

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Periodic Review

14 week response report

**Internal Periodic Review of:** School of Mathematics UG & PGT

**Date of review:** 27-28 March 2023

**Date of 14 week response:** 17 October 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><b>Assessment &amp; Feedback</b></p> <p>The review team <b>recommend</b>, as a priority matter, that the School review the thread of assessment throughout programmes to relieve the pressure on students (where appropriate) avoid the clustering of deadlines, and ensure that the credits to course hours ratio is proportionate</p> <p>The review team <b>recommend</b> that the timetabling service provide schedules in a timely manner, to allow Schools to better plan and communicate with students about examinations.</p>	AY 2023/24  Ongoing	<p>Staff and student workload due to continuous assessment will be addressed systematically in the longer term as part of our School's ongoing review of our pre-Honours curriculum. In the short term, all course organisers have been requested to carefully review the amount of continuous assessment given to their students and the continuous assessment deadlines. Where appropriate, the amount of continuous assessment is to be reduced to ensure that the credits to course hours ratio is proportionate and deadlines are to be adjusted to avoid clustering.</p> <p>A review of the exams process has been undertaken following the August 2023 Resit diet. This has identified the key processes, system and wider challenges that impact the delivery of the exam timetable. A range of short and longer term enhancements have been identified, including recommendations for both the Exams team and for Schools/Deaneries. These recommendations will be presented to the Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group in November 2023. While some changes are already in progress for December 2023 diet, others are longer term objectives. The service will review the impact of incremental changes in January 2024. A new system for exam timetabling is currently in implementation. This system has the ability for "auto-scheduling." This <b>may</b> reduce the time needed to deliver an exam timetable in the longer term.</p>	

2	<p><b>Remit item 2: Best use of technology</b></p> <p>The review team <b>recommend</b> that the School roll out their technology enhanced curriculum plans, once developed, in their own timeframe, whilst working in line with the known principles and guidance of CTP.</p> <p>The review team <b>recommend</b> that the School include standard archetype course models, utilising STACK where appropriate.</p> <p>The review team also <b>recommend</b> that a role, or space in the existing WAM tariff for an academic member of staff, is created to lead on this and is well supported by School management.</p> <p>The review team <b>recommend</b> that a training and learning process is in place to facilitate competency in digital pedagogies and to encourage knowledge sharing amongst staff.</p> <p>The review team <b>recommend</b> that the School reviews its equipment and facilities to make sure hybrid teaching and the proposed technology enhanced curriculum is properly equipped (in particular, lecture capture).</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>AY 2023/24</p> <p>AY 2023/24</p>	<p>The School's technology enhanced curriculum plans are currently being shaped as part of our School's ongoing review of our pre-Honours curriculum.</p> <p>Pre-pandemic the School had well-developed archetype course models. We intend, through the parallel School reviews of pre-honours and the University curriculum transformation project, return to their systematic use through the School. While we expect there will be some exceptions (e.g. project modules, and modules with placements such as mathematics education) standard archetype course models do provide welcome consistency to students. During the pandemic we made a much wider use of online assessment, including STACK and other tools, based on experience with courses such as Fundamentals of Algebra and Calculus. These approaches to teaching will have enduring value as part of a balance of different practical methods.</p> <p>The School has one academic member devoted 50% to writing STACK questions, and another as Learning Designer. Further development of standard archetype course models will involve appropriate staff development and follow-up.</p> <p>An academic staff member will lead on staff development in the School. He is preparing a plan for the School Management committee, which is expected to include plans for staff development of both digital pedagogies and formal/informal mechanisms to encourage knowledge sharing amongst staff.</p> <p>This issue is under review and there is a paper on lecture recordings, including the suitability of equipment currently being prepared for our School Teaching Committee. Equipment for lecture capture will remain a University policy/practice with standard teaching room setups. Possibly, more than this might be needed for certain MSc programmes (where distance participation is specifically encouraged).</p>	
3	<b>Employment of Tutors</b>			

	<p>The review team strongly <b>recommend</b> that the School reviews the tutoring commitment required for the next academic year to ensure that tutoring is properly resourced.</p> <p>The review team also <b>recommend</b> that the School develop a long-term plan for their use of tutors, both to ensure appropriate resource is in place and to avoid undue pressure on the Teaching Office as it plans for each year ahead.</p>	<p>AY 2023/24</p> <p>AY 2023/24</p>	<p>The way the School deals with tutoring has evolved over the past academic year. To meet current needs, we created the 1 year, Grade 6 position of Full Time (FT) University Tutors. Six such appointments have been made for the academic year 2023-24. It is anticipated that another round of appointments will be required in future years.</p> <p>An overhaul our tutor management system is in progress. Marking hours for tutors were previously out of line with workload, so this has now been corrected. Tutor training has been improved with a focus on addressing issues that surfaced in the previous year, and all tutors now undergo a review/peer-review process each year. The tutor café has been introduced, where the tutors can discuss issues around their tutoring and receive advice. The issue of pressure on the Mathematics Teaching Office due to tutor management is currently being reviewed. The possibilities of a new appointment and/or a redistribution of administrative responsibilities are being considered.</p>	
4	<p><b>Curriculum mapping</b></p> <p>The review team <b>recommend</b> the School undertakes a review of the co-ordination of delivery, especially at postgraduate taught level, to consider mapping of prerequisites across courses &amp; programmes.</p>	<p>AY 2023/24</p>	<p>In the short term the School Teaching Committee will ask Programme Directors to review course descriptions and requirements to ensure that pre-requisite requirements across courses are appropriate, coherent, and complete. In the longer term, a working group began meeting in September 2023 to review our pre-Honours curriculum, which will necessarily involve examination of these considerations at that level of study, which will in turn require a review of the coordination of course delivery at higher levels.</p>	
5	<p><b>Remit item 1: Student Employability</b></p> <p>The review team <b>recommend</b> that the School brings conversations around employability further into the curriculum.</p> <p>The review team also <b>recommend</b> that the School, in order to better understand industry requirements and to</p>	<p>AY 2023/24</p> <p>AY 2023/24</p>	<p>Skills and career development, employability and exposure to industry are currently being considered as part of the School's ongoing review of our pre-Honours curriculum. Matt Vickers our careers consultant delivers talks to all new mathematics students during freshers' week and to all year 1 students in semester 2; in these talks he highlights the range of services provided by the Career Service, especially those targeted at mathematics students. Also, our academic cohort leads are encouraged to discuss employability issues their cohorts.</p> <p>The School now has an Industrial Advisory Board which exists to facilitate liaison between the School's teaching and staff and the private sector. The Board comprises industrial,</p>	

	<p>build industry partnerships, create an industrial liaison board and involve the Student Voice in this activity.</p> <p>The review team <b>recommend</b> that Student Systems and Insights work with the Careers Service to develop a data management system that allows for better targeted support for students.</p>	Ongoing	<p>academic and student representatives; it is proposed that student representatives could continue on the board for up to 3 years after their studies.</p> <p>Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling will work with the School and the Careers Service to understand in more detail their requirements in this area. There is currently no resource to undertake this work within SAIM so funding would need to be secured, or the work prioritised against other planned work, if significant development is required.</p>	
6	<p><b>Recruitment / pre-arrival</b></p> <p>The review team <b>recommend</b> that space be created in the WAM tariff for an academic roles' involvement in UG recruitment, and work with the relevant Professional Service staff on recruitment and admission activities.</p> <p>The review team <b>recommend</b> that the School review communication of material with PGT students at pre-arrival stage and include details of the list of software to be used so that students are better prepared.</p>	<p>AY 2023/24</p> <p>AY 2023/24</p>	<p>We plan to incorporate responsibility for UG recruitment into the Director of Teaching team, giving overall oversight to the Director of Teaching, and workload allocation for one of the Deputy Directors of Teaching for the operational requirements of this work.</p> <p>Following the full implementation of the new student support model in 2023-2024, the Director of Teaching, Head of Student Services, and appropriate additional colleagues will review in Semester 1 of 2023-2024 all pre-arrival and welcome week activities across the whole taught programme. A review of communications to PGT students, including about software requirements, will be an explicit item.</p>	
7	<p><b>EDI Development</b></p> <p>The review team <b>recommend</b> that the School and College allocate resource to EDI development in order to best support ongoing work and activities.</p>	Ongoing	<p>There was a review of EDI in the College led by the Dean of Systematic Inclusion, which was discussed a few months ago by the College Strategy and Management Committee. As a result of this the College is investing in a new full-time position in the College Office to support ongoing work and activities in EDI. This is not yet advertised but should be soon, and so will certainly be in place in the near future.</p>	
	Please report on steps taken to feedback to students on the outcomes of the review	The outcomes of the review will be presented and discussed at the meetings of the School Teaching Committee which has student representation.		
For Year on response only	Any examples of a positive change as a result of the review			