR Committee (and noted in the associated minutes), and at the February 2021 ECA RKE committee. There is a possibility that this could be timed to coincide with the UG Graduate Show, to serve as a showcase of contributions from across ECA.</p>
4.3	PGT students report that in general they are satisfied with their	August 2020 (identification of 'hot spots')	The issue of course availability, at both UG and PGT levels, is a perennial challenge across the whole University. In this respect ECA is no different, and the School acknowledges	<b>Date of completion: Summer 2020 (+ ongoing)</b>



<p>learning experiences. However, some PGT students raised concerns that they have been forced to take undergraduate-level courses as part of their programme due to their preferred postgraduate choices being taken by undergraduate students. This has greatly reduced their ability to specialise in their preferred areas of study. PGT students who are converting from a different subject at undergraduate level state that they sometimes need to rely heavily on the help of their classmates to master skills required for their programme, and PGT students with an undergraduate background in the same subject they are studying at Masters level sometimes experience strong overlap between material covered at undergraduate level and material covered within the first few months of their PGT programme. The panel <b>recommends</b> that these issues are taken into account in the</p>	<p>August 2020 and beyond (Boards of Studies policy around course capping)</p> <p>August 2021 (measures implemented to alleviate the most perennial course capping issues)</p> <p>August 2021 (phase out of shared lower level UG-PGT teaching)</p>	<p>that students can be left frustrated if they are unable to access their preferred optional course(s). There are two common causes for such issues: (i) timetabling clashes; (ii) capping of course sizes. In terms of the former, there is already work ongoing to seek compatible timetabling of the most common course options at various levels. However, solving the timetabling issue requires an institution-wide approach, which is ongoing and to which ECA will continue to contribute.</p> <p>In terms of the issue of course capping, the studio-, workshop-, and seminar- based nature of many courses at ECA makes this a particularly challenging issue. Course proposers will continue to be challenged to develop curriculum that is scalable, through Boards of Studies policy. The most direct solutions involve the development of new pedagogical approaches (which we note as common practice in other areas of the University), and/or designing courses in such a way as to make it practically feasible to teach them more than once per year. All such measures will, in time, contribute to the kind of cultural shift needed to encourage more scalable new curricula. In terms of the curricula that is currently offered, the ECA PG/T Director will work during 2019-20 to identify the key 'hot spots' where course capping is a perennial issue, and work with Subject Area Heads and wider colleagues to seek solutions.</p> <p>ECA acknowledges that there are a number of issues with the practice of shared UG/PGT teaching. The School would contend, however, that in the case of shared SCQF Level 10/11 teaching (i.e. final year Hons/Masters-level courses that share a degree of contact time, but with separate course codes, learning outcomes, and assessment), there are sensible arguments to continue such practices that align with both pedagogical and resource-usage priorities (as long as there is clear and justifiable differentiation between the Level 10/11 course versions, and as long as students are clearly informed).</p> <p>In the small minority of cases where a degree of shared teaching takes place between lower-level UG and Masters-</p>	<p>During the Covid-19 pandemic, ECA has moved to a singular, integrated UG+PGT Board of Studies (BoS) framework. The most like scenario is that this will continue in perpetuity.</p> <p>One key advantage of such a singular BoS structure, particularly for a School as large as ECA, is that all proposed UG and PGT courses are seen by the same set of Board members, and hence issues of parity, distinctiveness, strategy, alignment, and general learning design can be appraised with appropriately forensic detail and consideration.</p> <p>In light of the PPR recommendation 4.3, the integrated ECA BoS is presently reviewing its entire BoS workflow/pipeline, and the specific issue of Hons/PGT versions of a given course is going to be looked at very carefully (work on this commenced prior to the disruption caused by Covid-19 in March 2020, but was temporarily placed on hold for obvious reasons). The intention will be to develop a clearly articulated strategy, workflow, documentation, and set of expectations, which will lead to a more strategic and sustainable course offering.</p> <p>As noted in the 1-year response to the main Recommendation 4.0, a more strategically-defined vision for ECA's PGT offering is continuing to emerge. Plans that in some cases have been considered over a long period of time have inevitably been accelerated as ECA looks to deal with, and learn from, lessons learned from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>
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	<p>recommended Postgraduate Strategy, with a clear articulation of the ethos and distinctiveness of PGT study within ECA.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> PGT Programme Directors and Boards of Studies (ECA PGT Director)</p>		<p>level, ECA agrees that such practices may not always be conducive to optimal student experience (though there may have originally been understandable reasons to develop such practices that relate to limited spaces/resources). To address this, ECA has taken, and is continuing to take, steps to develop new curricula and teaching strategies in the affected areas that will eliminate such practices entirely from 2021/22. ECA will also no longer permit the design of new courses that involve such a model of shared teaching.</p> <p>(See also the response to Recommendation 4.7, below.)</p>	
4.4	<p>Despite the generally positive experiences reported by online students, the review team are concerned by the lack of pedagogical consideration of the specific needs of online learners on the online MSc Digital and Media Design programme, given student's reported experiences of the way in which material is structured and presented to online learners. The panel <b>recommends</b> that as part of a wider postgraduate strategy for ECA, further attention should be paid to curriculum delivery methods and student support for online students, with an evidence-based approach towards the design of online learning experiences</p>	<p>May 2020 (engagement of DMD students with External Examiner)</p> <p>August 2020 (initial MSc DMD programme review and recommendations + findings of ECA online learning working group – see also Recommendation 4.5 below)</p>	<p>Ongoing development of the Digital Media Design Programme is informed by a Principal's Teaching Award Scheme project ("CollaboratED: Collaborative Learning in a Shared Studio Environment for Digital Media Design Students") in which the Programme Director and colleagues are explicitly investigating improved support for online learners. This involves analysis of a number of types of data about students' experiences and learning needs. Over the next year, resulting insights will be used to develop and nuance the processes used in individual courses. It needs to be borne in mind that most courses in this programme are based very firmly on design projects and fundamentally active learning, including through collaborative group work.</p> <p>That said, in light of this recommendation a review of the MSc Digital Media Design (DMD) programme will be conducted with the Programme Director and wider academic team. Examples of University of Edinburgh best practice will be drawn upon, further internal expertise will be engaged (e.g. ECA Learning Technology team), and the potential for wider UoE support for programme development will also be explored (e.g. drawing on expertise within the IAD). Student engagement with the review will also be sought.</p> <p>In the current academic year (2019-20) we will also work to ensure that online students are given the same opportunities to speak directly to External Examiners as those on campus. Whilst our online students are already</p>	<p><b>Date of completion: ongoing</b></p> <p>In light of the Covid-19 pandemic over the past year, ECA's 14-week and the 1-year responses to Recommendation 4.4 must be considered in a rather different light to that of late 2019/early 2020.</p> <p>Whilst ECA fully agrees that all programmes should be periodically reviewed, and pedagogical methods considered in a broad and research-informed way in terms of their ongoing appropriateness, the urgency of doing this for the specific programmes identified has necessarily been deprioritised for the time being.</p> <p>A key factor in play here must be the recognition that since September 2020, essentially the whole University (other than those programmes already solely online) has adopted a hybrid teaching approach that is remarkable similar to that highlighted as problematic in the ECA PPR. Such an approach considers the online/digital and on-campus cohorts as essentially constituting a singular "hybrid" cohort, which is precisely the model employed by the DDM/DMD programme pairing (a not-dissimilar approach is also being taken wholesale across EFl).</p> <p>As such, ECA does not feel that it is in a position to radically overhaul this at the present time. Rather, we continue to reflect upon the ways that School-wide hybrid teaching has impacted upon our pedagogical</p>

	<p>that scaffold student learning (through strategies such as chunking and active learning). This should include more opportunities for online students to interact with course material, rather than the current focus of relying on virtual access to on-campus sessions for online learners.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> Programme Directors for Online PGT Programmes</p>		<p>able to engage in such discussions, we will further emphasise the importance of this communication channel as a useful conduit for direct, actionable course and programme feedback.</p>	<p>and practical teaching models (in ways that are both positive and negative), and we will prioritise a considered and forward-looking approach that seeks to take the best of both worlds in the years to come.</p>
4.5	<p>The panel <b>recommends</b> that consideration should be given to the purpose and future of online learning as a whole within ECA as part of a wider ECA postgraduate strategy.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> ECA PGT &amp; ECA PGR Directors and Board of Studies</p>	<p>August 2020 (findings of ECA online learning working group)</p> <p>2021-2 for PGR Distance Learning model</p> <p>2022-3 for PGT Programmes (if any new)</p>	<p>ECA is aware that the costs in developing and delivering quality, new online learning programmes is significant. Elements of online learning already take place across ECA via LEARN and other platforms, and ECA has engaged in MOOC development on a number of fronts, but a fully integrated online programme requires considerable resource, and clearly defined and understood strategic objectives.</p> <p>To this end, online learning has been identified as a key issue by the ECA Recruitment and Admissions Strategy Group (RASG), including the question of PGR online learning. A working group, initially reporting to ECA RASG, has recently (September 2019) been established, Chaired by the ECA Director of Technology Strategy, and with membership including the ECA Directors of L&amp;T (UG, PGT, PGR), and the ECA Director of Communications and Engagement. It will consult with the Centre for Digital Education and the Near Future Teaching project, building upon best practice at Edinburgh and at external institutions, as well as drawing on findings from research into market trends and demand. However, the group will prioritise high quality digital education first and foremost, along with its alignment to broader ECA research strands</p>	<p><b>Date of completion: ongoing</b></p> <p>In relation to the potential development of an online-based PGR programme, ECA notes that this issue has been discussed on multiple occasions within the CAHSS PG Education Committee, and there is further work ongoing at CAHSS-level and UoE-level in this regard. Within ECA, paperwork to propose models for both online and distance PGR programmes are being worked on at present, and will be presented to the ECA PGR Committee later in a/y 2020-21 (acknowledgement of and information about this was recently provided to CAHSS PG Education Committee). ECA is also playing a central role in the development of the UNA Europa PGR collaborative doctorate, which (at least initially) will be delivered via online channels.</p>

			<p>and strengths. The initial focus of this working group will be centred on PGT and PGR programmes (see also below).</p> <p>During academic year 2019-20, the ECA PGR Director will circulate a policy paper on Distance Learning PhD models, with a view to introducing such a programme for 2021-2. There appears to be genuine demand for distance learning, and a recent paper at CAHSS PG Education Committee has established the wider University context.</p>	
4.6	<p>The panel <b>recommends</b> that the recommended ECA-wide postgraduate strategy should include strategic consideration of skills development and employability for its postgraduate students.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> ECA PGT &amp; ECA PGR Directors and Board of Studies</p>	<p>November 2019 (new programme-level early approval processes)</p> <p>August 2021 (sharing of good practice from accredited programmes at specifically-focussed PGT/PGR Committees)</p>	<p>ECA was pleased that the panel recognised the good practice in this area already embedded into curriculum practice across the School. Our reading of this recommendation is that there is some unevenness in provision across the School, and more might be done to share good practice and highlight what is done more explicitly. This is especially relevant given that a significant number of ECAs UG and PGT programmes benefit from external (professional) accreditation. We will look to find ways to foreground such good practice, including at relevant PGT and PGR Committees.</p> <p>Issues of skills development and employability have been central to a number of recent new programme designs (examples being the newly launched undergraduate BMus Music and BSc Acoustics and Music Technology degrees) and this good practice will be shared with colleagues looking to develop new curricula.</p> <p>To this end, a specific implementation of this Recommendation can be seen in newly defined ECA-level processes and guidance for new (and majorly changed) programmes. ECA has recently (October 2019) introduced a new School-stage early development process for such programmes (i.e. in advance of the initial CAHSS/College-level “Early Notification” stage) that will require proposers to provide a range of narrative commentaries that relate to skills development, employability, and a range of other key areas. By drawing attention to these important issues at the earliest possible stages, the intention is to embed them deeply within the cultural norms and expectations of colleagues across the School.</p>	<p><b>Date of completion: November 2020.</b></p> <p>The key recommendation here, when considered in the context of ECA’s 14-week response, is essentially that ECA could more strongly promote the sharing of good practice in relation to skills development and employability, since there are already a number of very strong examples of good practice across the School. As noted in the 14-week response (and the 1-year response to 4.0, 4.3, and 4.8), a stronger emphasis on these issues has already been baked-in to the new degree programme proposal process, which applies to both UG and PGT programmes.</p> <p>In addition, it should be noted that as of December 2020, ECA is now operating with a singular/joint UG+PGT School-level learning and teaching committee, the <i>ECA Education Committee (EEC)</i>. An important rationale for the formation of this was to support better and clearer sharing of good practice in relation to curriculum development and review at all levels (which of course includes issues of skills development and employability).</p> <p>A small cross-ECA working group has recently been convened to look at the issue of graduate skills development and employability, which has come about in part due to issues stemming from necessary changes to the format and conceptualisation of the ECA Graduate Shows caused by impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The group will be looking at ways to foster sharing of good practice, feeding in to the ongoing discussions within EEC mentioned above.</p>

				<p>In relation to PGR programmes, the issue of skills development and employability has been discussed on multiple occasions over the past year within ECA PGR Committee meetings. The feeling within this Committee is that certain aspects of this recommendation, such as CV development and interview skills, are already very well covered by the IAD. These are supplemented by ECA’s Research Successes Forum (for staff and PGR students) and its PGR-focused Survive and Thrive workshops.</p>
4.7	<p>The panel <b>recommends</b> that in creating an ECA-wide Postgraduate Strategy, there should be a strong emphasis on the clear delineation between undergraduate and postgraduate level teaching. The strategy should specify which PGT programmes are intended as conversion courses programmes (programmes for students with no undergraduate background in a specific subject area) and which as specialisations (programmes allowing students with an undergraduate background in a specific subject area to further specialise within this area), and this information should be made clear to potential applicants.</p>	<p>August 2020 (initial findings of engagement project)</p> <p>August 2021 (enhanced external programme-level communications)</p>	<p>This Recommendation ties in quite closely with that of 4.3, addressed above. Noted here is ECA’s response to the issue of “conversion” vs “specialisation” programmes.</p> <p>ECA feels that the specific Recommendation that all PGT programmes should be clearly categorised and marketed as either “conversion” or “specialisation” is particularly challenging, for a number of reasons that pertain to both ECA, and many other Schools across the University. A key issue is that whilst some programmes may indeed be so categorisable, many of ECA’s PGT programmes fall somewhere between the two broadly named categories. In many cases, a certain level and type of background is often essential, but the whole point of the programme is to bring together a range of people from a range of backgrounds for a shared, co-beneficial educational experience. This issue is clearly of great contemporary relevance, in the context of increasingly cross-University curricula, and the burgeoning of EFI. ECA is concerned that simply categorising all PGT programmes into one of two such categories carries with it the risk to appearing to “undersell” what such “conversion” programmes actually represent.</p> <p>That said, ECA does recognise that there is always room to improve the clarity and quality of external marketing and communications information, so that prospective students have the clearest, most representative view of what is on offer, and why. To this end a new engagement/recruitment project has recently begun (started April 2019), led by the ECA Director of</p>	<p><b>Date of completion: ongoing</b></p> <p>As noted in the 14-week response, ECA does not fully agree that a strict delineation between “conversion” and “specialisation” programmes is necessary nor appropriate.</p> <p>However, we strongly agree that improved clarity of communication to prospective students about the nature of each of our programmes is important, and is something that we should improve across the board.</p> <p>We also agree that it is important to have clearly articulated course descriptors for UG and PGT courses, and especially so where there is a degree of shared teaching between, say, SCQF Level 10 and 11 “versions” of a course (see also Recommendation 4.3 response).</p>



	<p><b>Who:</b> PGT Programme Directors and Board of Studies (ECA PGT Director)</p>		<p>Communications and Engagement. This project will look closely at the external information, both in terms of content and communications processes, provided about all our PGT (and UG + PGR) programmes. ECA will look to improve the clarity and quality of this programme-level information, to better inform prospective students about the unique opportunities and student experience to be gained from enrolling here.</p>	
4.8	<p>The panel <b>recommends</b> that an admissions and recruitment strategy should form part of the recommended wider ECA postgraduate strategy.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> ECA Recruitment &amp; Admissions Strategy Group</p>	<p>November 2019 (RASG process)</p> <p>December 2019 (first round of RASG-level review)</p>	<p>ECA has worked throughout summer 2019 to clarify and extend the remit of the Recruitment and Admissions Strategy Group (RASG), which is Chaired by the ECA Principal. RASG will now play a key role in reviewing new (and majorly changed) programmes at the earliest possible/sensible stage. Part of this will require RASG to appraise programme proposals against agreed Subject Area and ECA-level strategic plans. This new process will result in every such programme proposal being either (i) supported, in which case School-level funds will be released to help the proposers gain actionable market insight and other data; (ii) asked to review and resubmit, taking into account specific recommendations; (ii) rejected outright. Key to the operation of this new process is a shift in cultural expectation that any/all such programmes might be approved. Rather, ECA will take a more active role in shaping the strategic development of programmes that meet the School's wider goals.</p> <p>In addition, the ECA Director of L&amp;T (PG/T) and ECA Head of Student Administration and Support Service (SASS) have been working closely with the CAHSS PG Admission Office (PGAO) to develop new processes for managing PG admissions applications. These processes build upon successful previous work in this area, including pilot processes for a number of programmes carried out during academic year 2018/19. The overall strategic objective is to reduce the amount of administrative processing work undertaken by academic staff, freeing them up to spend more time on applicant conversion and other activities.</p>	<p><b>Date of completion: December 2019</b></p> <p>As noted in the 14-week response and elsewhere in the 1-year response, a new process has now been implemented across ECA, wherein proposals for new programmes (whether UG or PGT) have to go through a pre-proposal "pitching" stage, overseen through ECA Recruitment and Admissions Strategy Group (RASG).</p> <p>An admissions pilot process also continues within a number of our PGT programmes, through close partnership with the CAHSS PG Admissions Office. This has particular complexity for ECA and CAHSS, given the portfolio component involved in the student application process for many of our PGT programmes.</p> <p>In addition, ECA has recently appointed a fixed-term role, 'ECA Portfolio Champion' (Zoe Patterson, from the ECA Design Subject Area), to work closely with Fraser Muir and key stakeholders as CAHSS and UoE look to replace the digital platform involved in portfolio submissions for admissions processes.</p> <p>ECA also developed a brand new support process for PGT (and PGR) Programme Directors involved in making student recruitment decisions (as 'selector') during the yearly admissions cycle, wherein a detailed set of information around target recruitment numbers, together with associated target offer-making numbers based upon analysis of historic data, was provided to each academic Programme team. Together with periodic auditing of the latest data during the admissions cycle (provided via John Tullis</p>



				in the CAHSS PGO) and regular check-ins with Subject Area L&T teams, ECA secured a record number of applications and offers made during the 2019-20 admissions cycle (i.e. for entry in September 2020) – this despite the suspension of nearly 50% of ECA’s PGT programmes due to the impact of Covid-19. A review of these suspended programmes is ongoing, as part of a wider appraisal of our PGT admissions strategy (see also Recommendation 4.0).
5	<p>The panel also <b>recommends</b> that ECA identify and implement ways to better integrate research students into the research culture, noting that the lack of transparency and consistency of some existing processes, such as desk and funding allocation, is hindering students’ engagement with their studies.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> ECA PGR Director</p>	<p>August 2020 for key issues, longer term for study space for practice-based students</p>	<p>Transparency in funding and in relation to allocation priorities for study spaces is fundamental to good student experience. Since the PPR, we have created an additional PGR study space in Alison House. However, study space is a finite resource and so it is very important that students are engaged in defining priorities and principles for usage. We will establish this year a PGR Spaces Group (student committee), reporting to the PGR SSLC. Students will therefore become the decision makers in relation to study space usage and protocols. The bigger challenge relates to practice-based spaces in ECA. The capital development plans for ECA will unlock some further provision here (see also Recommendation 2), but that is longer term. Discussion about opportunities for innovation including PGR spaces at EFI are ongoing. We have also since the PPR revised and improved the guidance and forms for the Postgraduate Research Expenses fund applications.</p> <p>(For wider issues of integration in research culture, see response to Recommendation 4.)</p>	<p><b>Date of completion: December 2020</b></p> <p>This point is partly responded to above – see 4.2.</p> <p>A PGR Spaces Group was constituted through the ECA PGR Committee in a/y 2019-20, but due to the pandemic this group has been inactive. Estates issues will be revisited when full and safe return to the campus is possible. See also Recommendation 6.</p>
6	<p>The panel <b>recommends</b> that ECA review all postgraduate taught and research student spaces to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spaces are of sufficient quality, consistent, available and appropriate to student need;</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing work already in embedding more student-led decision making practices (i.e. in session 2019/20)</p> <p>2022-2023, and beyond, for more</p>	<p>ECA is committed to improving all student spaces and have done and are doing so in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ECA is now (re-) establishing an ECA Space Strategy Group (first meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2019), chaired by the ECA Principal, where allocation of space, PG space issues, proposals and decisions will be high on the agenda, with oversight to address this PPR recommendation.</li> <li>• Review of PG spaces is already part of the consultation, design and proposed provision that will be implemented through ECA’s major estate development. Significant improvements in the</li> </ul>	<p><b>Date of completion: December 2020 + ongoing</b></p> <p>Since the 14-week response ECA has invested in improvements to many of our PG spaces and facilities accessed by PG students as part of wider programme of continual review and targeted investment overseen by the Space Strategy Group (SSG). Our SSG and Planning &amp; Resources Committee memberships now also includes student representatives/conveners, too. While planned progress would have been accelerated over the last year, the impact of Covid has necessarily re-prioritised our (and UoE Estates) estates and SSG focus / energy and the limited and unpredictable</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spaces are fairly distributed according to need;</li> <li>• The process of space allocation is made clear to students and is consistently applied;</li> <li>• All students have access to the space required to complete their studies.</li> </ul> <p><i>Who: ECA Principal &amp; ECA Director of Professional Services</i></p>	<p>significant estates issues</p>	<p>quality, fair distribution, and allocation of PG space will be delivered at key stages of completion over the next 3 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the meantime, ECA will continue to assess and take the opportunity to improve PG space provision as we decant and re-cant our spaces and buildings through the major development phases. An early example of this is that we have already decanted some Design programme PG studios from the Fire Station to better spaces in the NE Studio Building (NESB) and have already agreed, with input from staff and students, to move these studios one final time when we decant the NESB to their long term desired home in Evolution House.</li> <li>• We have already undertaken a review and completed in May 2019 the re-allocation of staff and PGR spaces at Alison House to ensure adequate PGR provision.</li> <li>• PGR SSLC is setting up a PGR Spaces Group (see also Recommendation 5) specifically to manage the main cross-ECA shared PGR space on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of Evolution House, and the newly-configured PGR spaces in Alison House in a consistent way. This Group will act as a pilot to inform future development of consistently applied and appropriate allocation of PGR space as we progress through the estate development and short term allocations of PG space meantime.</li> <li>• The ECA Space Strategy Group, noted above, will in 2019-20 look into whether and how PGT and PGR student cohorts might be allowed to expand their space usage during the summer period, when demand from UG cohorts is lower. This consideration will need to take into account the wider needs of academic researchers and practitioners.</li> </ul>	<p>access to campus for extended periods has slowed down our programme of ongoing upgrades and (re)-prioritisation. Nonetheless SSG has approved another range of project works which we hope to agree with UoE Estates to be carried out over the next 4-6 months. Throughout the last year we have made scores of bookable studio, desk and study space a priority for our PG students, making as much space as possible available when restriction levels have permitted this and prioritising PGR and PGT critical needs access as restrictions have tightened.</p> <p>The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in many estates projects across the University being put on hold for what appears now to be a minimum of two-five years. ECA was significantly affected by this as we were anticipating breaking ground this year with our own estates project, on which much of our strategy last year had been based. Our developing plans to address PG provision in a more transformational, coordinated manner have therefore been hampered. Nonetheless as part of ECA's recent Annual Plan and Vision refresh we have re-iterated our commitment to invest in and make progress with key aspects of the development including PG and student spaces and facilities.</p>
7	<p>The panel <b>recommends</b> consolidating emerging initiatives to develop a more distinctive and confident culture of</p>	<p>August 2021 (but ongoing as a project)</p>	<p>This relates to Recommendation 4.2 above, and the comments made there apply equally well here.</p> <p>Furthermore, ECA agrees and accepts that more needs to be done to develop confidence in the practice-based</p>	<p>As noted in relation to 4.1, practice-based research is a major focus in relation to PGR research and culture within ECA. In a/y 2020-21, all new PGR students in Art and Design are working on practice-based projects, which has accelerated discussion about the</p>

	<p>practice-based research within ECA.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> ECA Principal, ECA PGR Director and Subject Area PGR Leads</p>		<p>research-community (among staff as well as students), and certainly REF2020 is fostering an understanding of practice-based research for staff that needs to cross-fertilise similar understanding within the PGR community. This is the key area for consolidation, but it is also true that PGR students model the notion of practice-based research in new and developing ways. Therefore, as part of our strategy to foster staff-student research exchanges across ECA, this will be a particular thematic focus over the next academic year. (It should be noted that the new Principal of ECA comes from a practice-based background.)</p>	<p>best ways in which to foster and support such research.</p> <p>As the 14-week response noted, ECA’s REF2021 submission, including its environment statement, reveal the extent to which practice-based research is centrally embedded within the School. Ensuring the distinctiveness and scale of this is visible to staff and PGR students is an ongoing activity.</p>
8	<p>The panel <b>recommends</b> that ECA School management consider increasing resources within the PGO office to allow the issues to be addressed.</p> <p><b>Who:</b> ECA Director of Professional Services and ECA Senior Management Team</p>	<p>October 2019 (for foundations of the UG/PG admin support merger to be complete)</p> <p>2021-2022 for fully formed new SASS service</p>	<p>We have already undertaken a major review looking at both UG and PG support and the feasibility of a single teaching organisation, the outcome of which is to bring the UTGO and PGO together as one Student Administration and Support Service (SASS). This includes UG, PGT, PGR, and Student Support. We are in the process of implementing this major change to structure, service, ways of working and processes. Resource considerations have been assessed, and will continue to be assessed and addressed where necessary, throughout. The changes include new opportunities for development and progression within the wider team (a number of which have already resulted in internal progressions) as well as some adjustment to remits aligned to grade appropriate responsibilities and redistribution of workload and resource which, combined with the efficiency gains of rationalisation, will improve capacity and resilience across the new service. We are taking a phased approach to implementing, reviewing and bedding in these major changes, aiming toward a more fully formed long term structure and service by 2021/22.</p> <p>Two additional and major factors that will have significant bearing on our plans and future response to this recommendation will be changes to staffing, resource, location of services and work coming out of the Service Excellence Programme’s Student Administration and Support strand (see <a href="https://uoesharepoint.com/sites/ServiceExcellenceProgramme/SitePages/Student-Administration-and-Support-Plans-and-Priorities.aspx">https://uoesharepoint.com/sites/ServiceExcellenceProgramme/SitePages/Student-Administration-and-Support-Plans-and-Priorities.aspx</a>, web link)</p>	<p><b>Date of completion: Early 2020 (formation of SASS) + ongoing (as outlined below)</b></p> <p>ECA Student Administration and Support Service (SASS) development was fast tracked out of necessity early in 2020 as most staff in ECA moved to working from home (due to Covid-19). There have been substantial operational challenges during 2020 in relation to covid-related changes to supporting staff, students and provision of services.</p> <p>Most of the planned work to align ways of working across the previous UGTO/PGO (teaching admin offices) has been temporarily deprioritised. The new SASS service has also been impacted by high levels of staff absences and delays to recruitment, made further problematic by the recent UoE-level recruitment freeze. The School has not yet seen the promised positive changes as a result of SEP projects (now drawn under ART), and overall the sense is that <u>more work</u> is currently with the School, compared with previously. Likewise, the UoE-wide Student Support and PT review, which had promised a range of positive gains on the administration side, is paused.</p> <p>The school remains committed to the possibilities of bringing together UG, PGT and PGR teams to share practice and realise benefits and efficiencies of alignment. A fixed term (12 month) post is supported in the School plan to assist SASS with development</p>

			and the aligned major review of future student support and personal tutoring (see <a href="#">SharePoint site</a> , web link) and expected changes which will be implemented over the course of the next 3 years.	and implementation of more aligned services across these areas.  Progress has also been made in regard to facilitating better engagement between PGR and Research across ECA and University, as manifest in ECA's recent Annual Plan and Vision refresh. Work is ongoing to define where responsibilities lie and what training, support and additional investment may be needed and where.
	Please report on steps taken to feedback to students on the outcomes of the review	This 14-week report will be shared and discussed further at upcoming UG/PGT/PGR Committee meetings (all of which involve student representation). It will also be circulated within the PGR student committees, and will appear as an agenda item on an upcoming meeting.  Update (17 February 2021): The updates provided in the 1-year responses above will be shared with the ECA Education Committee, and the ECA Planning and Resources Committee (both of which include student representation). Content from this report will also be shared with student representatives on the ECA-wide staff-student liaison committee (ECA SSLC).		
For Year on response only	Any examples of a positive change as a result of the review	Please see the 1-year responses itemised against each Recommendation, above – there are many examples of positive change throughout (as well as notes to highlight ongoing challenges).		