

**Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
Hybrid meeting held online via Teams and in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House
Thursday 23 March 2023 at 2.00pm**

Confirmed Minute

<p>Present: Dr Aidan Brown Dr Adam Bunni Philippa Burrell Professor Jeremy Crang Professor Jamie Davies Dr Murray Earle Professor Patrick Hadoke (Vice-Convenor) Clair Halliday Karen Howie Professor Antony Maciocia Sarah McAllister</p> <p>Sam Maccallum Dr Kathryn Nicol Dr Paul Norris (Convenor) Callum Paterson Rachael Quirk Professor Tim Stratford Stephen Warrington Kirsty Woomble</p> <p>In attendance: Dr Matthew Bell Olivia Hayes (Minutes) Dr Sarah Henderson Professor Sabine Rolle</p> <p>Professor Veronica Ruiz Abou-Nigm Dr Paula Smith Tom Ward</p> <p>Apologies: Dr Donna Murray</p> <p>Dr Uzma Tufail-Hanif Dr Deborah Shaw</p>	<p>Elected member of Senate Head of Academic Affairs (CSE) Head of Academic Administration (CMVM) Dean of Students (CAHSS) Dean of Taught Education (CMVM) Elected member of Senate Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM) The Advice Place, Deputy Manager Head of Digital Learning Applications and Media, Information Services Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE) Head of Student Support Operations, Student Systems and Administration Vice President Education, Students' Association Head of Academic Policy and Regulation Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS) Academic Engagement Coordinator (Co-opted member) Head of Taught Student Administration & Support (CAHSS) Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE) Dean of Student Experience (CSE) Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)</p> <p>College Academic Misconduct Officer (CSE) Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services CMVM Director of Postgraduate Taught Education Dean of Education (CAHSS), Convener of the CE & SC Task Group Edinburgh Law School MSc Critical Care Deputy Programme Director Director of Academic Services</p> <p>Head of Taught Student Development, Institute for Academic Development Elected member of Senate Dean of Students (CMVM)</p>
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<p>1. Welcome to new members</p> <p><i>APRC formally welcomed two new members to the Committee, who joined in February:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Callum Paterson, Academic Engagement Coordinator. The Academic Engagement Coordinator position was co-opted to the Committee in September 2022.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clair Halliday, The Advice Place, Deputy Manager. Attendance at APRC will be shared between the Manager and Deputy Manager of The Advice Place. This will be formally reported to Senate when the 2023/24 membership of the Committee is presented at the May meeting.
2.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting - APRC 22/23 6A For approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 January 2023 (enclosed) <p>The Committee approved the minutes of the January meeting.</p>
3.	<p>Matters Arising - Verbal Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Externally-Facilitated Review of Senate and its Standing Committees: January 2023 Meeting Tom Ward provided an update on the Externally-Facilitated Review of Senate and its Standing Committees. The review is ongoing and the consultants have reported that there has been excellent engagement with the survey with focus groups and individual interviews scheduled for the end of March. • Approval for non-standard programme start dates for the Online MBA: January 2023 Meeting Sarah McAllister confirmed that the Systems implications of the non-standard start had been considered and the proposal can be supported. The formal approval of the Online MBA would be included in a March e-business meeting of APRC. • Provisional Academic Year Dates 2026/27: January 2023 meeting Olivia Hayes contacted ResLife regarding the provisional dates and they have confirmed that the provisional dates for 2026/27 do not allow sufficient time to prepare for Induction Week following the end of the Edinburgh Festival. The provisional dates will be revised in light of this and presented to APRC for approval in May. • Curriculum Transformation: Sept 2022 & January 2023 meeting The Convener, Paul Norris, confirmed that there has been no business for APRC arising out of Curriculum Transformation since the previous meeting. <p>Report of Convener's Action The Convener updated APRC on the actions which have been taken by Convener's action since the Committee last met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of approved concessions A total of 19 individual student concessions have been approved. There have been no cohort concessions received since the previous meeting. The Convener gave a broad overview of approved concessions approved by category: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extensions and AIS: 16 ○ DPT variation, progression requirements and credits: 3 There are four concessions currently under consideration, equally split between the two categories given. • Handling of concessions in relation to Industrial Action There have been no concessions relating to Industrial Action considered since APRC met in January 2023. This would be revisited under item 9.
4.	<p>LLB (Hons) Global Law - APRC 22/23 6M For approval</p> <p>The Deputy Convener, Professor Patrick Hadoke, convened this item.</p>

This item was introduced by Professor Veronica Ruiz-Abou Nigm, School of Law.

This paper is seeking permission for the proposed new LLB (Hons) Global Law programme to deviate from Taught Assessment Regulation (TAR) 55.2.

The Global Law programme contains a compulsory Junior Year Abroad (JYA) in Year 3, which is core to the structure of the programme. The JYA will be level 10 and assessed on a Pass / fail basis with the degree classified on the 120 credits of Level 10 courses completed in Year 4.

There would be no resit opportunity if a Year 3 student fails and students would be offered an exit award of the MA Laws.

The School anticipate approximately 30 students for the first four years of the programme.

APRC approved a new sub-clause of TAR 55.2 being created, in which the LLB (Hons) Global Law programme is explicitly named as a programme where regulation 55.2 does not apply. This would read identically to 55.2(c), where an exemption is already in place for the MA International Business programme.

Action: Academic Services to update the Taught Assessment Regulations to include the new sub-clause.

5. Proposed Changes to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures - APRC 22/23 6B

For discussion

Dr Matthew Bell, College Academic Misconduct Officer (CSE) introduced the item, which is for discussion. A paper would be returned to APRC for approval in May. The paper proposes changes to the procedures around cases of collusion, and the addition of a 50 mark penalty.

The Committee discussed the paper. The following points were made:

- It would be useful to receive further legal advice on the proposals provided under 1.5 and to clarify if a non-disclosure agreement can be included, and that the processes around handling of academic misconduct and code of conduct cases align.
- 1.5 should to provide further clarity around why the names of individuals are being shared. It may be necessary to also distinguish between groups of students colluding and a student having their work stolen or used without their consent.
- A concern was raised regarding the sharing of exam numbers with students. The Students Association representatives on the Committee did not believe this to be an issue and noted that in collusion cases students are generally aware of the other individuals involved.
- There was discussion on the interaction of the Special Circumstances Policy and Academic Misconduct Procedures. It was confirmed that these are separate processes and it is at the discretion of the relevant Boards of Examiners to consider cases that interact with both policies. The Board of Examiners cannot waive an academic misconduct penalty, however can consider actions provided under the Special Circumstances Policy. The Procedure should clarify the interaction with the Special Circumstances Policy and ensure advice aligns across University policies and procedures.

In addition to the comments provided, a number of drafting points were raised by the Committee, to be shared with the paper authors:

- 1.5: the wording is to be redrafted to take account of comments. The wording should be revised to indicate that a student interview is not a requirement.
- 3.4: the wording is to be redrafted to clarify that students will have an opportunity to respond before a penalty is applied.
- 5.3: the wording is to be revisited to take account of comments and discussions with the CE & SC Task Group.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.4F: there is a discrepancy between the paper and the draft Procedure in relation to contract cheating. The reference to duty of care included in the Procedure is to be clarified. <p>The Committee were invited to provide further comments to Roshni Hume by 10 April.</p>
6.	<p>Update from the Coursework Extension & Special Circumstances Task Group - APRC 22/23 6C For discussion</p> <p>Professor Sabine Rolle, Convener of the Coursework Extension & Special Circumstances Task Group introduced this item.</p> <p>The paper provides APRC with the findings and positions reached by the Coursework Extension and Special Circumstances Task Group, a summary of the findings of the ESC Reviews: discussions with Schools 2022/23 and of the service in 2022; and an overview of the proposed next steps to bring together the findings of work underway across ESC including responses from APRC and Heads of Schools to these proposals, to be overseen by the Deputy Secretary, Students. A final set of recommendations will be coordinated by the Deputy Secretary, Students and presented to the May meeting of APRC.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the paper. The following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is urgent of change needed ahead of the 2023/24 academic year, and there is a lack of clarity around a plan to take the policy forward. The Committee noted that if the current position remains, there is a high risk that Schools will introduce local changes which are at odds with the desire to develop greater consistency across the student experience and Schools. The Committee agreed that a plan for implementation should be considered, with particular focus on what changes can be implemented for 2023/24 and a plan to communicate what measures are to be introduced, and what will be held over to future years and why. The volume of coursework extensions may not change, regardless of a possible policy changes. Students do not see the use of coursework extensions as problematic and this is seen as part of the package of support available to students. The Committee noted the challenge for the Task Group in attempting to produce recommendations in the absence of data to support thinking. There was concern from some members regarding the proposed reduction of time available for a coursework extension coming from the CE & SC Task Group, and in particular the impact on disabled students. A clarification was made regarding self-certification in Special Circumstances. It was confirmed that Special Circumstances applications do not permit self-certification, however depending on the circumstances, a students' own word may be taken into account in determining the validity of an application. There is concern from some members regarding the feasibility of taking forward substantial changes ahead of 2023/24 without clarity on the systems implications that such changes would present. A general reflection on the feasibility of making policy changes via Task Group was shared with the Committee. <p>Action: The Convener would share comments with the paper authors to establish what action can be taken and a plan for taking this forward.</p> <p>The Committee were invited to provide further comments to Olivia Hayes by 10 April.</p>
7.	<p>Online exam arrangement for 2023/24 – submission deadlines - APRC 22/23 6D – CLOSED For discussion</p>

	<p>This item of business was closed: its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.</p>
8.	<p>Industrial action: variations to academic policies and regulations - APRC 22/23 6E For approval</p> <p>This item was introduced by Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services. This paper invites the Committee to consider whether to approve any temporary general variations to academic policies and regulations.</p> <p>The Academic Contingency Group (ACG) have monitored the impact of industrial action and believe that significant disruption has occurred and recommend that APRC activates Taught Assessment Regulation 70 (Significant Disruption: Concessions and Standards) and considers two modest and proportionate variations.</p> <p>A paper is due to be presented to Senate on 29 March which proposes changing the delegation of powers under Taught Assessment Regulations 70 and 71 from APRC to Senate, this includes all concessions relating to significant disruption and individual student concessions being considered by full Senate. A query was raised as to whether APRC could delay consideration of the proposals outlined in the paper until after Senate has met. The Committee felt that the current position is urgent and it is necessary to consider activating Taught Assessment Regulation 70 based on the current powers of the Committee. APRC agreed that any temporary variation to regulations should be implemented immediately.</p> <p>APRC considered the proposals outlined in the paper in turn.</p> <p>The Committee confirmed that it supports a staged approach to considering the case for general variations to academic regulations and policies.</p> <p>The Committee agree that significant disruption has occurred and the Committee supports the activation of Taught Assessment Regulation 70.</p> <p>The University has a responsibility to its students to ensure that students can progress and graduate as expected. The ACG has reviewed the options available and at this stage, recommends two specific action be taken. The ACG will continue to monitor the situation and may recommend further action at a future point.</p> <p>APRC considered the proposals for two temporary variations outlined in the paper. The following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conduct of assessment has been disrupted for specific groups of students. The feedback from Colleges indicates that Schools will need to consider changing the content or weighting of assessments in response to this. • The industrial action does not call on external examiners to resign, however there may be disruption to the availability of external examiners during this time. There is a disparity in regulations which require external examiners to comment on exam papers and not other forms of assessment. • Schools should continue to seek external examiner input where possible, and where this is not possible, Schools should undertake additional internal scrutiny. <p>APRC approved a temporary variation to permit schools to make changes after the start of a course without the approval of College or consultation with students and external examiners.</p> <p>APRC approved a temporary variation to relax the requirement to consult External Examiners when setting examination papers.</p>

	<p>The two temporary variations to regulations would take effect immediately, and remain in place until no later than the end of session 2022-23 (including the resit diet in summer 2023):</p> <p>APRC revisited the position agreed at the 26 January meeting on the handling of concessions relating to industrial action. The Committee agreed that the agreed position should continue until the next meeting of APRC on 25 May.</p> <p>Action: The Convener of APRC would update the Convener of Senate on the actions taken by APRC to be outlined at Senate on 29 March.</p> <p>Action: Academic Services to prepare guidance and issue to Schools as soon as practicable.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Undergraduate Degree Regulations 2023/24 - APRC 22/23 6F To recommend to Court</p> <p>This item was introduced by Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Academic Policy and Regulation.</p> <p>This is a routine paper that contains the draft Undergraduate Degree Regulations for 2023/24.</p> <p>APRC supported the Undergraduate Degree Regulations being recommended to Court subject to one amendment. Regulation 9 is to be amended to apply to students in all years, rather than only commencing students.</p> <p>Court will consult with Senate and the General Council before the Regulations return to Court for approval.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2023/24 - APRC 22/23 6G To recommend to Court</p> <p>This item was introduced by Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Academic Policy and Regulation.</p> <p>This is a routine paper that contains the draft Postgraduate Degree Regulations for 2023/24.</p> <p>An amendment to Regulations 33 and 34 would be considered by the Committee during a period of e-Business.</p> <p>APRC supported the Postgraduate Degree Regulations being recommended to Court subject to Regulation 9 being amended to apply to students in all years and agreeing the position on Regulation 33 and 34 via e-Business.</p> <p>Court will consult with Senate and the General Council before the Regulations return to Court for approval.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Schedule of review for policies, regulations and guidance – update - APRC 22/23 6H For approval</p> <p>This item was introduced by Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Academic Policy and Regulation.</p> <p>This paper updates the Committee on the schedule for reviewing policies, regulations, and guidance documents which are the responsibility of the Senate Committees. The Senate Education Committee and Senate Quality Assurance Committee are both content with the revised schedule.</p> <p>The Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Policy was intended to go to the Senate Education Committee in May. A note would be circulated to the Committee following the meeting to confirm when this policy will be reviewed.</p>

	<p>Action: Kathryn Nicol to circulate an update to the Committee to confirm when the Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Policy will be reviewed.</p>
12.	<p>Proposed Policy Changes related to Implementation of Student Support Model - APRC 22/23 6I For approval</p> <p>This item did not have a presenter.</p> <p>The Committee considered the proposed Student Support Project related changes for APRC on the following policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authorised interruption of study 2. Course Organiser: Outline of Role (CSPC) 3. Performance Sport policy 4. Programme and Course Handbooks Policy 5. Protection of Children and Protected Adults 6. Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure 7. International Student Attendance and Engagement Policy 8. Support for Study <p>APRC supported the recommended changes to these policies subject to 'programme director' being reinserted into the relevant policies.</p> <p>Action: Academic Services to consider a statement being added to each policy to ensure consistency when dealing with dealing with Schools, Deaneries and Institutes.</p> <p>Action: Sarah McAllister to feed back to the project on the lack of clarity on what happens to students returning from AIS and their named contact.</p>
13.	<p>Revised Proposals for Coordinating Institutional Activities on Assessment and Feedback - APRC 22/23 6J For approval</p> <p>This item was introduced by Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services.</p> <p>At its meeting on 26 January 2023, APRC discussed proposals for establishing these new task groups to coordinate these activities – focussing in particular on the Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation group (which would report to APRC and SQAC). While the Committee was strongly supportive of those proposals, it made suggestions for amendments to the membership and remit of that task group. The revised proposals set out in this paper take account of the feedback from the three Committees.</p> <p>Mr Ward noted that expanding the membership to include all suggestions would lead to very large groups. No powers would sit with the task groups and there would be no change to the responsibility of relevant Committees for affected policies.</p> <p>APRC approved the updated remit and membership for these new Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group, as set out in paragraph 13.</p>
14.	<p>Major Change to an Existing Programme: MSc in Critical Care - APRC 22/23 6K For approval</p> <p>This item was introduced by Dr Paula Smith, Deputy Programme Director for the MSc Critical Care.</p> <p>This paper proposes the introduction of a fully taught Year 3 for students enrolled on the MSc in Critical Care programme, to be offered as an alternative to the current 60-credit dissertation.</p>

The programme team asked for APRC's view on whether to remove the Year 3 progression hurdle as the courses are derived from Year 2 of the programme. The Convener believes that Regulation 56 should be waived for the programme. APRC noted that as the award requirements will not change and therefore the progression requirement is not a key concern.

APRC approved the option of a fully taught Year 3 for students enrolled on the MSc in Critical Care programme, as an alternative to the existing 60-credit dissertation.

The School were advised to give further thought to the progression hurdle and APRC agreed to consider any business arising from this at the March e-business meeting.

15. Amendment to Support for Study Policy - APRC 22/23 6L

For approval

The Deputy Convener, Professor Patrick Hadoke, convened this item.

This item was introduced by Dr Paul Norris, Convener of APRC.

This paper is to submit draft changes to the Support for Study Policy in relation to ongoing discussions from January 2022. The Committee were invited to approve the proposed change, which has been discussed with Colleges and the Disability and Learning Support Service. The Deputy Secretary, Students is continuing to consult on substantive changes to the policy, however this update is being presented for approval ahead of a further and more in-depth review of the policy.

The Students Association and The Advice Place noted that they are eager to be involved in any future discussions and consultation on the policy.

There was concern raised regarding the wording under 9.2 and a request that the following text be removed from the policy: 'they have been discharged from hospital.'

There was concern regarding making this change without due consideration and this would be referred back to the Deputy Secretary, Students to take forward as part of the in-depth review of the policy.

APRC approved the revised wording presented, subject to the second bullet under 7.4 being amended to read 'inviting the student to attend...'

16. Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review 2021/22 - Verbal Update

To note and comment

This item was introduced by Ms Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer, who provided an update on the Committees recent progress against actions in response to the 2021/22 review, approved at the January meeting.

The External Review of Senate and its Committees is currently underway and Committee members were invited to complete a survey and volunteer to attend a focus group.

There has been a coordination of work for items of common business across Committees, including the Assessment and Feedback work. This will be ongoing throughout the year.

Standing Committee Conveners are considering how to respond to a motion approved at the 12 October Senate meeting relating to reasonable additions to their committee to improve BAME, student, and trade union representation. A paper will be presented to Senate's 29 March meeting.

The Senate Committees Newsletter has resumed with the first issue circulated in December. A subsequent issue is in the pipeline however has not been produced as yet due to Academic Services capacity constraints.

17.	Committee Priorities for 2023-24 - APRC 22/23 6N To note and comment This item was introduced by Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services. This paper invites Committee members to comment on potential priorities for the Committee to focus on in 2023-24. This will assist the Conveners of the Standing Committees to present a plan for approval by Senate at its meeting on 24 May 2023. The Committee made the following comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ongoing work around Coursework Extensions and Special Circumstances should be added to the priorities.• There is a suggestion that Assessment Regulations should be reviewed alongside the Curriculum Transformation work to allow this to be fed into CTP discussions. This would be considered however Academic Services capacity may be a constraint.
18.	Any Other Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tom Ward invited members to submit expressions of interest by 31 March to be a member of the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group.- Members were reminded that Senate will take place on 29 March. Members who also sit on Senate were encouraged to attend.- An email would be circulated to the Committee with a survey on the Student Partnership Agreement consultation. The deadline for responses is 10 April.- Paul Norris will be demitting his College role at the end of the academic year and the Convenorship of APRC will become available. An expression of interest will be circulated to members ahead of the next meeting.- Thanks were extended to Tom Ward for his support to the Committee and best wishes for the future. Tom is leaving the University at the end of March.- Apologies were extended to the Committee for the late circulation of papers for the 23 March meeting, which was unavoidable due to unforeseen circumstances. This would be rectified moving forward.