

**Internal Periodic Review of:** Literatures, Languages and Cultures

**Date of review:** 13 & 14 March 2023

**Date of 14 week response:** September 7, 2023

**Date of year on response:**

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.

Recommendation no	Recommendation	Timescale for completion	Comment on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion	Completion date
1	<p>Student Support (remit item 3)</p> <p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the College works with the School to revisit proposals particularly in relation to alternative academic contacts within the new [student support] model.</p> <p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School consider if it has appropriate mechanisms for supporting students who may require more help in transitioning into University study, the Year Abroad and final year of the degree, and that students are aware of what is available to them at the earliest opportunity.</p>	19/5/2024	<p>The School notes that alternative academics contacts are not included within the new student support model, which LLC is implementing this AY23-24. Following concerns expressed in the School in discussion of the model in AY22-23 we have sought to clarify the role of cohort leads, and the remit of cohort leads, student advisors and course administrators. We are currently providing training sessions for these leads and ensuring appropriate collaboration with student support (and the new student advisers). Given concerns about the burden of enquiries, for Welcome Week and Week 1, we will offer an extensive programme drop-in sessions for students seeking various forms of assistance (including course changes), and academics will participate in this triage unit. Because this is our first year on the new student support model, we expect to review our practice across the year.</p> <p>Introduction of the cohort model provides an additional opportunity to stress transitions, and indeed key groups, such as 3<sup>rd</sup> year study/work abroad students, will have cohorts to support their particular needs. We will measure the success of these cohorts throughout the year by consulting with students and cohort leads. Future iterations of the model for AY24-25 and beyond can be developed with these identified needs in mind.</p>	
2	<p>Year Abroad</p> <p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School revisit the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences</p>	19/5/2024	<p>Work within LLC and across the LLC/SWAY interface is a major priority workstream for the School in AY23/24. Regular meetings between Head of School and Head of SWAY will be supported by detailed work on remits, roles and responsibilities. The need for</p>	

	<p>(CAHSS) workload allocation model to ensure that there is clarity of expectation for Year Abroad Co-ordinators in dealing with year abroad arrangements.</p> <p>The review team recommends that the Vice- Principal International and Head Study and Work Away consider, in consultation with the School, the business critical need for an appropriately qualified central resource to support students and staff with visa requirements for compulsory undergraduate year abroad study.</p> <p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School further ensures that students are signposted to financial support information (in relation to visa costs and health screening for example). This should happen at the earliest possible opportunity so as to aid accessibility.</p>		<p>this work has been flagged to, and is in turn expected by, Deputy Director Students and CAHSS.</p> <p>The School will revisit an incomplete previous workstream on reconciling and establishing clear remits and expectations for YA Co-ordinators. If there are implications for the current WAM tariff that can be taken into consideration, however we prefer in the first instance to ensure equity within and between the roles rather than seek a change to the CAHSS WAM model.</p> <p>SWAY has reported that they are not insured to offer visa application advice and support and that despite regular liaison across the sector there are no signs that this is affordable or practicable. However SWAY have reported to LLC that they plan to offer more generic advice in relation to particular destinations, where possible, establishing a central web resources; they will continue to work with consular bodies (e.g. Campus France. the Spanish Consulate) and they have delivered information sessions for students traveling to those destinations. Unfortunately, no such partnership has materialised with Italy (also one of our most popular destinations). Because work visas have particular complications, with employers abroad not always having the same support mechanisms as universities, and often not understanding all rules and regulations, it may become the case that more students need to be steered toward study abroad.</p> <p>The School will liaise with SWAY to ensure that information provided from both units clearly signposts issues such as visa costs and health screenings. In discussion with SWAY it has been noted that the introduction of Turing funding in AY22-23 created specific uncertainties and delays. Longer experience with Turing and the UoE ‘underwrite’ of stipendiary support for mandatory study and work away is already leading to improvements in timely payments to students, and greater clarity in communications.</p>	
3	<p>Assessment and Feedback (remit item 2)</p> <p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School expand upon this in consultation with students to develop consistency and clarity in marking criteria and their application. The School should consider harnessing existing expertise within the School and providing</p>	19/5/2024	<p>Due to the Marking and Assessment Boycott, some good progress on marking criteria has been stalled, but it will be a key priority for the School, led through the Learning and Teaching Committee, in AY23-24. Following some robust conversations in AY22-23, all subject areas are now working on developing marking criteria. One acknowledged challenge is that marking criteria for language assessments will need to differ considerably from those for</p>	

	<p>opportunities for sharing practice across the School. In developing marking criteria it may be helpful to consider employability and the kinds of skills the School wants its students to develop.</p> <p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School consider assessment types, the assessment load and deadlines, with reference to differentiation in respect of student needs and consistency of their experience.</p>		<p>literature and culture courses. Our expectation is that best practice will be shared via Learning and Teaching Committee. Our Board of Studies paperwork has now been updated so that all new course proposals will be required to specify the applicable marking criteria.</p> <p>We recognise that there is over-assessment in some parts of the school. This has impact on student experience but we also see the deleterious impact on academic and professional services capacity. As such this has been identified as both a Teaching and Learning and a Resource issue, requiring a joined-up approach between Head of School (supported by School Executive) and the Director of Learning and Teaching (supported by Learning and Teaching Committee members). In AY23-24 we will raise awareness of these issues, and continue to scrutinise any courses presented for approval. We aim to initiate fuller curriculum review, capacity and relevant data allowing, to identify courses where multiple assessments are meeting the same learning outcome and/or where assessment structure results in excessive demand on students, teaching staff, and members of the Teaching Office.</p>	
4	<p>Postgraduate Tutors</p> <p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School consider whether it is content that there is parity of esteem and expectation in recognising the value that postgraduate tutors bring to learning and teaching.</p> <p>The School should review the postgraduate tutor job description and job segments with College HR colleagues and/or the College WAM Lead and ensure that the workload allocation model tariffs are appropriately applied with reference to the marking of assessments. The School should also consider the apparent disparity between staff tutors who can and do run office hours, and postgraduate tutors who cannot; this risks impacting the student and staff experience.</p>	19/5/2024	<p>Postgraduate tutor roles are reviewed annually in advance of contract renewals, through discussion between School HR team, the Director of Learning and Teaching and with input from the broader School Leadership Team (Heads of Subject). In AY22-23, in addition to offering a paid training for new tutors last year, LLC also offered a second paid workshop where January-start tutors could learn from experienced tutors and best practices could be shared. We have identified that in AY22-23 there were some mistakes in communication so not all tutors received all briefings.</p> <p>Review of these roles ahead of AY23-24 has meant that, in line with College guidelines, more citizenship hours have been provided, which will enable tutors to offer more contact points with individual students (meetings or “office hours”). We have reviewed the marking tariffs and have confirmed that they conform to College guidelines. As part of new tutor training (and the January full-tutor workshop, which we will repeat this year), the L+T Director will offer concrete strategies for maximising marking efficiency and making best use of internal comments and overall feedback.</p>	

			<p>The School will continue to review modes of support for guaranteed hours tutors, and will include a discussion of the key issue raised by the IPR of ‘parity of esteem and expectation’ in an appropriate committee agenda in AY23-24. However we note the resource constraints which mean that we are unable to include more hours for student contact outside of tutorials, and that estate limitations make drop-in office hours unachievable.</p>	
5	<p><b>Management Structures</b></p> <p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School consults with staff to establish whether clear decision-making structures are in place to support a sense of accountability from teaching staff. There may be opportunities to assess the efficacy of management structures in order to achieve transparency of communication, closing the feedback loop on actions taken and passing on clarity to students.</p>	19/5/2024	<p>The School Management team held its first ever ‘away day’ in June 2023 and in light of the IPR report, a session was focused on management structures. A subsequent review of School management committees has taken place, and a new model is in place for AY23-24 aiming to adopt a more strategic overview, with more agile communication between teams, swifter follow-up on critical issues, and more accountability for progress on major projects.</p> <p>The Head of School will work with all line managers across the School (not just Heads of Subject as in previous years) to emphasise accountability and the importance of ensuring reporting lines are clear to all staff.</p> <p>We will review the clarity of communications to students in relation to raising issues and concerns, ensuring that this refers both to ‘close’ contacts (reporting to Head of Subject or Director of Teaching in relevant area) and to School level, to ensure multiple options are available.</p> <p>The School notes that action will be undertaken during AY23-24 to begin to tackle some longstanding cultural issues in the School with the aim of increasing a sense of joined-up decision making between subject area and School level in relation to both staffing and the management of learning and teaching. However the School notes that the current approach to resource allocation in the University, and long-term under-investment by CAHSS in LLC professional services teams, represents a considerable barrier to identifying effective solutions.</p>	
6	<p><b>Curriculum</b></p> <p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School reflects afresh on the broader opportunities available in the</p>	19/5/2024	<p>We note that while Curriculum Transformation remains an exciting prospect, we do not yet have a clear signal about its size, scope, timeline, and resource. Key role holders in LLC have regularly attended CTP workshops—most recently, one on PGT—and we</p>	

	Curriculum Transformation Programme and how it engages with this. There may be scope for the School to have more control of its portfolio of programmes and it was clear to the review team that staff have a lot of good ideas to share in relation to curriculum transformation.		remain keen to see how it can enable us to think about things like student transitions, challenge courses, curriculum review, and possibly even degree simplifications (given the large number of joint degrees we currently have—whose administration is time-consuming and complex). We have a member of the central CTP team now in a secondment with LLC, and her business analytics skills will help us to identify areas where efficiency can be improved, processes streamlined, and decision-making informed and empowered. LLC will continue to contribute actively to CTP, although at the current date we have major concerns that the resources required to implement current plans are not available, and that the resource implications of proposed changes pose an unacceptably high risk.	
7	<p>Student Voice</p> <p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School consider the range of opportunities for engaging with, compensating, and recognising the contribution of its Student Reps. Student Rep recruitment and training is supported by Edinburgh University Students' Association and there may be avenues for the School to further its links with the community and increase uptake in these roles.</p>	1 Year	The Director of Learning and Teaching met with Robin Gay from EUSA in June to discuss steps forward. EUSA does not support paying reps, and in any case, we won't really have the resource for that. What we discussed instead is identifying better ways to recruit and retain student reps. The new cohort events, which will commence in welcome week, will offer us an early opportunity to recruit reps. And our strategy will be to retain those reps, where possible, year-to-year, meaning that, for example, a rep starting in Y1 can continue to Year 2 and hit the ground running in Year 2 by accessing training immediately rather than in Week 5 or 6 of the term. We will also continue to review the role of reps, identifying areas where their time might be saved and where their use is most critical to the certification of student voice within key School initiatives, committees, and decisions. Our goal will be to make the cohorts integral to this process, as they will provide the reps readymade opportunities to hear from their peers.	
	Please report on steps taken to feedback to students on the outcomes of the review		Because I was working on this over the summer, when students are away, we haven't yet engaged significantly with students but will do so this semester through our student-staff liaison committees at subject area level. And when we have new reps in place, we will communicate findings to school-level reps to feed down to subject area reps.	
For Year on response only	Any examples of a positive change as a result of the review			