

**The University of Edinburgh**

**Internal Periodic Review**

**Business School**

**Postgraduate Provision**

**6-7 February 2023**

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## Executive summary

This report comprises the outcomes from the internal review of postgraduate provision in the Business School.

The review team found that the School has effective management of the quality of the student learning experience, academic standards, and enhancement and good practice.

The report provides commendations on the School's provision, recommendations for enhancement that the School will be asked to report progress on to the Senate Quality Assurance Committee, and suggestions on how to support developments.

## Key Commendations

The review team commends the School, and in particular Inger Seiferheld and team, on its exemplary approach to the review. The review team was impressed by the high quality report, the organisation of the review days, and the openness of the large number of staff and students who participated.

The review team commended the School on the vibrant sense of community that has been nurtured between students, and learning and teaching staff. The review team was particularly impressed by the coaching culture (a very strong attribute for the School and exemplar for the wider University) and the exemplar system of support for TAs (especially the targeted investment in and development of recruitment and mentoring). Detailed commendations are included in the report.

## Key Recommendations

The key recommendations identified by the review team for the School to prioritise are:

- **The School implements a support framework for postgraduate research students.** This systematic approach should include: a formal process for recording meetings between postgraduate research students and supervisors; an informal 10 week progression review from the start of the PhD as standard to ensure that students have settled-in and established good working relationships with the supervisory team; and a review of the operation of PhD progression board meetings to formally include provision of a "safe space" in which the student can discuss the relationship with the supervisors.
- **The School develops a formative feedback/forward strategy at programme and course level for each student.** The strategy should introduce explicit and embedded opportunities for students to submit formative assessment tasks across programmes (with at least one per course) that does not attract a summative mark but does ensure staff provide early feedback to the student before they submit summative assessments. These should be early in the course, and designed into the course to ensure students practice the final form of summative assessment and can make a judgement on how they are doing.

## Commendations, recommendations and suggestions

### Commendations:

Key strengths and areas of positive practice for sharing more widely across the institution.

No	Commendation	Section in report
1	The review team <b>commends</b> the School, and in particular Inger Seiferheld and team, on its exemplary approach to the review. The review team was impressed by the high quality report, the organisation of the review days, and the openness of the large number of staff and students who participated.	Section A
2	The review team <b>commends</b> the School on the initiative to develop and expand the postgraduate research offering and to increase accessibility with the transition to the integrated PhD model.	Section B1
3	The review team <b>commends</b> the School on the highly impressive coaching culture, a very strong attribute for the School and exemplar for the wider University.	Section B 2.1
3	The review team <b>commends</b> the School on the positive engagement with the new system of student support and in particular the systematic support for students of concern.	Section B 2.3
4	The review team <b>commends</b> the School on its approach to communications to students, specifically the manner in which it identified the issues and directed resources to meet the challenge. The students who participated in the review felt that the School's communications to students are clear and well organised, with particular praise given to the Student Development Team Newsletter.	Section B 2.3
5	The review team <b>commends</b> the School on the development of the programme Town Hall Meeting (THM).	Section B 2.4
6	The review team <b>commends</b> the School on the vibrant sense of community that has been nurtured between students, and learning and teaching staff. The review team was also particularly impressed that students located away from 29 Buccleuch Place still felt strongly connected to the School.	Section B 2.6
7	The review team <b>commends</b> the School on its exemplar system of support for TAs, particularly the targeted investment in and development of recruitment and mentoring. The student TAs that the review team met recognised the career development benefits of these teaching opportunities and welcomed both the experience and financial support provided by the work.	Section B 2.7

**Recommendations:**

Areas for development and enhancement (progress to be reported).

Priority	Recommendation	Section in report	Responsibility of
1	The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School explores and adopt a broader range of assessment types, drawing on its connections with business and industry, to ensure that it continues to strike an appropriate balance between academic and practical assessments.	Section B 2.2	School
2	The review team <b>recommends</b> the School develops a formative feedback/forward strategy at programme and course level for each student. The strategy should introduce explicit and embedded opportunities for students to submit formative assessment tasks (e.g. early drafts, a mid-term test, mock exam, a draft essay structure, quiz) across programmes (with at least one per course) that does not attract a summative mark but does ensure staff provide early feedback to the student before they submit summative assessments. These should be early in the course, and designed into the course to ensure students practice the final form of summative assessment and can make a judgement on how they are doing.	Section B 2.2	School
3	The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School implements a support framework for postgraduate research students. This systematic approach should include a formal process for recording meetings between postgraduate research students and supervisors. Students should be required to write-up a brief summary note after each meeting, covering key points of discussion and any agreed actions, which is then checked by the supervisor before it is uploaded to EUCLID. An informal 10 week	Section B 2.3	School

	<p>progression review from the start of the PhD should be held as standard to ensure that students have settled-in and established good working relationships with the supervisory team. The meeting also gives an early academic "check point" to ensure that the student has an appropriate understanding of the project and of what is required of them. The School should also review the operation of the annual "2-to-1" PhD progression meetings to ensure that a formal and systematic "safe space" is included to provide the student with an opportunity to discuss the relationship with each supervisor.</p>		
4	<p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the University (in particular the central Student Experience related areas in partnership with Communications and Marketing) consults Schools and Colleges on the timing and tone of general central communications to students in order to ensure that information is accurate and relevant. Furthermore, consideration should be given to a standardised schedule of regular University-wide communications linked to, and considerate of, local School and College requirements and the option of allowing local areas to adapt and then cascade central communications to local student cohorts.</p>	Section B 2.3	Deputy Secretary Students and Head of Internal Communications and Marketing
5	<p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School communicates the opportunities and funding available to research students to attend national and international conferences and actively encourages them to participate.</p>	Section B 2.6	School
6	<p>The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School provides more regular opportunities for research students to hear about the latest research interests of academic staff and also opportunities to contribute to this work.</p>	Section B 2.6	School

7	The review team <b>recommends</b> that the School signposts the different pathways for TA's to gain teaching accreditation with Advance HE (EdTA, PGCAP, direct accreditation) and offers practical support. Whilst this may not suit all TA's, teaching accreditation provides value to their contribution to the School and has become an important factor for future employment.	Section B 2.7	School
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### Suggestions:

For noting (progress reporting is not required).

No	Suggestion	Section in report
1	The review team <b>suggests</b> the School considers ways to encourage Business students to take course options outside the School and to allow non-Business students the opportunity to access School courses.	Section B 2.1
2	The review team <b>suggests</b> that the School focuses its 20 credit courses in Semester 1 (to allow a better spread of workload for students to adjust to in their first semester) and its 10 credit courses in Semester 2 (where the students have adjusted to the requirements of their programmes).	Section B 2.2
3	The review team <b>suggests</b> the School develops marking guidance (including exemplars for each grade descriptor) to help ensure that feedback is clear and understandable to all students.	Section B 2.2
4	The review team <b>suggests</b> the School ensures that specific course requirements, in particular any prerequisite knowledge or skills, are communicated clearly to applicants prior to entry. If certain skills (for example Python programming skills) are recommended (or desired) but not a barrier to entry, the School should provide additional development opportunities to allow students to develop their competency to the appropriate level.	Section B 2.3
5	The review team <b>suggests</b> that the School share good practice on THM timings/frequency to encourage more consistent practice across programmes and improve experience for all students.	Section B 2.4

6	The review team encourages the School to build on its initiatives to decolonise the curriculum and <b>suggests</b> that it seeks opportunities to engage with related University level activities (including consideration of female perspectives and scholars) in order to share experience and learn from other initiatives across the institution.	Section B 2.5
7	The review team <b>suggests</b> that the School explore ways of tracking/monitoring that new PGR supervisors complete the required online training course available on LEARN and that experienced supervisors regularly update their training at least every 5 years as per University requirements.	Section B 2.7
8	The review team <b>suggests</b> that the School consider options for providing TAs with a formal feedback mechanism in relation to Course Organisers.	Section B 2.7
9	The review team <b>suggests</b> that the School continues to work with the College to seek new opportunities to access teaching and social space across the University estate.	Section B 2.8



## Section A – Introduction

### Scope of review

The Internal Periodic Review of the Business School in 2022-23 consisted of:

- The University's remit for internal review
- The subject specific remit items for the review:
  - Student Communications
  - Programme design changes
- The Reflective Report and additional material provided in advance of the review
- The meeting of the review team including consideration of further material
- The final report produced by the review team
- Action by the School and others to whom recommendations were remitted following the review

### Review Team Members

Convener: **Professor Matt Bailey**, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

External Member: **Professor Sally Everett**, King's College London

External Member: **Dr Sara Maioli**, Newcastle University

Internal Member: **Dr Anja Klein**, School of Divinity

Student Member: **Eddie Ungless**, PhD student, School of Informatics

Review Administrators: **Brian Connolly** and **Susan Hunter**, Academic Services

### The School

The Business School is one of 11 academic Schools and 1 Centre in the College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences. It is a 'full-service' business school, offering programmes at undergraduate, MSc, MBA and PhD and executive education levels. The School is led by the Dean supported by the Director of Faculty, the Director of Professional Services (DoPS), the School Executive (SE) and the International Advisory Board. The SE membership includes the Director of Faculty, the Heads of our six academic Groups, the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Directors, the Director of Engagement and the DoPS.

### Physical location and summary of facilities

The School is located at 29 Buccleuch Place.

### Date of previous review

9-10 November 2016.

### Reflective Report

The report was prepared by Inger Seiferheld, with contributions from the following:

- Members of the School Executive
- Members of the Admissions, Marketing & Alumni team
- Members of the Research & PhD Support team
- Members of the Teaching Operations team
- Members of the Executive Development team
- Members of the Student Development team
- The Quality & Accreditations team
- PGT and PGR Programme Reps

The review team **commends** the School, and in particular Inger Seiferheld and team, on its exemplary approach to the review. The review team was impressed by the high quality report, the organisation of the review days, and the openness of the large number of staff and students who participated.

## Section B – Main report

### 1 Strategic overview

The University of Edinburgh Business School is a ‘full-service’ business school, offering programmes at undergraduate, MSc, MBA and PhD and executive education levels. The School is led by the Dean supported by the Director of Faculty, the Director of Professional Services (DoPS), the School Executive and the International Advisory Board. School Executive (SE) membership includes the Director of Faculty, the Heads of the six academic Groups, the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Directors, the Director of Engagement and the DoPS.

The School provides a range of postgraduate programmes at MSc (taught and by research), MBA and PhD levels. Since the last review there have been significant changes to the content of the programme portfolio. To streamline the presentation of specific training requirements (and for marketing purposes) the Doctoral programme has been separated out into three strands: Accounting, Finance, and Management (each with a recommended foundation of taught courses). The PhD Financial Technology has also been added and will be followed by the PhD in Business Economics and the PhD in Management Science and Analytics in 2023/24. Several changes have also been made to the postgraduate taught programme portfolio.

The School collaborates with the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) on the MSc Creative Industries and the MSc Service Management and Design but these programmes are ‘owned’ by the EFI. MSc in Finance, Technology and Policy is the first programme that was developed under the EFI auspices also involving the School of Informatics (one core course and up to two electives) but is currently delivered within the Business School.

The review team noted the School’s plan to launch an integrated PhD programme model (1+3) in 2024/25 at which point it is expected that approximately 75% of students will enter onto the integrated programme and 25% will enter on a traditional 3-year programme (contingent on evidence of sufficient research training). This move is driven by the need to ensure standards in both training provision and PhDs/associated publications that will allow graduates to be competitive in the job market (particularly those with the ambition of an academic career). The School has hopes that the integrated model will also help to build a stronger community within a given year’s cohort and support Widening Participation and Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity objectives by removing the MSc entry expense/barrier. The review team **commends** the School on the initiative to develop and expand the postgraduate research offering and to increase accessibility with the transition to the integrated PhD model.

### 2 Enhancing the student experience

#### 2.1 The approach to enhancing Learning and Teaching

The School promotes a personalised approach to skills development and employability as central to its approach to learning and teaching. A culture of professional coaching has been nurtured to create an environment where students are empowered to take accountability for their own development and to support them to become more successful in their professional and personal lives. The

School's coaching provision (embedded in the MBA but also via the Edinburgh Award and careers coaching) facilitates self-awareness, accountability for goal setting, action and reflection to improve performance. The review team noted feedback from employers on the job-readiness of the School's graduates and from students on how empowering their Edinburgh Business School experience has been. The review team **commends** the School on the highly impressive coaching culture, a very strong attribute for the School and exemplar for the wider University.

The School has recently completed the transition to a 10/20 credit structure at postgraduate taught level. This change was undertaken to align with the University's new Curriculum Framework which aims to facilitate sharing of courses across Schools with standard units of credit for taught courses. However, the School acknowledges that opening its courses to non-Business School students is a challenge due to the constraint on teaching space which has already forced it to place limits on course size. A key priority for the School is to keep postgraduate taught teaching within the School estate in order to nurture a coherent student cohort identity and build a sense of community, particularly in Semester 1. To manage the uncertainty in student numbers, the School has strengthened the use of pre-requisites and co-requisites where appropriate, and introduced a cap on student numbers, where there is a pedagogical rationale to run a smaller class (e.g. industry projects) and/or a significant risk of demand outside the core programmes that cannot be accommodated. The review team noted the benefits of students broadening their educational experience by exploring course options outside their main field of study. For Business students in particular, exposure to courses in for example modern languages or philosophy and ethics could enrich their educational experience and have a positive impact on their future careers. The review team **suggests** the School considers ways to encourage Business students to take course options outside the School and to allow non-Business students the opportunity to access School courses.

## 2.2 Assessment and Feedback

The transition to a 10/20 credit structure has increased complexity for students in relation to course length, workload, and assessment. To manage this increased complexity the School implemented a new postgraduate taught assessment model linking course credit with assessment and contact hours to maintain a broadly consistent experience for students taking different credit courses. This approach to streamline assessment aligns with the University's new principles for assessment and feedback.

The students who the review team met raised concerns in relation to the timing of assessments. The students felt that some courses seemed to pack too much material within the 5 weeks teaching blocks for 10 credit course and they had too little time to digest the material and prepare for the assessment. This is particularly pronounced in Semester 1 for many of the international students as it is their first experience of the UK higher education system. The review team **suggests** that the School focuses its 20 credit courses in Semester 1 (to allow a better spread of workload for students to adjust to in their first semester) and its 10 credit courses in Semester 2 (where the students have adjusted to the requirements of their programmes). There was also general feeling among the students that the School's current range of assessment types, especially essay based assessment, is not particularly relevant to careers outwith academia. The students would like

more assessments that directly test the real-world business skills that most of them will use during the course of their careers. The review team **recommends** that the School explores and adopt a broader range of assessment types, drawing on its connections with business and industry, to ensure that it continues to strike an appropriate balance between academic and practical assessments.

The School strives to ensure that feedback is provided on course assessments within 15 working days, in line with the University's Taught Assessment Regulations. However, some of the students that the review team met raised concerns that feedback on assessments took too long to come back to be implemented on the next piece of coursework. The review team also noted that a formative feedback event is provided on all courses (in that all students are offered an appointment to see their Course Organiser for individual feedback) but this did not necessarily entail that individual feedback was provided to each student to allow them to reflect constructively on their learning and improve their performance prior to summative assessment. The review team **recommends** the School develops a formative feedback/forward strategy at programme and course level for each student. The strategy should introduce explicit and embedded opportunities for students to submit formative assessment tasks (e.g. early drafts, a mid-term test, mock exam, a draft essay structure, quiz) across programmes (with at least one per course) that does not attract a summative mark but does ensure staff provide early feedback to the student before they submit summative assessments. These should be early in the course, and designed into the course to ensure students practice the final form of summative assessment and can make a judgement on how they are doing. Feedback could be in the form of written or recorded audio feedback (which can be used to mark large groups relatively quickly) and consideration should be given to mapping when students can expect to receive feedback. Peer and self-assessment is also appropriate if a clear marking rubric is provided supported by whole class feedback. The review team acknowledges the challenges of providing individual feedback to the School's larger student cohorts but feedback was a significant issue for the students that the review team met during the course of the review.

The students who the review team met raised concerns regarding the timeliness of feedback but also in relation to the clarity of the language used by staff and the confused nature of the marking scheme. The timeliness of feedback was noted as important not just so that students can make improvements to their performance but also so that international students have the results and progression evidence that they require for visa or funding deadlines. International students in particular found the marking scheme confusing and lacking clarity, especially in relation to the language employed by staff in feedback. For example, the term 'excellent' is routinely used to describe marks ranging from 70% and above but this is unhelpfully vague if they are trying to understand what differentiates a piece of work receiving a mark of 70% from another awarded 80%. Students want the language staff use to feedback to them to be precise and consistent so that they can understand what they need to do to improve their performance. Fundamentally students regard this as an issue of transparency and fairness. They want to be able to confidently compare marks awarded across courses and programmes in order to gauge their progress relative to their past performance and that of their peers. The review team **suggests** the School develops marking guidance (including exemplars for each grade descriptor) to help ensure that feedback is clear and understandable to all students.

## 2.3 Supporting students in their learning

The University began the phased transition to a new system of Student Support in September 2022. The School has engaged positively with this major new institutional priority, with all its postgraduate taught students included in the initial phase. This also coincided with the merger of the School's undergraduate and postgraduate taught support teams into the new Teaching Operations Team, which has aided the transition. A key element of the School's approach to student support has been the development of the Case Management system. To provide enhanced support for students of concern a Case Management meeting is held every week, bringing together academic and professional services leadership to consider issues in a case-by-case approach. Follow-up actions are taken after every meeting encompassing a wide range of mental health and wellbeing support. Students in need of this enhanced support are identified either via Special Circumstances escalations or meetings with Personal Tutors or the Senior Tutor, with high risk cases escalated to Programme Directors. The School evaluates the impact of the approach by analysing data on referrals from Wellbeing Services and the Case Management list, where a note is kept for each student to document their evolution, the actions taken, and responses met. The review team **commends** the School on the positive engagement with the new system of student support and in particular the systematic support for students of concern.

The review team noted that the School has implemented changes to provide extra support for postgraduate research students by allowing them the opportunity to raise issues with a person from outside their Subject Group which they might not wish to discuss with their Supervisor. However, the students that the review team met did not feel that they have access to a confidential, safe space for them to feedback on their supervisory relationship. Furthermore, as there is no formal requirement to record discussions at supervisory meetings, students and supervisors can often have a significantly different understanding as to what actions have been agreed. The review team **recommends** that the School implements a support framework for postgraduate research students. This systematic approach should include a formal process for recording meetings between postgraduate research students and supervisors. Students should be required to write-up a brief summary note after each meeting, covering key points of discussion and any agreed actions, which is then checked by the supervisor before it is uploaded to EUCLID. An informal 10 week progression review from the start of the PhD should be held as standard to ensure that students have settled-in and established good working relationships with the supervisory team. The meeting also gives an early academic "check point" to ensure that the student has an appropriate understanding of the project and of what is required of them. The School should also review the operation of the annual "2-to-1" PhD progression meetings to ensure that a formal and systematic "safe space" is included to provide the student with an opportunity to discuss the relationship with each supervisor.

The School invited the review panel to consider both School and University level communications to students with a view to the volume of information disseminated, the channels used, and the manner and timeliness of communications. The School has implemented changes to the way it communicates to students with a communication manager and officer as well as a digital marketing officer recruited to a dedicated Admissions, Marketing, Communications and Alumni Team. The team was tasked with the development of a strategic approach to the School's

student communications, and is also responsible for supporting other staff within the School who have communication as part of their job remit. The review team **commends** the School on its approach to communications to students, specifically the manner in which it identified the issues and directed resources to meet the challenge. The students who participated in the review felt that the School's communications to students are clear and well organised, with particular praise given to the Student Development Team Newsletter.

The School raised concerns about University level communications to students, particularly in regard to accuracy. The School cited instances where its staff have had to mitigate the negative impact of University level communications which were inappropriate for its student population. The students and staff who the review team met were in agreement that the University's structured approach to pre-arrival and induction communications worked particularly well. The review team acknowledges that communication with students once matriculated tends to be complex because it involves a diverse range of staff across academic and professional areas. However, lessons could be learned from the way the University has strategically resourced and organised its pre-arrival and induction communications to students. The review team **recommends** that the University (in particular the central Student Experience related areas in partnership with Communications and Marketing) consults Schools and Colleges on the timing and tone of general central communications to students in order to ensure that information is accurate and relevant. Furthermore, consideration should be given to a standardised schedule of regular University-wide communications linked to, and considerate of, local School and College requirements and the option of allowing local areas to adapt and then cascade central communications to local student cohorts.

Some of the students who met the review team felt underprepared for the more technical aspects of their courses due to confusing communications from the School as to the specific skills that would be required for each course (for example Python programming skills). The review team **suggests** the School ensures that specific course requirements, in particular any prerequisite knowledge or skills, are communicated clearly to applicants prior to entry. If certain skills (for example Python programming skills) are recommended (or desired) but not a barrier to entry, the School should provide additional development opportunities to allow students to develop their competency to the appropriate level.

## 2.4 Listening to and responding to the Student Voice

The students that the review team spoke to felt listened to and generally happy with the support provided by the School. They were aware of the School's formal mechanisms for student representation and agreed that they operated effectively. In particular, the students praised the Town Hall Meeting (THM). Each programme within the School organises at least three THMs per semester, which provide an opportunity to address student issues in real time. One of these THMs is organised and led by students with the aim of eliciting feedback to channel into the Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) which takes place once a semester between the student reps, the programme director, and representatives from the teaching office and student development. The review team **commends** the School on the development of the programme Town Hall Meeting (THM). However, the students that the review team spoke to noted that sometimes the timings/frequencies of THMs can differ between programmes which can impact on their effectiveness.

The review team **suggests** that the School shares good practice on THM timings/frequency to encourage more consistent practice across programmes and improve experience for all students.

## 2.5 Accessibility, Inclusivity and Widening Participation

In line with the University's aspiration to decolonise the curriculum the School offered an "Intro to Decolonisation" workshop in 2020, compiled a resource list for all subject areas, and led a funded research project on "Decolonising the Business School Curriculum". The School is also piloting a project to transform the curriculum for a UG and PGT course as per de-colonialisation principles. The review team encourages the School to build on its initiatives to decolonise the curriculum and **suggests** that it seeks opportunities to engage with related University level activities (including consideration of female perspectives and scholars) in order to share experience and learn from other initiatives across the institution.

## 2.6 Development of Employability and Graduate Attributes

All postgraduate research students have access to funding to help support their development and research. The School makes available £1000 per research student per financial year to spend on individual professional or personal development activities such as attending conferences. The School acknowledges that there has been a post-Covid upsurge in demand from research students for funding to travel internationally to attend and present at conferences. The review team noted that attending key conferences and submitting papers can be a prerequisite for employment in some fields. The students who met the review team recognised the benefits of conference participation but did not feel encouraged or supported by the School to pursue this aspect of academia. The students agreed that they would like more opportunities to participate in conferences, particularly earlier on in their programme of study. The review team **recommends** that the School communicates the opportunities and funding available to research students to attend national and international conferences and actively encourages them to participate.

The review team noted that past funding initiatives included an "Excellence through Collaboration" fund to support co-authored conference papers by School staff and PhD students. The School reported that this initiative helped to further integrate Doctoral students into their respective Subject Group, as well as help setting them underway on their career path. The review team **commends** the School on the vibrant sense of community that has been nurtured between students, and learning and teaching staff. The review team was also particularly impressed that students located away from 29 Buccleuch Place still felt strongly connected to the School. However, the students who the panel met felt distant from the research interests and current work of the academic faculty. The review team **recommends** that the School provides more regular opportunities for research students to hear about the latest research interests of academic staff and also opportunities to contribute to this work.

## 2.7 Supporting and developing staff



The School strongly encourages academic staff to engage with the University's Institute for Academic Development (IAD, which delivers training related to pedagogical practice), with new teaching staff encouraged to undertake the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP), the Edinburgh Teaching Award (EdTA) and different levels of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) Fellowship scheme. The review team welcomed the School's move to reintroduce its Excellence in Teaching awards (paused during the pandemic) and are awarded based on performance in course evaluations. The review team **suggests** that the School explores ways of tracking/monitoring that new PGR supervisors complete the required online training course available on LEARN and that experienced supervisors regularly update their training at least every 5 years as per University requirements.

Doctoral students are offered the chance to undertake Teaching Assistant (TA) work, generally encompassing tutorial cover and marking. The review team **commends** the School on its exemplar system of support for TAs, particularly the targeted investment in and development of recruitment and mentoring. The student TAs that the review team met recognised the career development benefits of these teaching opportunities and welcomed both the experience and financial support provided by the work. However, there seemed to be a lack of awareness within the student groups as to the existing opportunities to gain accreditation for their TA work. The review team **recommends** that the School signposts the different pathways for TA's to gain teaching accreditation with Advance HE (EdTA, PGCAP, direct accreditation) and offers practical support. Whilst this may not suit all TA's, teaching accreditation provides value to their contribution to the School and has become an important factor for future employment. The review team **suggests** that the School considers options for providing TAs with a formal feedback mechanism in relation to Course Organisers.

## 2.8 Learning environment (physical and virtual)

The review team noted that the previous review in 2026-17 had recommended that "the School and College take urgent steps to provide additional study and interaction space to MSc students to enhance the student experience". However, a proposed move to new premises, that would have addressed this issue, has now been stopped due to strategic decisions made at University level. The School has strived to create additional space for students through refurbishments and change of use within the existing building, 29 Buccleuch Place, but any additional study space will need to be allocated by the University. As mentioned in section 2.1 this constraint on teaching space has forced the School to place limits on course sizes and is the key challenge to the opening of School courses to non-Business School students. The review team **suggests** that the School continues to work with the College to seek new opportunities to access teaching and social space across the University estate.

## 3. Assurance and enhancement of provision

The School operates within the University's Quality Framework and the review team is confident that academic standards are high. The School's approach to setting, maintaining and reviewing academic standards is appropriate. Standards are continually reviewed through External Examiner reports, student feedback and annual monitoring.