

**Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee
to be held on Thursday 21 September 2023 at 2:00pm
at Liberton Tower Meeting Room, Murchison House, Kings Buildings or Teams**

AGENDA

1.	Welcome and apologies	
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting: • 8 August 2023	APRC 23/24 2A
3.	3.1 Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convener's communications • Actions log • Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedure, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group 3.2 Report of Convener's Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Discipline Officers • Summary of approved concessions 	Verbal Update APRC 23/24 2B
4. SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS		
4.1	Students' Association Sabbatical Officer Priorities 2023-2024 For discussion	APRC 23/24 2C
4.2	Operation of the December 2023 Exam Diet To approve	APRC 23/24 2D
4.3	ChM – inclusion in Period of Study Table and Model for Degree Types and Policy To approve	APRC 23/24 2E
5. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NOTING		
5.1	Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review 2022/23 To note and comment	APRC 23/24 2F
5.2	Committee Administration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APRC Membership • APRC Terms of Reference For information • Committee Priorities For information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policy and regulatory arrangements for the Curriculum Transformation Programme ○ Strands of work relating to the Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group (particularly in relation to academic policy and regulation). 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ongoing work around Coursework Extensions and Special Circumstances○ Receive policies for approval in line with agreed updated schedule of review of policies, regulations and guidance	
6.	Any Other Business	
Date of next meeting Thursday 23 November 2023, 2-5pm, Liberton Tower Meeting Room, Murchison House, Kings Buildings or Teams		

**Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
Online meeting via Teams
Tuesday 8 August 2023, 11:00-12:30pm**

Unconfirmed minute

<p>Present: Dr Aidan Brown Dr Adam Bunni Professor Jamie Davies Dr Murray Earle Professor Patrick Hadoke (Convenor)</p> <p>Clair Halliday Carl Harper Karen Howie Professor Antony Maciocia Rachael Quirk Professor Tim Stratford Dr Uzma Tufail-Hanif Stephen Warrington (Deputy-Convener) Kirsty Woomble</p> <p>Substitute members present: Nichola Kett Isabel Lavers Dr Neil Lent Katy McPhail</p> <p>In attendance: Olivia Hayes (Minutes)</p> <p>Apologies: Philippa Burrell Professor Jeremy Crang Lisa Dawson Alexandra Laidlaw Callum Paterson Emily Taylor</p>	<p>Elected member of Senate (CSE) Head of Academic Policy and Regulation, Academic Services Dean of Taught Education (CMVM) Elected member of Senate (CAHSS) Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM) The Advice Place, Deputy Manager Vice President Education, Students' Association Head of Digital Learning Applications and Media, ISG Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE) Head of Taught Student Administration & Support (CAHSS) Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE) Elected member of Senate (CMVM) Dean of Student Experience (CSE)</p> <p>Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)</p> <p>Interim Director, Academic Services, Registry Services Academic Administration Manager (CMVM) University Learning and Teaching (IAD) Deputy Head of Academic Affairs (CSE)</p> <p>Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services</p> <p>Head of Academic Administration (CMVM) Dean of Students (CAHSS) Academic Registrar, Registry Services Head of Academic Affairs (CSE) Academic Engagement Coordinator, Students' Association (Co-opted member) Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS)</p>
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1. Welcome and Apologies

The Convener opened the meeting and extended his thanks to the Committee and substitute members for attending the first meeting of APRC in 2023/24, which is an additional meeting to consider the approach to resit assessment and application of temporary variations due to industrial action.

	<p>The Convener noted that Dr Aidan Brown, Dr Murray Earle and Dr Uzma Tufail-Hanif continue on APRC as elected members of Senate in 2023/24. Thanks were extended to the elected Senate members for their input so far and for their contributions in the year ahead.</p> <p>The Convener noted that formal welcome to new members joining the Committee will be held over to the first Ordinary meeting on 21 September.</p> <p>The Convener reminded members that the APRC Internal Effectiveness Review is currently underway and asked members to please submit their feedback by 5pm, Friday 11 August 2023.</p>
2.	<p>Minutes of previous meetings - APRC 23/24 1A For approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 June 2023 (enclosed) • 31 July 2023 (enclosed) <p>The Committee approved the minutes of the 30 June and 31 July meetings as presented and no objections were raised.</p>
3.	<p>Update on concessions related to industrial action – Verbal update To note</p> <p>There have been no further concessions relating to industrial action since the previous meeting of APRC on 31 July. The Convener noted that any concessions received will be handled in the manner previously agreed by the Committee.</p>
<p>For approval</p>	
4.	<p>Redeeming failure or missing credit for taught courses with delayed results - APRC 23/24 1B For approval</p> <p>Ahead of introduction of this item, the Convener noted that the Committee are asked to endorse the approach to resit assessment proposed in section 10 of the paper and to approve the proposed application of an existing variation to Taught Assessment Regulation 13 set out in section 15 of the paper.</p> <p>Dr Adam Bunni, Head of Academic Policy and Regulation introduced the item. He noted that the paper presents options regarding the redemption of failure or missing assessment for undergraduate students continuing their studies in 2023/24 who are found to have failed courses from 2022/23. This is possible where results have been delayed due to the marking and assessment boycott, or where students were granted null sits due to Special Circumstances. The paper proposes that Schools be permitted to exercise discretion over where these options are used, based on what is considered academically appropriate. The primary approach to redeeming failure will be based on resits taking place, within existing exam diet periods, but with an increased cohort of students which includes those students taking assessment to redeem failure from the previous academic year.</p> <p>The Committee considered Section 10 of the paper. The following points were raised in discussion:</p>

- There are concerns that an increased volume of assessment for students seeking to redeem failure alongside assessment in the next year of study may overburden students. Boards should give consideration to the timing of assessment for redeeming failure, this was flagged as a particular concern for outcomes published following the October Boards and where a resit is expected to take place in the December diet.
- Boards of Examiners will have discretion to determine whether a resit assessment or alternative assessment should take place and the timing of these. There is concern among some members that Board discretion will not account for the individual impact of whether a resit or alternative assessment is offered, in particular those with a greater volume of failed courses or caring responsibilities.
Other members noted that Boards should retain the discretion to balance mitigation measures alongside the requirement to maintain academic standards.
- There are a number of students who have been awarded a Null Sit but a Board of Examiners has not ratified the decision. Therefore, these students have not been able to take the resit assessment despite knowing they are required to do so.

The Committee endorsed section 10 as drafted and no objections were raised.

The Convener noted the comments raised regarding the motivation of Boards of Examiners. However, the responsibility for determining the format of assessment, and a Board's competency is deferred to Boards of Examiners who are trusted to make decisions as appropriate.

The Committee agreed that graduating students are additionally impacted by lengthy delays in confirming final results. Boards should be encouraged to set alternative assessments where possible to allow graduating students to make up missing credits as soon as possible and ahead of the usual assessment periods, particularly where these fall within Semester 2.

The Committee noted that the format of reassessment for redeeming failure is a decision which is within the gift of Boards of Examiners.

The Committee agreed that students redeeming failure should be given adequate notice of the format of assessments and sufficient time to prepare for resit or alternative assessments and deadlines should be set to reflect this.

The Committee considered section 15 of the paper. The following points were raised in discussion:

- Boards of Examiners are responsible for determining which higher level courses can be used to award passes for courses at a lower level, and determining where this is appropriate. This decision will be taken by Boards at the point where course results are confirmed and progression decisions are being made.
- It will be challenging for Schools to provide students with information on what courses can be taken to demonstrate achievement at the higher level in time for Semester 1 enrolment. Foundational work can be undertaken in Schools to determine what courses may be suitable to demonstrate achievement at the higher level; however, this information will not be required in time for the start of Semester 1.
- The guidance to Schools will recommend that the usual information be provided to students on course choices, and that the available options to redeem failure be confirmed to individual following the October Boards.
Due to the timing of course choices and October Boards, students are unlikely to have the information required to make an informed choice on whether they need

	<p>to redeem failure in 2023/24. It is acknowledged that some students will be dissatisfied that they were unaware of the ability to redeem failure with enrolment at a higher level. Equally, there is an unwelcome risk that students' course choices will be influenced by a desire to avoid further assessment at the lower level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, students should be offered a choice between being awarded a pass for achievement at a higher level, or taking a resit assessment. Students may prefer to have a numeric grade and mark on their transcript. The approach is likely to depend on whether a course is core or optional and the specific programme requirements. Schools are likely to need to offer resit assessments to students who either do not demonstrate achievement or do not take associated courses at the higher level. • The Committee acknowledged that a large amount of work surrounding marking, redeeming failure and administrative support for assessment is being carried forward from 2022/23 into 2023/24. The implementation of the proposal may require manual intervention of student records to allow pass/fail grades to be awarded where a numeric grade is usually given. • An upcoming workshop is being held with Central University staff, Colleges and a small number of School contacts to work through the practical application of the redeeming failure proposal. This workshop will help to identify gaps and further develop guidance for Schools and Boards of Examiners. <p>The Committee approved section 15 of the paper as presented and no objections were raised.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that Schools and Boards of Examiners should be strongly encouraged to take account of student preference when deciding whether to award a resit assessment or awarding a pass where the student demonstrates achievement at the higher level.</p> <p>The Committee support any actions that can be taken to reduce or simplify administrative processes associated with redeeming failure and help to reduce the burden of any workload carried forward from the previous academic year.</p>
5.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Committee considered a request to update the Appeals Committee membership to take effect from 1 September. The update will remove two retiring members and add Dr Paul Norris to the Committee who will act as Committee Convener.</p> <p>The Committee approved the revisions to the membership and agreed that further changes to the Appeals Committee membership can take place via Convener's Action.</p> <p>The Convener noted that the first Ordinary meeting of APRC will take place on Thursday 21 September 2023 at 2.00pm. The meeting will be held in hybrid format and the format of meetings for the year ahead will be discussed at this meeting.</p>

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

21 September 2023

Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedure, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group

Wednesday 2nd August 2023, 9-11am, Charles Stewart House and Microsoft Teams (Hybrid)

Note extract for APRC:

The group discussed the practical arrangements for online examinations: Learn Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) tasked the Group with exploring issues around late assessment submissions specifically related to issues with Learn not uploading submissions instantaneously.

Melissa Highton presented the paper and reiterated that Learn was the most appropriate platform for digital assessment submission. Work has been undertaken to deliver Learn Ultra and there are no plans to change VLE platforms in the coming years.

The timestamp of submissions – when they are received by the system and not when the upload commenced – was identified as a key issue and discussed by the Group.

A 10 minute silent window is currently used. Some students are penalised for their upload completing after the deadline, even though the upload started before. This issue also creates work for the ESC and Appeals teams.

It was confirmed that there is a mechanism to see at which time the student started the submission. It was agreed by the Group that changing the threshold from the uploaded time to submitted time would help to address this issue, and practical guidance can be issued to students on how to evidence their submission (i.e. a screenshot of the last modified date and timestamp).

Action: Sinéad Docherty to note discussion and agreed course of action confirmed back to APRC as a matter resolved.

Action: Learn Ultra team to work with Colleges to demonstrate how the system captures the data showing the start time of the upload. Melissa Highton to arrange with College leads on this group.

Action: Amend guidance on the receipt of submissions and ensure this is consistently articulated to Schools. The College leads are to co-ordinate this.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

21 September 2023

**Students' Association Sabbatical Officer
Priorities 2023-2024**

Description of paper:

1. This paper notes the priorities of the Students' Association Vice President Education and the Sabbatical team for 2023-24.

Action requested / recommendation:

2. For information and discussion.

Background and context:

3. Each year a report is presented to the Senate standing committees on the priorities of the student representatives for the coming year.

Discussion:

4. See attached paper.

Resource implications:

5. Actions arising from the ideas discussed in the paper may have resource implications. These will be considered in detail if specific action is proposed.

Risk management:

6. The risk of any action arising from the ideas discussed in the paper will be assessed if specific action is proposed.

Equality & diversity:

7. The ideas discussed in the paper aim to encourage and support equality, diversity, and inclusion. The equality impact of any specific actions arising from the paper will be assessed once the actions are proposed.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed:

8. This will be agreed if specific actions arising from the ideas discussed in the paper are identified.

Author

Callum Paterson

Academic Engagement Coordinator
Edinburgh University Students'
Association

Presenter

Carl Harper

Vice President Education 2023-24
Edinburgh University Students'
Association

Freedom of Information: Open

Priorities of the Students' Association Vice President Education for 2023-24:**1. Creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment**

The current University environment creates barriers preventing many students to reach their learning objectives and leaving more to advocate for their needs to be met. Carl will be focusing on continuing to bring the voices of our most disadvantaged and marginalised students into committees and working groups on issues such as Extensions and Special Circumstances, and Assessment and Feedback. They will also focus on exploring and tackling hidden course costs.

2. Real student engagement

There are currently a number of strategic projects which will have a significant impact on the student experience at Edinburgh, but many students feel like they haven't been consulted or even told what's happening. Carl will focus on driving deeper and longer-term student engagement and dialogue in Schools and Colleges, as well as with strategic projects such as Curriculum Transformation. Carl maintains that a candid, communicative, and intensely student-facing outreach style is key in driving student engagement.

3. Ensuring students feel valued members of their academic community

Too often, students feel like they're just a number, and they don't have a voice; our policies and processes should centre students' needs and interests, now and into the future. Carl will also be focusing on developing reward and recognition for student leaders, from student representatives to PALS Leaders.

The Sabbatical Team's shared priorities for 2023-24 are as follows:**1. Tackling the Cost-of-Living Crisis**

The Cost-of-Living Crisis continues to fundamentally shape the student experience at Edinburgh; the University must do more to recognise, and protect students from, its impact.

2. Being open and engaged advocates

The University is a complex, ever-changing institution, making it challenging for students to navigate; we want to prioritise transparency within these processes, and be strong advocates for our members on the issues that matter most to them.

3. An inclusive and engaging Association

We want all our members, but particularly those who have historically been disengaged or excluded, to feel a sense of belonging to the Association and the student community at Edinburgh, and able to fully participate in our activities.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**21 September 2023****Operation of the December 2023 examination diet****Description of paper**

1. The paper discusses dates for the December 2023 exam diet. It also outlines the existing principles which underpin the exam timetabling process.

Action requested / recommendation

2. APRC is asked to consider the options covered in the paper and agree a position regarding the dates of the December 2023 exam diet.

Background and context

3. On 27 January 2022, APRC approved Semester dates for the 2023/24 academic session. According to these dates, the December examination diet during this session is due to start on 11 December 2023. There is a longstanding agreement with EUSA that December exams will not take place any later than 21 December in any given year, in order to ensure students are not required to travel too close to Christmas. This means that, in 2023, there are only 10 days- excluding Sundays- available for the exam diet. Timetabling and Examinations have indicated that, in order to set an exam timetable which is free of clashes and allows appropriate spacing of exams for individual students, a minimum of 11 exam sessions are required for the exam diet.
4. Before the pandemic period, both the December and May exam diets used to operate with two exam sessions per day. During the pandemic period, this was reduced to one session per day. This change was made both due to the reduction in the use of exams overall, with many courses moving to continuous assessment, and due to the need to schedule exams at a time most suitable for students to sit them in different time zones. From 2022/23, many courses returned to assessment via in-person exams, although some have retained the approach to assessment adopted during the pandemic period.
5. It is possible there may be increased demands on the December 2023 exam diet, should any Schools seek to run resits for Semester 2 courses for any students found to have failed those courses in 2022/23, where their results were delayed due to the marking and assessment boycott. As such, ensuring the adequacy of the overall number of sessions available is critical.

Discussion

6. As mentioned above, Timetabling and Examinations have indicated that it will not be possible to schedule the required volume of examinations in the December 2023 diet should it operate with only 10 exam sessions. It will therefore be necessary to seek to increase the number of sessions. There are three options for doing this, which are discussed below.

a) *Start the exam diet on Friday 8 December*

7. To maintain our commitment to EUSA and our student community, the diet must end no later than 21 December. The only option for extending the length of the diet therefore would be for it to start earlier, on Friday 8 or Saturday 9 December.
8. Starting the diet on Friday 8 December would lead to a reduction in the length of the revision period for students. Although the nature of the academic calendar dictates that the revision period be shortened in some years, APRC has always been keen to safeguard the revision period as far as possible. If this is the preferred option, the Examinations team would minimise scheduling examinations on this date to minimise the number of students impacted.
9. This option would reduce risks around the availability of staff in Schools to answer questions about papers, and of invigilators and professional services, which are a concern when exams run on weekend days (as discussed below).

b) Start the exam diet on Saturday 9 December

10. Although it is common for exams to take place on a Saturday, it is generally desirable to keep the number of weekend sessions to a minimum. It is often the case that errors or questions are identified with regard to exam papers which can be resolved by contacting a member of academic staff responsible for the paper. Running exam sessions on weekends increases the likelihood that such staff will be unavailable to respond to queries. Academic and professional services staff are also currently required to deliver exam papers to venues ahead of exam sessions. Moreover, the first session of the diet taking place on a Saturday would make it more difficult to address promptly any issues identified with processes around the operation of exams, such as can arise at the beginning of any diet.
11. Adding a further weekend session may also present additional challenges for students with childcare or other caring responsibilities, who may find it more difficult to find cover for these responsibilities on the weekend.
12. There have been concerns raised with the University in the past about the fact that exams were running on a Saturday, as the Jewish Sabbath. To date, these concerns have where necessary been addressed through the provision of adjustments via Taught Assessment Regulation 25.2:

“25.2 Students who believe that religious reasons or participation in elite-level sport prevent them from sitting an examination at the scheduled time or venue should contact their Student Adviser and Student Support Team. Their case is considered by the relevant Dean and Student Administration in consultation with the Convener of the Board of Examiners.”

c) Introduce a second session into one day of the exam diet

13. As noted above, prior to the pandemic, it was common to run two exam sessions per day during the diet. Adding an additional session into an existing day of the diet would allow the University to avoid extending the diet dates.

14. Adding a second session in the day would be an exceptional measure put in place for one day in the diet to ensure the adequate number of sessions across the diet. The addition of the second slot adds increased pressure into the preparation and running of the diet on the day, particularly in connection with the logistics of special arrangements students and venue set up (including availability of other staff to support this).
15. In this instance, it would be suggested that online exams would be scheduled to start in alignment with the in-person exams (2.30pm) for consistency.
16. This approach may increase the likelihood of a student sitting exams on the same day or on consecutive days, however if this were the preferred option, the Examinations team would seek to minimise instances of this occurring. The addition of a second session on only one day of the diet may cause confusion for students and increase the risk of them missing their exams.

Resource implications

17. Resource implications of the proposed options are identified in the discussion above.

Risk management

18. Risks associated with the proposed options are identified in the discussion above.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

19. No direct implications.

Equality & diversity

20. Equality and diversity implications of the proposed options are identified in the discussion above.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

21. The Exams Team will communicate with Schools about the arrangements for the diet. In the event that arrangements are unusual, students will be communicated with accordingly.

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Freedom of Information

H/02/27/02

APRC 23/24 2D

OPEN

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

21 September 2023

ChM – inclusion in Period of Study Table and Model for Degree Types and Policy**Description of paper**

1. The purpose of this paper is to seek inclusion of the Master of Surgery (ChM) degrees within the policy documentation for:

A. The Period of Study Table

(<https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studyperiodtable.pdf>), and

B. The Model for Degree Types

(https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/models_for_curricula.pdf).

Whilst the ChM currently appears within the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study Postgraduate Degree programme Regulations (DRPS) 2023/24 (see: regulation 89), it is not outlined within these additional documents.

C. Approval for the maximum period for an authorised Interruption of Study be for 12 months (part time continuous programmes) or 24 months (part time intermittent programmes)

The Master of Surgery degrees are as follows:

- ChM Urology
- ChM Trauma and Orthopaedics
- ChM General Surgery
- ChM Clinical Ophthalmology
- ChM Vascular and Endovascular Surgery

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval.

Inclusion of the ChM degree in the Study Period Table

We propose for inclusion:

Degree	Prescribed Period of Study	Maximum extension period by Concession	Maximum Interruption of Study by Concession	Maximum Allowable
ChM, part-time, continuous	24 months	24 months	12 months maximum	5 years
ChM, part-time, intermittent	48 months	24 months	24 months maximum	8 years

a. Inclusion of the ChM degree within the Models for Degree Types Policy

We would request that the following Model Template be included as per the description of the ChM degree in DRPS Regulation 89:

Taught Postgraduate Master of Surgery (ChM) programmes

120 credits, of which a minimum of 120 are at SCQF level 12, consisting of:

- a) At least 80 credits at SCQF 12 level are passed with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits; and
- b) Attain an average of at least 50% for the 120 credits at SCQF level 12, and;

- c) Satisfy any other specific requirements for the ChM degree programme that are clearly stated in the respective handbooks.

An exit award is available to students leaving the programme without qualifying for the award of ChM. Based on the criteria set out in the Taught Assessment Regulations, a named Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) will be awarded if:

- a) At least 80 credits at SCQF level 12 are passed with a mark of at least 40% in each of the courses which make up these credits; and
- b) Attain an average of at least 40% for the 120 credits at SCQF level 12
- c) Satisfy any other specific requirements for the ChM degree programme that are clearly stated in the respective handbooks

Background and context

3. The Master of Surgery (ChM) is an SCQF level 12 PGT OL programme offered by either part time two year continuous or for two programmes, 4 year part-time intermittent study. These are detailed below:

ChM Urology (part time continuous, PTCHMUROLO1I)

ChM General Surgery (part-time continuous, PTCHMGENSU1P)

ChM Trauma & Orthopaedics (part time continuous, PTCHMTRORT1P)

ChM Clinical Ophthalmology (part time continuous, PTCHMCLOPH1P)

ChM Clinical Ophthalmology (part time intermittent, PTCHMCLOPH1U)

ChM Vascular and Endovascular Surgery (part time continuous, PTCHMVASEN1P)

ChM Vascular and Endovascular Surgery (part time intermittent, PTCHMVASEN1U)

4. The current DRPS (2023/24) Regulation 33 for Authorised Interruption of Studies states: *A student may apply for an Authorised Interruption of Study, and it may be authorised by the College if there is a good reason for approving the interruption. Students may be required to provide evidence to support their applications. Interruptions of study will not be applied retrospectively. Any one period of authorised interruption of study will not exceed one year, unless authorised by the College. The total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is the same for full-time and part-time continuous students and will not exceed 100% of the prescribed period of full-time study. For part-time intermittent students, the total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is calculated as half of the prescribed period of study, for example, three years for a six-year Master's programme. The Head of College may exceptionally authorise an Interruption of Study which would take the total period of interruption beyond 100% of the prescribed period of study, provided this does not exceed the maximum allowable study period.*

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/authorisedinterruption.pdf>

Also see the Study Period Table: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studyperiodtable.pdf

5. The ChM does not have a full time equivalent, and given that it is not a viable option due to the teaching structure to have less than a 12 month gap in studies, **we are requesting that the maximum period for an authorised Interruption of Study be for 12 months.**
6. For part-time intermittent ChM students, where the total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is calculated as half of the prescribed period of study, **we would request a 24 month authorised Interruption of Studies.**

7. The ChM structure is currently included within the DRPS 2023/4 (regulation 89) but is not reported in either the study period table or the Model for Degree Types Policy. This paper would make good this lack.

Discussion

8. Approval of this paper would formalise the ChM structure to better enable decision making in relation to the accepted period of extension or interruption of studies for students requiring this as, at present, this is by virtue of its omission, a subjective decision based on knowledge of the degree structure and recognition of models of apparently similar (e.g. PG Diploma programmes), neither of which allows for consistency of decision making. This would allow transparency, clarity and equality in student experience to ensure consistency of application of regulations and policy. Whilst this may be reviewed in the future as part of ongoing programme review processes, there is an urgent need to formalise the structure of the *current* ChM programmes.
9. Inclusion of the ChM degree within the Models for Degree Types Policy is indicated to allow recognition of the ChM and to align with its current descriptor within the DRPS 2023/24. It is not anticipated that this request will require further debate and discussion as a request to consolidate recognition of an existing degree structure being delivered within the University.

Resource implications

10. There are no resource implications beyond what would be considered normal academic and administrative input.

Risk management

11. In the absence of not being included in the Study Period table and the Model for Degree Types Policy, there is a risk that student requests for authorised Interruptions of Study and Extensions to study period would be treated unequally and thus disadvantage their studies. It would be to the particular detriment of the international students working in developing countries who, anecdotal experience indicates, may be more likely to apply for interruptions of study due to working and wider political or socio-economic stochastic factors. This may lower the degree completion rate and increase rate of early withdrawals/exits which may have implications for student satisfaction and institutional reputation in addition to potential financial implications.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

12. No direct implications.

Equality & diversity

13. No specific implications for equality and diversity.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

14. Not applicable

Author

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Uzma Tufail-Hanif
Chantelle Aftab
Oluseye Ogunbayo

Presenter

Louise Buckley

H/02/27/02

APRC 23/24 2E

Heather Ellis
16/08/23

Freedom of Information *Open*

Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

21 September 2023

Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review 2022/23

Description of paper

1. This paper provides the relevant Senate Standing Committee with analysis and proposed actions drawn from the responses received to the light-touch Senate Standing Committees internal effectiveness review conducted in summer 2023, which is intended to aid continuous improvement of our approach to academic governance.

Action requested / recommendation

2. To note the contents of the paper and comment on potential priority actions.

Background and context

3. The University is required under the 2017 Scottish Code of Good HE Governance to carry out an annual internal review of Senate and its Committees which carry delegated responsibilities.
4. In summer 2023, Academic Services issued a short questionnaire to Senate Standing Committee members and their responses were collated.
5. The review remained deliberately light touch, taking account of the external effectiveness review of Senate which took place in 2022/23.

Discussion

6. An analysis of questionnaire responses received from members and proposed actions can be found in Appendix 1.
7. Proposed actions for the Standing Committee, in response to the feedback from members, are intended to be proportionate to the scope of an annual effectiveness review, and the volume of feedback received.
8. Senate will receive the analysis of responses and proposed actions for each Standing Committee in October.

Resource implications

9. The resource implications of the proposed actions will be considered within Academic Services alongside other Departmental work for 2023/24. Actions will be prioritised and taken forward in line with available resources and in consultation with Senate Standing Committee Conveners. An update on progress with suggested actions will be presented to a future meeting of the relevant Standing Committee.

Risk management

10. This activity supports the University's obligations under the 2017 Scottish Code of Good HE Governance.

Equality & diversity

11. The review provides an opportunity to identify any equality and diversity issues in the composition of Senate Standing Committees, and the way they conduct their business.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

12. As detailed in paragraphs 8 and 9 above.

H/02/27/02

APRC 23/24 2F

Authors

Academic Services

Presenter

Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer

Freedom of Information

Open

APPENDIX 1**Report of Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee Internal Effectiveness Review 2022/23**

The Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee currently has 22 members. 13 responses were received to the Internal Effectiveness Review Questionnaire, equating to a 59% response rate. This is a small drop in response rate when compared with 2021/22 when there were 12 responses from 19 members equating to a 63% response rate.

- **Committee Remit**

The majority of respondents strongly agreed with the following statements, with a minority of respondents agreeing with the following statements:

- the Committee remit is clear (8 respondents strongly agreed, 5 respondents agreed).
- the Committee has adapted effectively to challenges of changes in priority (10 respondents strongly agreed, 3 respondents agreed).

All respondents agreed (7 respondents) or strongly agreed (6 respondents) that the scope of the Committee remit is appropriate.

The majority of respondents agreed (10 respondents) or strongly agreed (1 respondent) that the Committee is using task groups effectively and 2 respondents disagreed that the Committee is using task groups effectively.

The majority of free-text comments returned were regarding the use of task groups by the Committee. Comments reflected on defining the appropriate use of task groups, potential barriers to the Committee utilising task groups and the broader challenges experienced by short-life task groups across the University.

- **Governance and Impact**

The majority of respondents (11 out of 13) strongly agreed that they have a clear understanding of how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University.

The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements. A small number of respondents (≤ 2 out of 13) disagreed with the following statements:

- There is an effective flow of business between relevant College Committees, Senate Committees and Senate
- There are clear links between Committee business and University strategic priorities.
- The Committee makes the desired impact based on its remit and priorities

Free-text comments received indicate that members have a clear understanding of the Committee's role within the governance framework. Responses indicate that there could be improvements to reporting links between Senate Committees, reporting from Colleges and greater feedback on the outcomes and effectiveness of items within the Committees remit.

- **Composition**

All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the current composition of the Committee enables it to fulfil its remit and the size of the Committee is appropriate in order for it to operate effectively.

Free-text comments reflected on the valuable contributions and scrutiny brought by Senate members since joining the Committee and noted that further expansion of the Committee would impinge on the Committee's ability to function effectively.

- **EDI**

The majority of the respondents agreed (7 respondents) or strongly agreed (1 respondent) that the composition of the Committee is suitably representative of the diverse University population. Five respondents disagreed with this statement.

The majority of respondents agreed (8 respondents) or strongly agreed (1 respondent) that equality and diversity considerations are adequately addressed when discussing Committee business. Four respondents disagreed with this statement.

Free-text comments reflected on the Committee's consideration of EDI matters when receiving items of business. Members noted the challenges in ensuring that all protected characteristics are represented, and whether EDI matters are given appropriate scrutiny before items of business reach the Committee.

- **Role**

All respondents either strongly agreed (7 respondents) or agreed (6 respondents) that they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities as Committee members.

6 respondents agreed, 4 strongly agreed, and 3 disagreed, that they received an effective induction when they joined the Committee.

All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Committee members fully engage in Committee business.

One free-text comment reflected on the meeting times often clashing with another University-level group. Other comments reflected on the relevance of Committee business to their role and the ability to judge the effective engagement of members during a period where the volume of business was higher than normal.

- **Communications**

The majority of respondents agreed (7 respondents) or strongly agreed (2 respondents) that the Committee communicates effectively with stakeholders. Four respondents disagreed with this statement.

All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they have a clear understanding of their role in cascading information from the Committee as a representative of their College or Group.

The majority of respondents either strongly agreed (5 respondents) or agreed (4 respondents) that they have a clear understanding of their role in cascading information from the Committee. 3 respondents disagreed and 1 respondent strongly disagreed with this statement.

Free-text comments reflected on the value in clarifying the role of members in cascading information, defining what information can be cascaded and how developing a structured approach to cascading information will support members in providing updates on Committee business to the areas they represent.

- **Support**

All respondents either strongly agreed (10 respondents) or agreed (2 respondents) that the Committee is effectively supported by Academic Services.

The majority of respondents strongly agreed (9 respondents) or agreed (2 respondents) that the information provided to the Committee supports effective decision-making. One respondent disagreed with this statement.

All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Committee papers provide an appropriate level of detail on the background of issues brought to the Committee.

The majority of respondents agreed (6 respondents) or strongly agreed (5 respondents) that Committee papers provide an appropriate level of detail on how Committee decisions will be implemented. Two respondents disagreed with this statement.

Free-text comments indicate that members would value greater detail in papers on the implementation of proposals brought to the Committee. One comment reflected on repetitive detail and the length of papers, whilst another noted that the length of meeting agendas can be challenging to allow sufficient time for scrutiny of business. Comments reflected that the Committee has excellent support from Academic Services.

Proposed actions:

- Consider how to focus business within the Committee remit and clarify responsibilities where business overlaps and links with other committees. Academic Services will support paper authors to focus on the detail relevant to the Committee's remit and the decision being asked of them.
- Continue to explore ways to diversify the membership of the Committee and effectively consider EDI matters. Academic Services will signpost to relevant EDI guidance and training materials in order to empower members and enhance their understanding of EDI matters, and enable all members to appropriately scrutinise Committee business.
- Consider how the Committee can communicate effectively with stakeholders, including the roles and responsibilities of Academic Services and Committee members. In particular, proposals should include a plan of how information will be communicated to relevant stakeholders, and actions should record instances where Committee members have responsibility for communicating information or outcomes to their College or Group.
- Any actions need to be considered and undertaken within the wider context of the recommendations from the Senate External Effectiveness Review and as part of the continuous improvements made within Academic Services.