The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

**Meeting to be held on Thursday 23 May 2019 at 2pm
in the Raeburn Room, Old College**

AGENDA

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

2. **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 25 April 2019**   SQAC 18/19 5A

3. **Conveners Communications**   Verbal

4. **Matters Arising**

     For Discussion

5. Senate Themes for 2019/20 meetings   SQAC 18/19 5B

6. External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy   SQAC 18/19 5C

7. SSLC escalation of issues project   SQAC 18/19 5D

8. SSLC Guidance update   SQAC 18/19 5E

9. Student Voice Policy   SQAC 18/19 5F

10. Providing Summaries of Student Feedback to School Representatives Pilot update   SQAC 18/19 5G

11. Thematic Review : 2018-19 initial findings report   SQAC 18/19 5H

     For Information and Formal Business

12. Service Excellence Programme: Student Administration and Support update   Presentation

13. College Annual Quality Reports: update on actions   SQAC 18/19 5I

14. ELIR 4 – Outcomes of Reviews   SQAC 18/19 5J

15. Internal Review Reports and Responses   SQAC 18/19 5K

16. **Any Other Business**

17. **Date of Next Meeting**: Thursday 19 September 2019 2pm (venue tbc)

<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 25 April 2019
at 2pm in the Torridon Room, Charles Stewart House**

Present:

Professor Tina Harrison (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Dr Shereen Benjamin	Associate Dean (Quality Assurance) College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science
Brian Connolly	Secretary to Senatus Quality Assurance Committee, Academic Services
Dr Gail Duursma	School Representative (Engineering), College of Science and Engineering
Brian Green	Deputy Associate Principal (Learning & Teaching), University of Strathclyde
Dr Jeni Harden	School Representative (School of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Nichola Kett	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team, Academic Services
Dr Linda Kirstein	Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture, College of Science and Engineering
Sarah McAllister	Head of Operations & Projects & Assistant Director, Institute for Academic Development
Diva Mukherji	Vice President (Education), Students' Association
Dr Claire Phillips	Dean of Quality Assurance, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

Apologies:

Lisa Dawson	Director of Student Systems and Administration
Dr Katherine Inglis	School Representative (Literatures, Languages and Cultures), College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science
Megan Brown	Schools Engagement Officer, Edinburgh University Students' Association

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

The Convenor welcomed Paula Webster (Head of Student Data and Surveys, Student Systems) attending on behalf of Lisa Dawson.

2. **Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27 February 2019**

The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting.

3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

For Discussion

4. **Undergraduate Degree Classification**

4.1 **Undergraduate Degree Classification Analysis**

The Committee received the annual report on degree classification outcomes of successfully exiting undergraduates and thanked Jim Galbraith (Senior Strategic Planner, Governance and Strategic Planning) for preparing the paper.

The Committee noted that the proportion of first class and upper-second class degrees being awarded by UK higher education institutions is increasing and that this trend has provoked political interest in relation to the possible implications for academic standards. It was noted that the University remains in line with Russell Group comparators. It was also noted that most subject areas across the University are broadly in line with Russell Group comparators for their discipline and / or with the University average. The Committee will continue to monitor subject areas for patterns in degree classification outcomes which diverge substantially from either the institution average or disciplinary comparators.

4.2 **Strategic Discussion of Trends in Undergraduate Degree Classification Outcomes (CLOSED PAPER)**

The Committee received a report identifying six subject areas where patterns in degree classification outcomes diverge substantially from either the institution average or disciplinary comparators. The paper included a summary of actions taken in response to the four areas identified as significant outliers by the Committee last year.

The Committee discussed the following statistically significant outliers identified in the report:

- **Law** (also identified as an outlier last year) - the proportion of firsts awarded is significantly **above** the Russell Group average when averaged over 4 years (and also for 2017-18 in isolation).

- **Architecture** (also identified as an outlier last year) – the proportion of firsts awarded is significantly **above** the Russell Group average when averaged over 4 years (however not for 2017-18 graduates in isolation).

- **Maths** (also identified as an outlier last year) - the proportion of firsts awarded is significantly **above** the Russell Group average when averaged over 4 years (and also for 2017-18 graduates in isolation).

- **Computer Science** - the proportion of firsts awarded is significantly **above** the Russell Group average when averaged over 4 years (and also for 2017-18 graduates in isolation).

- **Education** (also identified as an outlier last year) - the proportion of firsts awarded is significantly **below** the Russell Group average when averaged over 4 years (and also for 2017-18 in isolation).

- **Engineering and Technology** - the proportion of firsts awarded is significantly **below** the Russell Group average when averaged over 4 years (and also for 2017-18 in isolation).

The Committee noted that while there may be good reasons for these areas to have these patterns of degree outcomes, it may be appropriate to clarify the position. The Committee agreed that a specific communication should be sent to each of the six Schools identified inviting them to reflect on their degree classification outcome data and provide an analysis of their context.

Action: Academic Services to contact the Schools listed above to inform them that they are outliers and that a detailed reflection on degree classification outcomes will be required within their annual quality report.

Action: Student Systems to produce a report comparing data on student entry qualifications with degree outcomes. The report will be submitted to the School Annual Quality Report sub-group meeting in September.

5. **External Examiner Taught Policy Review**

The Committee discussed proposed changes to the External Examiner Policy. The following was agreed:

- **External Examiner Reporting System** – the Committee agreed to a five year retention schedule for External Examiner reports held in the system (in line with the current published University retention schedule).

    Action: Academic Services to submit request to Student Systems for five year retention schedule.

- **Conflicts of Interest** – the Committee was not supportive of a new clause requiring Committee approval of exceptional appointments in relation to conflicts of interest. The Committee was in agreement that Colleges have robust processes in place and therefore this extra approval step was unnecessary. Instead, the Policy should state that the Committee devolves responsibility to the College and that they will be responsible for reporting annually to the Committee on numbers of External Examiners appointed exceptionally with conflicts of interest and any related emerging themes.

- **Exam paper approval** – the Committee was not supportive of the proposal to remove the need for External Examiners to approve exam papers. The Committee was in agreement that the rigour of the current approach was an important element of the system.

- **Programme External Examiner** – the Committee was in agreement that the Programme External Examiner role (introduced in August 2016) is working well and performs an increasingly important element in the quality assurance process.

- **External Examiners for Taught Programmes Handbook** – the Committee approved the proposal to archive the Handbook.

- **Appointment Letters** – the Committee approved the minor changes to the appointment and one year extension templates for consistency with data protection regulations.

- **Reporting deadlines** – the Committee was in agreement that the current reporting deadlines (31 July for undergraduate and 30 November for postgraduate taught) should not be changed in the Policy. However, it was noted that some areas would like to encourage External Examiners to submit reports before the stated final deadlines. **Action: Academic Services to check the legality of having a different date in the External Examiner appointment letter.**

Action: Academic Services to confirm whether the changes to the Taught Assessment Regulations (TAR) cover MRes or integrated degrees.

The Committee **approved** the changes (with amendments as agreed above) to the External Examiner Taught Policy.

Action: Academic Services will circulate the policy, with changes approved by the Committee, to Curriculum and Student Progression Committee for comment. Academic Services will submit a final draft, incorporating any further proposed amendments, to the final meeting of the Committee in May.

6.   **Review of the Structure of the Senate Committees: Initial Proposals for Consultation**

The Committee discuss the initial proposals for changes to the structure and membership of the Senate Committees. It was noted that there were no specific proposals for changes to the Committee's remit or membership. The Committee agreed that it would explore ways to strengthen links with the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) so that the University's quality review processes inform strategic discussion of learning and teaching issues.

Action: Academic Services to explore options for an annual joint meeting of Senate Quality Assurance Committee and Senate Learning and Teaching Committee.

7.   **Senate Committee Planning 2019-20**

The Committee discussed priorities for the next academic session, 2019-20. The Committee agreed that continuing the work on Assessment and Feedback should be a priority.

8.   **Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) Accreditation Committee**:

The Committee discussed the Annual Report 2017-18 (which had been delayed due to staffing changes in the College of Science and Engineering) and the Annual Report 2018-19. The Committee noted the suggestion from the Accreditation Committee that it may be more appropriate for the accreditation process to be overseen at University level rather than College level.

Action: Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture to discuss at College level and report back to the Committee.

For Information and Formal Business

9.   **Enhancement-led Institutional Review 2020: Final Contextualised Themes**

The Committee noted the final contextualised themes for information.

10.   **Analysis of Institutional Annual Statements 2017-18**

The Committee noted the analysis for information.

11.   **Internal Review Themes 2017/18 – Update**

The Committee noted the actions undertaken in response to the themes.

12.   **Internal Review Reports and Responses**

The Committee **confirmed** that it was content with the year-on progress of the Postgraduate Programme Review of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences and the Teaching Programme Review of Social Anthropology.

The Committee received and discussed a tabled paper which followed on from the year-on progress of the Teaching Programme Review of Medicine. The Convenor noted that the paper did not include details of a follow-up meeting with the School that she had attended in regard to recommendations 1 and 2. The Committee also noted that it was unclear whether the difficulties with the allocation of funding, referred to in the responses to recommendations 1 and 2, were specific to NHS Scotland or NHS Lothian.

Action: Medicine to resubmit the year-on response report with an update reflecting on the discussions with the Convenor and clarifying the source of the allocation funding difficulties.

13.   **Directors of Quality Strategic Development Sessions**

The Committee noted the summary report for information.

Action: Committee Secretary to send the summary report to LTC for information.

Action: Academic Services to circulate summary report to Directors of Quality and gather feedback on the sessions to identify what kind of support sessions the Directors of Quality would find most useful going forward.

14. **Knowledge Strategy Committee – Update**

The Committee noted the update for information.

15. **Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

16. **Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 23 May 2019 at 2pm in the Raeburn Room, Old College

<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

23 May 2019

Senate Themes for 2019/20 Meetings

<u>Executive Summary</u>

The Presentation and Discussion section of the Senate meetings is open to all members of staff and poses an opportunity to consider and take part in discussion on a key strategic theme.

In each session, presentations are made on a high level academic matter, intended to generate discussion. The session takes place at the beginning of Senate meetings and runs for 90 minutes.

The following themes have been covered in Presentation and Discussion sections in the past two years:

2018/19
- **Teaching and Academic Careers**
  Professor Charlie Jeffery, Senior Vice-Principal
- **The Research Excellence Framework**
  Professor Jonathan Seckl, Vice-Principal Planning, Resources and Research Policy
- **Widening Participation**
  Professor Charlie Jeffery, Senior Vice-Principal

2017/18
- **The Future of Distance Learning**
  Melissa Highton, Assistant Principal Online Learning and Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services
- **Edinburgh in the City: Partnering to Support Inclusion**
  Professor Lesley McAra, Assistant Principal, Community Relations
- **Student Employability**
  Shelagh Green, Director of Careers and Employability

<u>How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?</u>
Leadership in Learning and Research

<u>Action requested</u>
The Committee is invited to make suggestions for themes for the Presentation and Discussion sections for Senate in 2019/20.

<u>How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?</u>
Suggested themes will be passed to the Principal, who will decide the presentation and discussion themes in 2019/20.

<u>Resource/Risk/Compliance</u>

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   None

2. **Risk assessment**
   No. Since the paper aims to generate ideas rather than to recommend a specific course of action, it is not necessary to undertake a risk analysis

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   No. Since the paper aims to generate ideas rather than to recommend a specific course of action, it is not necessary to undertake an equality and diversity assessment

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open

Originator of the paper

Theresa Sheppard, Academic Services.
2 May 2019

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

23 May 2019

External Examiners for Taught Programmes:

Policy review stage 2

Executive Summary

The Committee approved amendments to External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy in April 2019. Curriculum and Student Progression Committee was invited to comment on the amendments. The only comments received related to the retention schedule seeking reassurance that consideration of part-time students had been taken into account in approving a five year timeframe.

The paper provides the final draft for approval by Quality Assurance Committee. The final draft retains exam paper approval by External Examiners and College approval of exceptional appointments under qualifications and expertise, and conflicts of interest.

Advice from Legal Services is that the reporting deadline in appointment letters, which constitute the External Examiner contract, should not differ from the deadline stated in the policy. However, Colleges can encourage External Examiners to submit their reports earlier that the stated deadlines if required.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
The paper is consistent with the University strategic plan objective of leadership in learning and the Committee priority of an ongoing programme of policy reviews.

Action requested
Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) to approve the draft policy for publication.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
Committee members to disseminate information through appropriate College committees and communication channels. Academic Services will communicate the policy updates in the annual policies and regulations communication in June 2019.

Resource / Risk / Compliance
1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   Resource implications were identified in relation to the proposal for a five year retention schedule for reports in the External Examiner Reporting System. This will involve an additional support task for the Student Systems Operations team, which is expected to be met from within existing resources.
2. **Risk assessment**

The External Examiner system is a key mechanism for ensuring that the University's provision is of a high standard. The proposed policy changes are intended to mitigate the risks associated with inconsistent operation of the External Examiner system.

3. **Equality and Diversity**

   The changes are designed to harmonise rather than substantively change procedures. There is no reason to think that these proposed changes will have any equality and diversity implications. Academic Services will update the current [Equality Impact Assessment](#) (published in 2015) once QAC has agreed the final policy document.

4. **Freedom of information**

   The paper is **open**

Originator of the paper
Susan Hunter, Academic Services
15 May 2019

External Examiners For Taught Programmes Policy

Purpose of Policy

The policy sets out the role, powers and responsibilities the University assigns to its External Examiners for undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes. The Policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of Schools, Colleges and at the Institutional level for external examining processes.

Overview

The policy replaces:(i) Code of Practice for External Examiners of Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes and (ii) Guidance to Schools/Colleges regarding the Freedom of Information and Data Protection implications of the University's Code of Practice on External Examining

Scope: Mandatory Policy

This policy applies to External Examiners, staff who are engaged in assessment, processes involving External Examiners appointed for undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes or courses and those involved in development of Course or Programme Handbooks. The policy must be applied, unless an opt out has been approved by Quality Assurance Committee or as otherwise stated in the policy, on the basis of a case proposed by a College. The "Application of the policy" provides guidance and must be applied, unless the College has approved an exemption on the basis of a case proposed by a School. The approving body records concessions and exemptions.

Contact Officer	Susan Hunter	Academic Policy Officer	Susan.Hunter5@ed.ac.uk

Document control

Dates	Approved: 18.04.2017	Starts: 28.05.2015	Equality impact assessment: 28.05.2015	Amendments: April 2017 Sept 2017 Sept 2018 April 2019	Next Review: 2021/22

Approving authority	Quality Assurance Committee
Consultation undertaken	Working Group of Quality Assurance Committee
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Academic Services
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	Taught Assessment Regulations www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations/assessment Guidance on policy, principle and operation of Boards of Examiners: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners
UK Quality Code	UK Quality Code, External Expertise
Policies superseded by this policy	Code of Practice for External Examiners of Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes, all previous versions of this policy
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.
Keywords	External Examiner, Board of Examiners

External Examiners For Taught Programmes Policy

Contents

Introduction

1. The University's Taught Assessment Regulations govern the conduct of assessment and examinations. This policy sets out the role, powers and responsibilities the University assigns to its External Examiners for undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes.

External Examiners For Taught Programmes Policy

All sections of the policy apply to External Examiners appointed to a course(s) or taught programme(s), referred to as Course External Examiners and Programme External Examiners respectively, unless otherwise stated.

External Examiners' Roles

2. The External Examiner system forms a key part of the University's quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms. External Examiners provide independent and impartial assurance of:
   - Consistent assessment standards, processes and student achievements which are comparable with other institutions
   - the integrity and rigour of assessment
   - fair, reliable and transparent assessment and degree classification

External Examiners also
   - identify good practice and enhancements and
   - contribute to programme and course design.

3. External Examiners need to be able to:

   a) participate in assessment procedures (see sections 35-37); and

   b) comment and give advice on assessment procedures and standards and jointly agree, as members of the Board of Examiners, the detailed assessment, award and final degree results.

4. External Examiners have the right to see any assessment material pertinent to the role and may comment about any aspect of a course or programme for which they are appointed as External Examiner.

5. Schools will not ask an External Examiner to assess directly the work of individual students unless this is explicitly stated in the External Examiner's terms of appointment. Where External Examiners are expected to advise on individual cases, the final decision will be made by the Board of Examiners, with consideration of the External Examiner's views.

6. Schools will determine which Programme or Course External Examiners may be required to have oversight of the decision process of the Undergraduate Progression Board.

7. Colleges or Schools may also choose to invite External Examiners to see and comment on reports and feedback related to curriculum review and quality of educational provision.

8. Schools may ask External Examiners to comment on the wider quality and enhancement aspects of a programme or course, such as its design, curriculum, mode of delivery and assessment methods.

External Examiners For Taught Programmes Policy

9. External Examiners are required to provide an annual report based on what they have observed of the University's assessment processes and students' assessed work.

Application

9.1 External Examiners should also comment on course content, balance and structure and on degree programme curricula. See sections 60, 61 and 62, which set out the expectations for External Examiners on completing External Examiner Reports.

Course External Examiners

10. The College appoints a Course External Examiner to each course. The Course External Examiner is expected:

   a) to assess and comment on whether the course enables students to achieve the defined learning outcomes and whether the assessment is appropriate in this regard;

   b) to consider the level of achievement of candidates on the course, in relation to standards elsewhere in the sector for the same kind of course within similar degree programmes;

   c) to review and approve, if appropriate, all examination papers and assessment criteria for the courses examined;

   d) to scrutinise a representative sample of all assessed work across each of the courses examined in order to judge whether marks are fairly and consistently applied to students across the courses, and whether markers are applying the marking scheme consistently and using the full range of marks where justified;

   e) to participate as a member of the relevant Board of Examiner meetings and to agree jointly the decisions of the Board of Examiners; and

   f) to be satisfied that the business of the Board of Examiners is correctly and robustly carried out, in line with the University's policies and regulations.

Application

10.1 The College can appoint a Course External Examiner for multiple courses, where appropriate. Colleges may appoint a Programme External Examiner to act as Course External Examiner for one or more courses.

External Examiners For Taught Programmes Policy

Programme External Examiner

11. The College appoints at least one Programme External Examiner to each programme that leads to a higher education award.

12. For combined degree programmes, the *"owning"* School is responsible for recommending Programme External Examiners for appointment by the College.

Application

12.1   Colleges can appoint a single Programme External Examiner for multiple programmes, including their exit awards, where appropriate.

12.2   A Programme External Examiner may be appointed to a programme and also act as a Course External Examiner for one or more courses. Where no Course External Examiners are appointed, the Programme External Examiner will also act as the Course External Examiner for the courses within the programme.

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13. The College appoints Programme External Examiners to give oversight of a whole programme. They are expected:

   a) to assess and comment on whether the programme design enables students to achieve the defined learning outcomes for the programme;

   b) to affirm that the programme meets recognised national standards for the final award;

   c) to consider the application of the scheme of award for classification of honours to ensure it is correctly and fairly applied to all students on the programme;

   d) to participate as a member of the relevant Board of Examiner meetings and to agree jointly the decisions of the Board of Examiners; and

   e) to be satisfied that the business of the Board of Examiners is correctly and robustly carried out, in line with the University's policies and regulations.

Application

13.1   Programme External Examiners do not necessarily need to have knowledge of all the subject areas covered by the programme in order to perform the role of Programme External Examiner. The Programme External Examiner's role is to have oversight of the academic standards for the programme(s) and/or award(s) for which they are appointed. The University's Taught Assessment Regulations provide further

information about the operation of the Board of Examiners:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf

Appointment

14. Colleges, on behalf of the University, are responsible for appointing External Examiners Colleges must have robust and documented mechanisms for approval of appointments in place.

15. Schools make nominations to the College after consultation with the staff members teaching the course or programme and having ascertained that the proposed individual is willing to accept the nomination as External Examiner.

Application

15.1   Schools and Colleges may operate different nomination and appointment processes depending on their respective quality assurance structures. Nominations are made in the name of the relevant Head of School and appointments are approved in the name of the Head of College. The information contained in the External Examiner nomination form should affirm to the College that the person nominated has the necessary authority and experience and meets the other requirements set out in relation to qualifications / expertise, conflicts of interest and terms of office below.

Selection

16. Schools and Colleges select External Examiners from suitably qualified people who meet the qualifications and expertise outlined in this policy (See sections 20 and 21). Prior to appointment, Schools and Colleges must also consider any potential conflicts of interest (see section 22).

17. The number of External Examiners for any particular degree programme or course should be sufficient to cover the range of studies therein. More than one External Examiner may be needed where there is a large number of students, the course or programme covers a wide range of studies, and/or a large volume of academic work contributes to the course or programme.

Application

17.1   In specialised subjects where the pool of expertise is small, it may be necessary to appoint a single External Examiner to more than one Board of Examiners

> simultaneously. Schools should exercise judgement in allocating an individual External Examiner a manageable workload.

18. External Examiners should normally be resident in the United Kingdom.

Application

18.1 If the proposed External Examiner is resident abroad, and planning to undertake work in the UK, the School must take account of UK visa and immigration requirements, travel costs and, where appropriate, check that the College is prepared to pay the cost of travel to Edinburgh before proposing the appointment.

18.2 Where an External Examiner from outside the UK is appointed, the School should confirm that the individual has the required knowledge of the UK Higher Education system.

18.3 Human Resources' website provides information on Right to Work in the UK and information and guidance for recruiters on immigration and visa requirements. See: https://www.edweb.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/recruitment/recruiters-guide/appointment/rtw-checks [EASE log in required].

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19. Schools must take account of any professional validation by external organisation or professional bodies if these are required in the discipline.

Qualifications and Expertise

20. In order to ensure that External Examiners are competent to undertake the responsibilities expected of them, only individuals who can show appropriate evidence of the following will be appointed:

   a) appropriate knowledge and understanding of the UK HE Sector's agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards, including the relevant subject benchmarks, the national qualifications frameworks and UK Quality Code for Higher Education (See https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code), along with sufficient experience of quality assurance and enhancement processes;

   b) a high degree of competence and experience in the fields covered and the necessary academic experience and subject knowledge to be able to identify good practice and recommend enhancements;

   c) sufficient standing and experience to be able to command authority and the respect of academic peers and, where relevant, professional peers;

   d) relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate.

External Examiners from outside the HE system, for example from industry or the professions, may be appropriate in certain circumstances;

e) competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures;

f) awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula;

g) familiarity with the standard expected of students to achieve the award that is to be assessed;

h) fluency in English and, where programmes are delivered or assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language(s); and

i) competence and experience relating to the enhancement of the student learning experience.

Application

20.1 In addition to the above, Schools may wish to develop their own School-specific guidance on the requisite qualifications and experience for External Examiners, as appropriate to their own specific disciplines.

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21. In exceptional circumstances, the College may approve the appointment of an External Examiner who does not meet the criteria with respect to standing and/or experience. Requests for appointments of External Examiners in these circumstances must be supported by a School recommendation. Colleges will not approve this type of exceptional appointment for a sole Programme External Examiner for a specific degree programme. Colleges will report annually to Senate Quality Assurance Committee on exceptional appointments of External Examiners who do not meet the criteria for qualifications and experience stated in this policy.

Application

21.1 These exceptional circumstances may arise where the School seeks appointment of an External Examiner from industry or where the nominee has no previous experience as an External Examiner. Where the College appoints an External Examiner who is not an academic for a particular course, the School will need to ensure that a mechanism for assuring academic standards are maintained; for example, by having another External Examiner who is an academic on the Board of Examiners.

21.2 Where an External Examiner has no previous experience as an External Examiner for any institution, a more experienced External Examiner will be appointed to act as mentor to work with the first-time External Examiner to provide guidance and to ensure that the Examiner fulfils the requirements of their role. Schools must consider whether first-time External Examiners have additional information and development needs when compared with experienced examiners.

External Examiners For Taught Programmes Policy

Conflicts of Interest

22. External Examiners must be wholly impartial and independent of the University, its staff, governing body and relevant partners. Individuals in any of the following categories will not be appointed as External Examiners:

    a) Members of the University Court, University Committee members or employees of the University.

    b) Anyone with a current or previous personal, family or legal relationship with a student being assessed. (See also 25)

    c) Anyone who is, or knows they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study or any of the courses in question.

    d) Anyone significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme(s) or course(s) in question. Significant involvement in this context means directly involved with a close knowledge of one another's work.

    e) Former staff or students of the institution, unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by or with the individual have completed their programme(s) of study.

    f) Anyone whose appointment would create a reciprocal external examining arrangement involving equivalent programmes at another higher education institution.

    g) Anyone whose appointment immediately follows the appointment of an External Examiner from the same department in the same higher education institution.

    h) Any nominee who has a colleague from the same department of the same institution already acting on the Board of Examiners to which the nominee is to be appointed.
    i) Any nominee who has an honorary position at the University or has held an honorary position at the University within the last five years.

Application

22.1   This is a non-exhaustive list. Schools and Colleges must use their judgement when ascertaining whether a conflict of interest exists.

22.2   With regard to section 22 (f), staff who perform External Examiner duties in other Universities should keep their School informed in order to ensure that reciprocal arrangements involving equivalent programmes do not occur.

22.3   Schools should avoid a situation where a member of University staff and a member of staff of another Higher Education Institution are both simultaneously sitting on the same Board of Examiners at both institutions. To maintain objectivity, Schools should

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attempt to select examiners from the full pool of experts available rather than continually re-appointing from a small, familiar group.

23. The External Examiner must keep the School informed of any changes in circumstances that may give rise to a conflict of interest. The School should inform the College when a conflict of interest arises.

24. In exceptional circumstances, the College may approve the appointment of an External Examiner where a conflict of interests has been identified. Requests for appointments of External Examiners in these circumstances must be supported by a School recommendation. Such an appointment will not be approved for a sole Programme External Examiner for a specific degree programme. Colleges will report annually to Senate Quality Assurance Committee on exceptional appointments of External Examiners with conflicts of interest categories stated in this policy.

> **Application**
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> 24.1   Exceptional circumstances may arise when a limited pool of expertise is available in a specific discipline or subject area.

Disclosure of intimate relationships

25. The University requires any member of staff, including External Examiners, to disclose an intimate relationship with any University of Edinburgh student (see Policy on Disclosure of Intimate Relationships).

Terms of office

26. The duration of an External Examiner's appointment will be for four years. An exceptional extension of one year may be permitted, if necessary.

27. Where an External Examiner retires from their institution during their four year External Examiner term, their appointment with the University as an External Examiner will cease at the end of the relevant academic session. An exceptional extension of one year to ensure continuity may be approved.

28. An External Examiner who has completed their term of appointment is not eligible for a new appointment until five years have elapsed.

29. In view of the time commitment required to fulfil the duties of an External Examiner, it is recommended that an individual should hold no more than one other External Examiner appointment for courses or taught programmes during their period of employment as an External Examiner in the University.

External Examiners For Taught Programmes Policy

30. The University expects that the External Examiner has agreed with their own institution / employer the time commitment required for the role.

31. It is recommended that the period of office for all undergraduate and taught postgraduate External Examiners begins on 1 August, finishes on 31 October for all undergraduate External Examiners, and on 30 November for all postgraduate taught External Examiners.

Appointment and Induction

32. Once the relevant College has approved an External Examiner's nomination, the College, or School where the College has delegated this responsibility, will communicate with the External Examiner notifying them of their appointment.

Application

32.1 The appointment notification should include:

a) a formal letter of appointment and details of the External Examiner contract, including a statement on the External Examiner's duties. This should include the courses or programmes they are appointed for, deadline for return of the External Examiner report and a statement that the External Examiner will operate within this policy and within the University's other regulations and policies;

b) guidance on the payment of fees and expenses, including relevant forms. The School or College will provide an explanation of how the External Examiner's fee is calculated or the amount if a fee is set. It should be explained that the fee will be subject to the External Examiner's satisfactory fulfilment of their duties and will be paid on the receipt of the External Examiner's final report. The School / College will also provide information on the University's Expenses Policy; and

c) the process for raising serious concerns about academic standards. (See sections 62-63)

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33. Schools will brief External Examiners as appropriate so as to enable External Examiners to fulfil their duties, including giving due attention to the needs of first-time External Examiners.

Application

33.1 This information should include links to:

- relevant sections of the University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study,
- course and programme handbooks,
- objectives of the courses,
- curricula and teaching methods,
- methods of assessment and marking scales or grade schemes,

> - the schedule for aggregation of marks of the various components in the overall assessment and
> - any arrangements for credit on aggregate or reassessment of parts of the programme.
>
> The School must also ensure that the External Examiner is briefed on their oversight role, where they have one, for an Undergraduate Progression Board.

34. At the beginning of the academic session, the School should provide the following information to the External Examiner:

    a) information on dates of meetings;

    b) details of the Board of Examiners' composition;

    c) detailed arrangements for other examining activities such as attendance at orals or practicals; and

    d) any other material the School considers necessary for the External Examiner to fulfil their role effectively.

Termination of Appointment

35. The University can terminate an External Examiner's appointment at any time where the External Examiner is deemed not to have fulfilled their obligations or if a conflict of interest arises which cannot be satisfactorily resolved. External Examiners who wish to resign before the end of their normal term of office must give three months' notice in writing to the appointing College.

> **Application**
>
> 35.1 Schools are expected to review the work of External Examiners and make recommendations for termination to the College for contractual non-compliance should this become necessary. The College is responsible for monitoring the External Examiners' compliance with their contracts. Schools and Colleges must make reasonable efforts to resolve issues of non-compliance through discussions with the External Examiner concerned. In rare cases where these matters cannot be resolved, termination of the appointment may be carried out by the Head of College on the basis of advice from Human Resources. The reasons for the termination of the appointment along with efforts to resolve the issues, should be fully documented.

Participation in Assessment

36. External Examiners are full members of the Board(s) of Examiners. All External Examiners have the right to attend meetings of all relevant Boards of Examiners.

37. In order to be quorate, at least one External Examiner must participate in and approve the decisions of the Board of Examiners.

38. External Examiners must participate in all Board of Examiners meetings relevant to their appointment. External Examiners are expected to attend in person at least one Board of Examiners meeting each academic year.

Application

38.1 If an External Examiner is not able to attend at least one Board of Examiners meeting in a year, their non-attendance must be reported to the College. The Taught Assessment Regulations define "attendance" and "participation".

Course External Examiners

39. In some disciplines, an External Examiner may need to assess students directly in some parts of the assessment (for example orals) and this should be explicitly stated in the External Examiner's contract. In all other cases, the External Examiner must never be asked to mark, grade or otherwise assess directly the work of individual students.

40. External Examiner(s) must review and approve draft examination papers. Draft examination papers should be accompanied by model answers, where applicable and appropriate, or solutions and the marking schemes to be applied.

41. Schools will provide Course External Examiners with a sample of students' assessed work for each component of summative assessment on the course (for example, examination scripts or student coursework) to review.

Application

41.1 The samples must provide the External Examiners with enough evidence to determine that internal marking is of an appropriate standard and is consistent. External Examiners should see samples of summative assessments from the top, middle and bottom of the range. The principles governing the selection of these samples must be agreed in advance and communicated to the External Examiner.

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42. Schools may ask External Examiners to jointly invigilate practical, oral or performance elements of exams with members of academic staff. Schools must inform students if oral assessment arrangements will involve an External Examiner.

Application

42.1 Where External Examiners directly conduct oral examinations, Schools must provide the necessary information about the oral assessment to allow them to judge the student's performance. Where the External Examiner does not directly examine the

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student, they have the right to view oral examinations and presentations (either in person or by audio-visual means) where practicable and proportionate. See the regulation on "Oral assessment" in the University's Taught Assessment Regulations: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf

43. External Examiners should have the same amount of involvement in both the content and process of practical examinations as they have for written papers and coursework.

44. Some Arts disciplines require assessment by live performance or exhibition. Participation by External Examiners in these forms of assessment must meet current standards and practices of the sector and relevant professional bodies, including, where appropriate the creation of retainable documentation of the performance and/or exhibition.

Programme External Examiners

45. The Programme External Examiner approves jointly, as a member of the Board, the decisions of the Board of Examiners regarding students' programme outcomes, including award and classification. The Programme External Examiner confirms that these decisions are taken in line with University regulations and published criteria.

46. Programme Boards of Examiners determine programme outcomes based on course marks which have already been ratified by a Board of Examiners. Members of the Programme Board, including the Programme External Examiner, are not entitled to challenge ratified course marks.

47. Programme External Examiners may be required to have oversight of the decision process of an Undergraduate Progression Board. This oversight may be remote; the External Examiner does not need to be physically present.

Application

47.1   The Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy sets out the responsibilities of External Examiners who have oversight of the decision process of the Board and how Schools can effectively support External Examiners in fulfilling their role.

www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ug_progression_boards.pdf

External Examiner Reports

Submission

48. External Examiners are required to submit a report annually to the Principal of the University via the External Examiner Reporting System.

49. External Examiners are also required to provide an additional reflective overview at the end of their periods of office.

50. The deadlines for submission of the External Examiner reports are 31 July for undergraduate and 30 November for postgraduate taught. External Examiners may submit their annual reports at any time prior to the deadline.

51. External Examiners are expected to provide informative comment on the extent to which:

a) the University is maintaining threshold academic standards set for its awards in accordance with the frameworks for higher education qualifications and applicable subject benchmark statements;

b) the assessment process measures student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the course(s) or programme(s) and is conducted in line with the University's policies and regulations;

c) the academic standards and the achievements of the students are comparable with those of other UK higher education institutions of which the External Examiner has experience.

52. External Examiners are expected to provide informative comment on quality assurance and quality enhancement and are asked to do the following:

a) confirm that sufficient evidence was received to enable the role to be fulfilled and if evidence was insufficient, give details;

b) state whether issues raised in the previous report(s) have been, or are being, addressed to their satisfaction;

c) address any issues as specifically required by any relevant professional body and highlight areas of good practice and innovation; and

d) recommend, where appropriate, opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities provided to students.

53. External Examiners are expected to provide informative comment on teaching, course and programme structures and content including:

a) good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment; and

b) opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities provided to students.

Actions in response to External Examiners' Reports

54. Schools are responsible for ensuring that they have robust mechanisms in place for handling External Examiner reports and for taking appropriate action where required in response to those reports.

53. A senior person responsible for teaching and quality assurance matters (the Academic Response Co-ordinator), designated by the Head of School, will take responsibility for responding to each External Examiner report. Schools will respond to External Examiner reports within six weeks so that information in the reports is acted upon promptly in order to

maximise its use to Schools and students. This response will demonstrate that the University has given full and serious consideration to the comments made and indicate what actions will be taken as a result.

54. It is the College's responsibility to oversee the operation of School processes for responding to External Examiners' reports. Each College is also responsible for handling issues or suggestions arising from External Examiners' reports that pertain to the College, so that Colleges can take appropriate action where required.

55. The College is responsible for identifying issues or suggestions that have institutional level implications and raising these matters in appropriate forums at an institutional level.

56. The College is responsible for ensuring that issues raised in a particular report, that are judged to be particularly serious or important, are notified to the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance acting on behalf of the Principal. This is only likely to occur in exceptional cases where institutional action is necessary

57. Schools may choose to send the reports of External Examiners who are subject to validation by external organisations, to the relevant organisation, provided they are accompanied by information setting the Examiner's comments into context and noting any action that will be taken as a result of the report.

Analysis of Themes arising from External Examiner Reports

58. Colleges and the University's Senatus Quality Assurance Committee use information from External Examiner reports to identify common themes in order to help shape their strategic approach to quality assurance and quality enhancement, and to enhance the student experience.

59. Schools will make themes extracted from External Examiner reports, and the Schools' summarised response to these themes, available to student representatives.

Application

59.1   Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLC) should consider themes arising from External Examiners' reports and summarised responses from Schools/Subject areas. Each School should decide which SSLC is most appropriate for the consideration of the summary reports.

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60. Students have the right to view External Examiners' reports. Schools are responsible for making External Examiner reports available to students on request.

Application

60.1   See sections 64 - 71 for further guidance on freedom of information and data protection matters. Schools should record the frequency of requests.

External Examiners For Taught Programmes Policy

Expenses and Fees

61. Colleges are responsible for determining how to set External Examiner fees, and for arranging for the payment of fees and expenses. In some circumstances, Colleges may devolve responsibility for paying fees and expenses to Schools. Payment of expenses must be in line with the University's Expenses Policy.

> **Application**
>
> 61.1   Payment of the External Examiner's fee is made annually by the Finance Office after receipt of a completed report from the External Examiner, and on the basis of payment instruction from Colleges or Schools.

Causes for Serious Concern

62. External Examiners have the right to raise any matter of serious concern with the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance, who acts on behalf of the Principal, if necessary, by means of a separate confidential report. The Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance will respond in writing, outlining any actions to be taken as a result.

63. Where an External Examiner has a serious concern relating to systemic failings in the academic standards of a programme or programmes, and has exhausted all procedures internal to the University, including the submission of a confidential report to the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance, they may invoke the QAA's concerns scheme or inform the relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body.

Data Protection

Personal information of External Examiners

64. In order to administer the processes of appointing, managing, and paying fees to External Examiners, Schools and Colleges hold personal data regarding External Examiners in line with the University's Data Protection Policy.

Use of data by External Examiners

65. External Examiners have access to confidential information and must ensure that personal data are always held securely and are not disclosed to any unauthorised third party either accidentally, negligently, or intentionally.

66. External Examiners must not identify students or staff in their reports. It should be noted that even if a student or member of staff is not named it may be possible to identify them, for

example using a student's exam number or matriculation number, or a member of staff's job title.

67. Where an External Examiner identifies an individual, the individual has the right under the data protection law to make a subject access request.

Details of External Examiners

68. The names, positions and institutions of External Examiners must be included in the relevant course/programme handbook and made available to students. Where an External Examiner is appointed to fulfil a role on behalf of a professional body, this will be stated.

> **Application**
>
> 68.1 This information will also be made available to relevant staff in the University, and, where relevant, to external bodies such as the Quality Assurance Agency.
>
> 68.2 Schools must inform students, in the course/programme handbook, that students must not make direct contact with External Examiners, and that other routes exist for queries about the assessment process.
>
> 68.3 The University holds information on appointed External Examiners for no longer than is necessary. The Human Resources (HR) privacy notice and retention schedule give details of categories of information and how long the University holds the information.

External Examiner Reports

69. The University does not publish External Examiner reports. However, External Examiner Reports are disclosable upon receipt of a request for copies of the reports in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

> **Application**
>
> 69.1 Schools are responsible for making External Examiners' reports available to students and the public on request. There is no requirement to publish External Examiners' reports. Schools must take care to redact from the report any information about identifiable students.
>
> 69.2 If the School is unsure about any aspect of a request made under freedom of information or data protection law, they should contact their local practitioner or the Records Management Section. Requests for the disclosure of any restricted reports made directly and separately to the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance will be judged on a case by case basis in line with the University's freedom of information obligations.

> 69.3   External Examiner reports are accessible to those who have access to the EERS system and Business Information Suite. This means that a significant number of staff in the University are able to access External Examiner reports and Schools' responses. The External Examiner Reporting System includes a mechanism for reporting a data breach. System guides contain further information on using this tool.

70. External Examiner reports are held in the system for five years from submission.

71. Data protection advice is available from the local Data Protection Champion and the University Data Protection Officer. Information Security advice is available from the Information Security Division of IS. Advice on disclosure of information is available from the University's Records Management Section.

1 August 2019

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

23 May 2019

Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLC) escalation of issues

Executive Summary
This paper outlines the outcomes and proposals following a project with a small number of Schools and Student Representatives to explore different approaches to escalating issues that cannot be addressed within SSLCs.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
The paper is relevant to the Committee's responsibility for the quality assurance framework.

Action requested
The Committee is asked to discuss and approve the recommendations.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
Communication with Schools and Colleges will be managed by Academic Services.
Edinburgh University Students' Association will manage communications with students.

Resource / Risk / Compliance
1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   Resources will be required from Academic Services, Edinburgh University Students' Association, Schools and Colleges.
   Full student engagement is essential to the enhancement of the student experience.

2. **Risk assessment**
   There are risks associated with ineffectively responding to student feedback.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was carried out on the Principles and Operational notes for SSLCs in September 2015 and identified no major equality and diversity implications. A review of the EqIA will be carried out following discussion and agreement of the operational guidance proposal and the project recommendations by the Committee.

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open.

Key words
Student Staff Liaison Committee, SSLC, Student feedback, student voice

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15 May 2019

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

23 May 2019

Explore different approaches for Student/Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) to ensure clearer routes to escalate issues

Background

The University has a clear commitment to excellence in learning and teaching and enhancing the student experience. To ensure that the University maintains a high quality student experience, it is essential that all students have an opportunity throughout their study to reflect on and evaluate their experience of academic life and the wider service offering. The Student Voice policy was approved in November 2017 and its purpose is to outline the University's approach to gathering, learning from and responding to the student voice. The University engages with its students through a variety of mechanisms to learn from and respond to students individually, collectively or through their representatives.

Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) provide a formal mechanism for communication and discussion between academic, professional services staff and representatives of the student body, relating to all matters connected with improving the degree programmes and the student experience.

At the Senate meeting on 3 October 2018, the approach and action plan for student experience was presented. One of the areas to be actioned during 2018/19 was to enable student voice through an enhanced and responsive representative system, in particular, looking at Student Staff Liaison Committees to ensure there are clearer routes to escalate 'upwards' where matters can't be dealt with locally.

During 2018/19, Academic Services and the Students' Association undertook a project with a small number of Schools and School and Programme Representatives to explore different approaches to escalating issues that could not be addressed within SSLCs.

The Student Experience action plan also identified that a University wide suggestions and comment scheme be introduced. An anonymous suggestion box 'Have Your Say' was launched during 2018/19 offering staff and students an opportunity to comment on how to make the staff or student experience better: what's working well and what could be improved. This online system provides a rich source of feedback on issues students are experiencing and are concerned about, therefore it is important to consider how this information can be used to demonstrate closing the feedback loop. However, this system is not designed to capture or record action points from SSLC meetings and it is via SSLCs that students in their role as programme representatives may communicate important information about what would enhance the student experience and what they value about their interactions with the University.

SSLC Project consultation and conclusions

As part of the SSLC project, information was gathered and collated on the operational arrangements of SSLCs throughout the University. As reflected in Appendix 1, many examples of good practice exist, as well as mechanisms to escalate issues and inform students of the outcomes and actions taken. Nevertheless, this practice varies across Schools and based on feedback from students, a more consistent and robust approach would be welcomed.

During the SSLC project, views were obtained from students (21 attendees) as well as Academic and Professional Services staff from a number of Schools and Colleges. A key finding is that, at present there is not a clear or consistent way for issues which are relevant to student experience but cannot be addressed at programme or School level can be escalated to College or University committees.

Staff noted that they would welcome clarity on School Committee Structures and how these report into College and University level committee structures. In addition, College staff would welcome an overview of outcomes/actions from SSLCs to review how these matters might inform practice, policy and enhancements in strategic planning.

A consistent message from students was that SSLCs worked well when communication about roles, expectations and actions to be undertaken were clear. For example, a summary of actions taken were circulated to all students on the programme and in another School a weekly meeting between teaching staff and student representatives enabled prompt responses to issues raised. Items raised and actions taken are then posted to a blog on the School website which is open to all students.

The main challenges are that the diversity of existing approaches make it difficult to provide clarity in terms of expectations for SSLC roles and the interactions between the SSLC and other University and School committees. Although some SSLCs are functioning well for some programmes, students and staff highlighted the need for a more structured and robust way of responding to actions, responding to issues and closing the loop. To support this, suggestions included a portal or central repository to enable student and programme rep communication, and to hold SSLC agendas, minutes and actions.

Recommendations

We recognise the need for recommendations to be workable and cause minimal disruption for Schools, regardless of their SSLC structure. Therefore we propose that the following recommendations are considered for implementation at the start of 2019/20.

- The Senate Quality Assurance Committee is asked to discuss and consider who in each School would be the most appropriate post holder to ensure that escalated issues are followed up and reported back to the programme level SSLC. e.g. the remit of the Director of Teaching or the School Director of Quality

- Introduce a standing item on the SSLC agenda, the School Learning and Teaching Committee (or equivalent) Agenda and College Learning and Teaching Committee or Quality Committee (or equivalent) Agenda for noting issues to be escalated.

- Suggested routes to escalate issues beyond programme level SSLC:
  - Issues that cannot be addressed at the programme level SSLC be escalated to School level Committees such as Learning and Teaching or equivalent.

  - Issues that cannot be resolved at the School level to be escalated to the College level Learning and Teaching Committee or equivalent.

  - Issues that cannot be resolved at the College level to be escalated to the University Senate Learning and Teaching Committee or the Senate Quality Assurance Committee

  - Issues could be collated in a central repository to ensure University oversight and to enable themes to be identified and reviewed by College and the University.

- The Senate Learning and Teaching Committee and the Senate Quality Assurance Committee could consider and respond to any issues raised by SSLCs that are

reported to either committee by a School Committee via the relevant Associate Deans or by School Reps via the VP Education.

- The School Rep must be invited to attend the School Learning and Teaching Committee (or equivalent).

- To support a more effective and streamlined approach to recording and reporting on actions, we recommend Academic Services develop an action log template for Schools to use (if not already in place). This would record a note of the issue raised, who to report to and an agreed action point. A more detailed minute could be recorded if there is a fuller discussion on a particular item.

- We recommend that the SSLC guidance be revised and made policy in order to mandate particular approaches. However, we recognise that for some Schools 2019/20 will be an implementation year of the programme representation model. Therefore we suggest that Academic Services and the Students' Association work with Schools to support the implementation of the mandated sections. [See QAC Paper 18/19 5E]

- The Student Voice Policy should be revised in order to mandate particular approaches (as above). [see QAC paper 18/19 5F]

- Develop a graphically designed visual representation of the new student representation system to provide clarity of roles and reporting structures.

- During School and Programme representative training, provide clarity of roles and reporting structures. We suggest that a talking heads video could be developed to give an overview of the representation structure and could be voiced by the VP Education.

- The Students' Association to work with Schools to develop a Glossary of terms for School and Programme Representatives.

- Academic Services and the Students' Association organise a SSLC good practice sharing event (to be held prior to the start of AY 2019/20?). A number of examples were gathered during the consultation process as well as noted in Appendix 1 which could be shared across the institution for schools to consider adopting. This event may be particularly beneficial to those Schools wishing to explore ways to enhance their SSLC format e.g. student meeting conveners and minute takers.

- The approach of responding with 'You said, We did' does have strengths and where appropriate could be continued. Data provided by students across a range of sources could be analysed in a more systematic way and adding capacity to the Student Data and Surveys team so that collated actions from SSLC meetings, CEQs, NSS, PTES and PRES and other surveys could be analysed as part of a 'big data' project could provide insights into the Student Experience in a way that is not currently available.

During the pilot a number of items of positive practice were identified. Although these are not directly related to the process of escalating issues, we recommend that Colleges and Schools consider these practices to ensure that a more consistent approach can be taken:

- The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences held meetings with the School Reps, the Head of College and the Deans of Undergraduate and Postgraduate

Studies. This proved a useful exercise and we recommend that this practice is adopted across the University to ensure that a consistent approach is taken. At the same time this should help to build and strengthen the relationship between the School reps and College Senior Management.

- Schools should organise an induction and welcome meeting with the SSLC convener, Professional Services staff, the School rep and the incoming Programme Reps (if not already in place). The meeting should set expectations of the Rep roles and the School, and the Rep handover document should be used to inform discussion. It is hoped that this process will help to build and develop positive relationships.

Academic Services
SSLC School information and examples of good practice

2018-19

School	Number of SSLCs including PGT & PGR where relevant and groupings	Any examples of good practice/approaches to address issues
Chemistry	Two; one for years 1-3, one for year 4-5 and PGT	Additional informal drop-in sessions for class reps with the Director of Teaching and the Academic Administrator
History, Classics and Archaeology (HCA)	2 per semester	Chaired by students Agenda with standing items, including reports from reps and the societies All relevant staff are invited and come, including SSO, UGTO, HoSAs, Teaching Directors, Careers consultant, IT manager etc. UGD communications standing item on the agenda: addresses minutes and matters arising from SSLC and School Council; updates on new developments, news etc, answers to queries asked at previous SSLC, reminders what students asked for/ brought up and School actions in response For complaints we have a robust complaints procedure in place based on the University's own policy
Business School	2 x UG per semester (for Honours and Non Honours) 12 x MSc per semester (per MSc programme) 3 x year for full time MBA 3 x year for Exec MBA	Reps have better knowledge of key staff in school with whom to raise issues before and in between formal SSLC mechanisms e.g. in PGT can go straight to Programme Administrator; across the school, we invest time in building a strong relationship with the elected School Council UG and PG rep to understand out with the SSLC schedule what issues may be important to students.
GeoSciences	PGT – 2 per semester UG – 1 per semester for each degree area (Earth Sciences, Ecology & Environmental Sciences, Geography) PGR – ad hoc focus groups and a student-staff committee that meets once a semester	After each UG SSLC, we prepare a 'You Said, We Did' response to issues raised by students via SSLC's and 'stop/ start/ continue' postcards and post this online at https://www.ed.ac.uk/geosciences/teaching-organisation/ug-students/student-representation/you-said-we-did We link to this from our UG Student Information Hub on LEARN and advertise it via announcements/ email. For PGT, the 2 meetings per semester take a different format. The first does not include programme directors and is chaired by the DoPGT and also attended by an Independent Staff Advisor and the Head of Student Services. There is a session at the end of the meeting where the Chair and HoSS leaves the room and the students may talk in confidence to the ISA. Any issues raised are then escalated by the

		DoPGT. The second meeting includes Programme Directors, who are asked to respond both at the meeting and via annual programme reviews to any feedback/ issues raised by students at the SSLC. For PGR, we hold focus groups as required (i.e. to prepare for PPRs). We also have a meeting of the student-staff liaison committee once a semester where reps from all areas of the School meet with the DoR, Head of Tutor & Demonstrator training and Head of Student Services to discuss feedback and issues.
Social and Political Science (SPS) (Undergraduate)	6 UG SSLC	We made significant changes last year and are still bedding in. All our UG SSLCs are visible from a single Webpage, this will allow us to have visibility of issue across the school. In semester 2 we plan to undertake some additional work to encourage subject areas to actively use SSLC as vehicles to consult with students on a number of issues (items for TPR, consultation on potential programmes changes, etc). However in some cases, student attendance and interest in becoming SSLC reps was disappointingly low.
Social and Political Science (SPS) (Postgraduate)	PG level we have 2 SSLC's, one for PGT and one for PGR.	A brief survey suggests that at PG level we have 2 SSLC's, one for PGT and one for PGR. The representatives are elected although often there is little contest for the posts. When issues that touch on specific courses or programmes arise, the Graduate School directorate follow this up with relevant academic staff. The structure is thus fairly straightforward but seems to work. As a School, and more generally, we are moving to a system of fewer and better trained representatives, as per EUSA preferences.
Biological Sciences (UG)	Four SSLCs (one for each year group) for UG students.	Each UG year group's SSLC meets twice per year (once each semester). Each SSLC involves: the 12 student representatives for that year group, the Director of Teaching (DoT), Course Organisers for that semester, Teaching Organisation staff and Student Support Tutors. The students' views on the year as a whole are discussed during the meeting (they will have been prompted to collect feedback from their peers beforehand). Course-specific student feedback is channelled to the SSLC (student reps have been prompted to collect this from their peers; some course teams will have had separate meetings/feedback sessions). The Chair (DoT) endeavours to look for overall themes for the year group so that these can be addressed. Course-specific issues are fed back to the relevant Course Organisers for their attention/action. Action points are flagged for attention locally where possible (for example, to Course Organisers, DoT, staff in the teaching organisation). If action is required from elsewhere in the University, the action point is forwarded (for example, to other teaching organisations, estates/facilities, disability service etc.).

		Action points are reviewed periodically and the SSLC minutes are updated to indicate completion or provide an update/comment if action was not possible. This allows the DoT to report back to the students that their suggestions were considered and whether change was possible.
Biological Sciences (PGT)	3 SSLCs: • One for all campus-based MSc programmes at King's Buildings; • One for the MSc in Biodiversity and Taxonomy of Plants, delivered at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh; • One for online students, delivered ad hoc using Blackboard Collaborate.	Membership of the SSLC consists of all MSc Programme Directors, student representatives and the postgraduate admin and student support team. In semester 1 the meeting is convened by the Associate Director of Teaching for PGT; in semester 2 2017/18 a student convenor was trialled, this was successful and is hoped to be repeated. Agenda is set in advance, with some fixed items but an opportunity for staff and students to suggest additional items for discussion. Each programme representative gives a summary on behalf of their programme, and actions are taken forwards by the Programme Director or referred to the relevant Course Organiser as appropriate. Minutes are shared widely with the student community via the PGT student Wiki and disseminated by student representatives. Online SSLCs are set up ad hoc subject to student demand, which is low due to very small student numbers on programme.
Biological Sciences (PGR)	We have one PGR SSLC which meets two to three times per annum.	We have a wiki page which sets out information about the role, and should be updated with issues raised and responses here: https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SBSGRAD/Graduate+School+Staff-Student+Liaison+Committee
School of Engineering	SCEE08001 Engineering 1 – 1 meeting in Semester 1 Undergraduate students (split by Discipline): Chemical Engineering – 2 SSLCs, 1 per semester Civil and Environmental Engineering – 2 SSLCs, 1 per semester Electronics and Electrical Engineering – 2 SSLCs, 1 per semester Mechanical Engineering – 2 SSLCs, 1 per semester	Following the SSLC meeting we establish whether each issue raised belongs at School, College or University level and refer on as appropriate. We log all actions as well as any progress made. Depending on the issue it could be ETO liaising with relevant areas and Teaching Services Manager or Director of Teaching raising at College level. We would report back at the next SSLC on progress, (and are also looking into ensuring this is communicated wider to all student via our wiki.)

	Postgraduate Taught students (all programmes combined in the same meeting) - 2 SSLCs, 1 per semester	
School of Economics	2 x UG Pre-Hons SSLC; 1 x UG Hons SSLC, 1 x PGT, 1 x PGR	UG issues that cannot be addressed locally are feedback by UG Director to CUGLAT or by HOS to relevant forum.
Literatures, Languages and Cultures (PG)	**7 SSLCs in Semester 1** 1. Translation Studies (PGT & PGR) 2. Asian Studies (PGT & PGR) 3. Celtic & Scottish Studies (UG, PGT & PGR) 4. English Literature and Theatre (PGT & PGR) 5. Film (PGT – no PGR rep this year) 6. Islamic & Middle Eastern Studies (PGT & PGR) 7. European Languages & Cultures and Cross-Disciplinary (PGT & PGR)	1. The School asks representatives to provide an overview of the issues that are going to be raised in advance of the meeting; this allows the School time to review the agenda items and, if possible, look into issues in order to provide responses during the meeting itself. 2. The School recently moved to SSLCs by subject area to allow more in-depth discussion, down to the detail of specific pieces of coursework. With the new structure, we will be able to now present a review minutes of previous SSLC meeting to highlight where action has been taken to address these specific issues raised. This will help to close the feedback loop so students know how issues have been addressed. 3. The School sends members of academic and administrative staff to the SSLC meetings, so that questions can be addressed from both perspectives (if needed). 4. The School provides minutes of the meetings to attendees to circulate within Departments and within the programme cohorts. Minutes are also made available on a School Wiki so that students and staff can track comments, issues and actions over time.
R(D)SVS	1 SSLC per course for BVM&S and 1 per PGT programme.	Minutes are put on LEARN to ensure a wide audience can see the issues (not just the reps) which increases accountability for action. SSLC minutes are on the agenda for the post course review – ensuring actions are addressed. SSLC minutes are reviewed by the Independent Course Reviewer as part of the QA process.
Divinity	Biblical Studies	For 2019/20 we are looking to move to a single UG SSLC for all Divinity UG programmes and a single PG SSLC combining all Divinity PGT and PGR programmes.
	History of Christianity	
	Religious Studies level 8	
	Religious Studies levels 10/11	
	Theology and Ethics level 8	
	Theology and Ethics levels 10/11	

	World Christianity level 11	
	Approaches to Christianity level 11	
Physics & Astronomy	1 SSLC for UG & PGT students Student Forum for PhD students	At the moment we rely on local knowledge/contacts for passing on matters that can't be addressed at School level. These would then be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting when we report back to the committee. I think there is room for improvement in this area especially when it comes to student comments on catering at KB or the shuttle bus service as nothing ever seems to change with those issues
Edinburgh Medical School: Biomedical Sciences	Undergraduate (UG) degree programme-based SSLC meetings from academic year 2018/19. Each PGT programme has a dedicated programme SSLC.	The proposal is that SSLCs meet at the end of each semester with a remit to review courses in that semester and to discuss themes as defined by the remit, as appropriate. Degree-programme SSLC meetings will be held during Week 11 of S1 and S2. It is envisaged that nominated degree-programme student representatives will chair the SSLC meetings. Where this is not possible then the meetings will be chaired by the Director of Teaching or Programme Director. Student degree-programme representatives will be asked to minute the meeting and report back to their fellow students with a brief summary on the main items raised at the SSLC and this report will should be made widely available to students through the programme LEARN page.
Centre for Open Learning (COL)	**Current SSLC total: 6** **Credit course SSLCs:** • Access Programme • International Foundation Programme • English Language Education (UG Credit: Academic English for Visiting Students/ Business English for Visiting Students/ Legal English for Visiting students) **Non-Credit SSLCs:** • English Language Education (Year-round Academic English pre-sessional/ In-	This is the first year that we have recruited student representatives and held SSLCs in COL. Being in the unique position of having a mixture of matriculated and non-matriculated students on our courses in COL. We have two programmes running that are structured in a traditional University Programme format. Much of our provision differs to traditional programmes as we have open courses Accessible to members of the public that do not offer credit nor follow the traditional programme format. We have adapted the student representative and SSLC guidelines to make the representative process as inclusive as possible and more in line with the needs of COL. COL's programme rep/ SSLC policy and procedures are very much in a trial phase. After Semester 1, the team met to adapt and improve the process tackling issues with non-represented courses, speeding up the recruitment process (which has to take place each Semester), clarifying the rep role and promoting the student rep system. We have worked with EUSA to adapt the content of training sessions to make them more relevant to our diverse student body.

	sessional support for matriculated students) • Short Courses: (Art & Design/ Literature & Theatre) • Languages for All (Beginners/ Elementary/Advanced)	We have attempted to recruit students enrolled on open Short Courses (members of the public) and while we still have courses running without representatives, we have an SSLC for Art & Design and Literature & Theatre courses. There is still a way to go with this and we still face issues of visibility and email access to non-matriculated students who do not have a university email. We have attempted to overcome challenges of creating representation of non-matriculated students by setting up a dedicated online spaces on our School webpage/Learn/open wikis where all COL students can submit feedback to their representative. We have created a new online route for students on courses without a representative to submit feedback to COL. We have postcards at reception for students to submit feedback on their courses, this means that students on courses without a rep still have the opportunity to give feedback. We have a student rep/SSLC noticeboard with details of reps, a simplified outline of the rep role and remit, and 'you said… we listened' posters. This physical, visual information means we can reach students who have courses that are not on Learn or who do not check their email for correspondence. We run separate SSLCs for credit and non-credit courses so that we can make the information exchange as relevant as possible to the students and staff attending (e.g. in ELE). The Access SSLC has proven invaluable as 2018/19 is the first year that the programme has run. The SSLC has allowed us to confirm aspects of the programme that are running well and have allowed us to consider student input for future iterations of the course. As this is a new process for us, we are constantly reflecting, adapting and improving our rep/ SSLC system. Following our first SSLCs, it became apparent that some staff needed 'training' on the process and this is being implemented prior to the Semester/ Term 2 SSLCs.
Edinburgh College of Art	6 UG SSSL, one is joint UG & PGT (Music). 2 PGT Subject Area SSLCs (Design & History of Art). 1 PGR SSLC that encompasses all ECA research programmes chaired by the ECA PGR Director and attended by all subject	We operate a relatively standard model of in person meetings, led usually by staff "convenor" but can be led by student. Online see minutes at https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/hss/eca/committees/SitePages/Home.aspx

	area PGR Directors. All other PGT programmes have informal meetings throughout the academic year often within the studio environment. We have a single ECA School Student Committee chaired by Head of School and all UG/PGT/PGR reps are invited. This committee is of a more strategic nature focussing on longer term planning.	
Moray House School of Education	**PGDE Secondary** has one SSLC group with reps from all courses – 16 reps in total. The SSLC meets 3 times a year.	- The SSLC is co-chaired by an academic member of staff and a student rep. - Agenda items are sought from reps prior to the meeting - Agenda is decided between rep and academic member - Minutes are taken by a student member of the SSLC and posted to academic rep. Minutes are recorded with action points and named person (this is good practice in that it is effective as the named person who could be staff or student has something to do before the next meeting). - These are taken to a Programme Team Meeting and the programme Team makes a more considered response to minutes which are recorded. (Sometimes there is not much to consider, sometimes there is). - Minutes and responses/suggestions/outcomes of actions are posted on Learn for student information - Ours is a one year programme and it is hard for students to see some of the longer term changes we make in response to their suggestions so we usually start the first meeting of the year with this information and the rationale for change. - We came to realise that it is important that the academic working on the SSLC should not be the PD. because this is too invested a role for both the PD and the students. - We also came to realises that students very much value the attendance of a large group of academic staff at SSLC so we try to ensure this happens. As a general point we would like training for reps at this level of programme SSLC. By reps we mean both students and academic staff.
	BA (Hons) Community Education. 1 SSLC to cover all 4 UG years, 2 reps per year	SSLC operates as per standard university guidance i.e. 1 meeting per semester. In addition; • PD meets regularly with all class reps throughout semester to identify and address any emerging programme issues. Also, to feedback on any progress relating to any matters outstanding from previous SSLC meetings.

		• PD works with rep's to help them create their own way of organising, which suits their needs and circumstances. • PD and programme secretary help with admin tasks such as room bookings etc., but the PD approach is developmental, in that the working assumptions agreed by student rep's is that the PD works to enable students to take on the key responsibilities of organising meetings, setting agendas, chairing meetings, taking and circulating meetings. - Students attend EUAS provided training, but given the background of the cohort, many of our reps already have a good range of knowledge and understanding of being a rep from previous experience, such as trade union rep, or similar activist back grounds.
	BA Childhood Practice has one SSLC which is attended by 6 student reps (2 from each year) and all core staff (4-5 staff members). It meets twice a year, mid Semester.	• The meeting is chaired by students with support from programme director. • Students write the minutes. Action points are noted with responsibilities assigned. • Student attendance is often low and recently students have not raised any issues. This is presumably due to the timing of SSLCs which take place soon after mid-course feedback. Students have reported a 'feedback fatigue'. • Issues raised at SSLC in the past included change of assessment dates or infrastructure (e.g. microphones not working, suitability of rooms). • As a programme team we would appreciate formal channels for issues that cannot be addressed locally. Generally these issues have been chased by the PD on behalf of students, and not always successfully. For example, our students are part-time students and have asked that therefore they would be entitled to 14 day extensions (rather than the standard 7). This has been denied at College levels, even though the programme team would have been supportive.
	MA (Hons) PE There are 4 SSLC groups. One for each year of the programme. There are a minimum of 4 in each SSLC group i.e. Year 4 has 4 reps. The groups meet with PD for their year once a semester, normally in Weeks 9-10	There are 4 reps in each SSLC group. There is rep. to represent each of the four groups (A.B.C and D) in their cohort. The reps. are requested to gather the opinions and views of their groups on various matters e.g. assessment, L&T, as well as wider matters impacting on their studies. Students take the mins. of the SSLC and forward to the Year PD post meeting. Upon completion of the SSLC's the 4 Year leads meet to discuss issues raised, before sharing and discussing common areas of concern, as well as best practices more widely at the next PTM. Mins. from each meeting are shared with the program staff via the STAFF Shared Folder on OneDrive.
	MA Primary Education with Gaelic has one SSLC group with a rep from each year group – 4 reps in total. The SSLC meets twice a year, once in Semester 1 and once in Semester 2.	- Minutes are provided by the student reps – who each write up the views of the year group they represent. - The programme director then adds in the action points that had been co-agreed at the meeting with a named person for the action point. - Minutes and responses/suggestions/outcomes of actions are posted on Learn for student information

		- Progress with, and any changes resulting from, SSLC items are presented at the next meeting of the students on the programme (as MA Primary Education with Gaelic is a small programme, it is possible to get the cohort together as a group). - A formal update on progress with SSLC actions from the previous semester is the start of each SSLC meeting, with any incomplete actions carried forwards. - SSLC feedback has resulted in some major changes to the programme (for example the change from students doing half a year's school placement in English-medium education and half a year in Gaelic-medium education to their doing a whole school year in Gaelic-medium education). Students have fed-back that they are very satisfied with the SSLC process and feel that it is an excellent forum for their views to be listened to and acted upon.

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

23 May 2019

Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC)
Operational Guidance

Executive Summary
This paper asks the Committee to approve the proposal to revise the Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance to change it to policy.

The guidance has been reviewed following the pilot with a small number of Schools to explore different approaches to escalating issues that cannot be addressed within SSLCs.

We recommend that the guidance be made policy to mandate particular approaches to further strengthen the value of SSLCs.
However we recognise that for some Schools, 2019/20 will be an implementation year of the programme representation model. Therefore we propose that during 2019/20, Academic Services and the Students' Association will work with Schools to support the implementation of the mandated sections as part of the transition from guidance to policy.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
The paper is relevant to the Committee's responsibility for the quality assurance framework.

Action requested
The Committee is asked to approve the proposal.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
The guidance will be made available on the Academic Services and Student Voice webpages. An email will also be sent to key stakeholders to notify them of the guidance updates.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   Full student engagement is essential to the enhancement of the student experience.

2. **Risk assessment**
   There are risks associated with ineffectively responding to student feedback.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was carried out on the Principles and Operational notes for SSLCs in September 2015 and identified no major equality and diversity implications. There have been no changes to the operational guidance since the EqIA was carried out. A review of the EqIA will be carried out if the proposal is approved.

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open.

Key words

Student Staff Liaison Committee, SSLC, Student feedback, student voice, Student Representation

Originators of the paper

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14 May 2019

Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Purpose of Guidance

This policy sets out the operational notes for Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs). The guidance was developed in partnership with Edinburgh University Students' Association as one of the ways to support and promote the engagement of our students in their learning and to strengthen the value of SSLCs.

The guidance supports the Student Voice Policy.

Scope: Guidance is not Mandatory

The guidance applies to all students and staff involved in SSLCs.

Contact Officer	Gillian Mackintosh	Academic Policy Officer	Gillian.Mackintosh@ed.ac.uk

Document control

Dates	Approved: 03.09.15	Starts: 01.07.13	Equality impact assessment: 11.09.15	Amendments: <mark>14.05.19</mark>7.08.18	Next Review: ~~2018/2019~~2020 21/2022

Approving authority	Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)
Consultation undertaken	The Students' Association, current School Directors of Quality, a group of Academic and Administrative staff supporting SSLCs.
Section responsible for guidance maintenance & review	Academic Services
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview/annual-monitoring-review-and-reporting https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/tprpprsubjectareasschoolsstudentinvolvement.pdf http://www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/data-protection/guidance-policies/student-information http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files//guidanceschoolcommsrep.pdf https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/activities/postgraduate/about/odl/ https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation/yourrepresentatives/classreps/
UK Quality Code	<mark>UK Quality Code</mark> for Higher Education Chapter B5: Student Engagement Advice and Guidance : Student Engagement (November 2018)
Guidance superseded by this guidance	Principles and operational notes for Student Staff Liaison Committees
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.
Keywords	SSLC, Student Staff Liaison Committee, Student Representation, Edinburgh University Students' Association, External Examiners.

Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

Student Staff Liaison Committees are held in every School and are the main forum for staff and Student Representatives to discuss matters relating to degree programmes and the student experience. Staff and Student Representatives are responsible for ensuring that students are made aware of how their feedback is acted upon after the SSLC meeting.

The following principles outline how SSLCs operate:

1.	Role	SSLCs provide a formal mechanism for communication and discussion between academic and administrative staff and representatives of the student body, relating to all matters connected with improving the degree programmes (at all levels of study including UG, PGT and PGR) and the student experience. In line with the new Programme Rep model, ~~it is suggested that~~ SSLCs would benefit from taking a programme–level approach. This would draw on the Student Representatives' feedback to identify areas of improvement within the student learning experience which contribute to the degree programme.
2.	Remit	SSLCs ~~are encouraged~~should ~~to~~ have a formal written remit available to students and staff. ~~It is suggested that t~~the remit should be ~~is~~ published on the School/Subject area/Research Centre/Institute website.
3	Membership	Meetings can be attended by Programme Representatives for the programmes being discussed, Elected School Representatives, Course/Year Organisers, Programme Conveners, School PG Programme Directors, Research Centre or Institute staff, Personal tutors, School Directors of Quality, Professional Services ~~Administrative~~ staff, School IT representatives & other relevant staff to discuss programme issues.
4	Frequency of meetings	At least one formal meeting should be held in each semester, which should be agreed upon in consultation with School staff and Student Representatives. This should ideally be scheduled to avoid clashing with courses students may typically be taking within the School. All SSLC members must ~~should~~ be informed of the date, time, location of the meeting, inviting any additional items to be added to the agenda. Schools must ~~should~~ publish the dates of the meetings ahead of the meeting and it is suggested that this happens at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.
5	Agenda items	The a~~A~~genda ~~must should~~ be made available in advance of the meeting. Suggested agenda items are listed in section 5.3.
6	Meeting format	Schools are encouraged to have student chairing of meetings or co-chairing with staff. Schools are further encouraged to select a member of staff to support the student chair. Online Learner Student Representatives and Students should have the opportunity to participate virtually during the meeting or otherwise, input via other electronic means beforehand. Exact format will vary between Schools however, an example of a basic format is described in section 6.

7	Minutes	Schools ~~are strongly encouraged~~must ~~to~~ publish minutes on the School/subject area webpages.

1. Role

Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs; or, Teaching or Programme Committees in some Schools or Postgraduate Research Forums in some Schools) are meetings at which Student Representatives, Programme/Course/Year Organisers, Academic and Professional Services ~~Administrative~~ staff supporting teaching and learning discuss the student experience which may include issues and activities in courses, programmes, and Schools.

To increase the effectiveness of student representation and support from Schools and the Students' Association, ~~it is suggested that~~ SSLCs would benefit from taking a programme-level approach. This would draw on Student Representatives' feedback and mid-course feedback to identify areas of improvement within the student learning experience which contribute to the degree programme. Schools are expected to implement a programme-level representation system for taught provision rather than following a tutorial- and course-level representative model. The number of programme representatives ('student reps') for taught provision in each School should be broadly proportionate to the number of students on programmes in the School. While Schools have flexibility, in liaison with the Students' Association, to determine how they organize their programme reps, a ratio of 1:40 is a useful guide.

Edinburgh University Students' Association coordinates Student Representation across the University and provides training and support for all Student Representatives (including Programme Representatives and elected School Representatives). Student Representatives should be jointly supported in their role by the Students' Association and Schools. Schools take ownership over their own student representation structures, the recruitment of Programme Representatives, and facilitating communication between Student Representatives and the students in their cohort so that feedback can be representative. Student Representatives work with the students they represent to identify areas for improvement, suggest solutions, and ensure that the views of the students they represent inform strategic decisions within the University. Student Representatives work in partnership with staff to build a stronger academic community and improve the student learning experience.

As structures and systems vary between Schools, Institutes or Research Centres, the format of SSLCs may also be different to reflect this. Nonetheless, the principles should remain the same in that the committee provides a formal mechanism for communication and discussion between academic staff, professional service~~administrative~~ staff and representatives of the student body relating to all matters connected with the degree programme, and the student experience.

2. Remit

2.1 Formal Written Remit

SSLCs should ~~are encouraged to~~ have a formal written remit, of which Student Representatives and staff review annually to ensure that it reflects current learning, teaching and research matters in their School/Subject area.

~~It is suggested that~~ the remit should be ~~is~~ published on the School/Subject area/Research Centre/Institute website and that all students in that area are made aware of this.

2.2 Student engagement

Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

Following the launch of the publication of the UK Quality Code Advice and Guidance: Chapter B5: Student Engagement (November 2018), the code states that the provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience'Higher education providers create and maintain an environment within which students and staff engage in discussions that aim to bring about demonstrable enhancement of the educational experience'. SSLCs are one way in which students and staff should engage in discussions to improve the student experience at the University of Edinburgh, including the online learning environment for students not studying on campus.

Furthermore, the code states: 'Higher education providers, in partnership with their student body, define, promote, monitor and evaluate the range of opportunities to enable all students to engage in share information so that students and staff involved in quality assurance and enhancement processes systems have an equally informed voice'. Student Representatives will be expected to gather representative student views to identify best practices and areas of improvement of the delivery, content, materials, assessment and feedback, and share with staff any suggestions so they can work in partnership to improve these areas and create a strong academic community within their area.

3. Membership

3.1 Suggested membership

SSLC meetings are attended by Programme Representatives, Course/Year Organisers, Degree Programme Conveners, School Postgraduate Programme Directors, staff representing Research Centres or Institutes, Personal tutors, School Directors of Quality, Professional Services Administrative staff supporting teaching and learning, School IT representatives and other relevant staff to discuss programme issues.

It is suggested that Tthe relevant elected Undergraduate/Postgraduate School Representative should is also be invited to attend SSLCs to be given the option to attend, and that they would receive SSLC communications. Some Schools may choose to ask the School Representative to chair the SSLC meeting(s).

3.2 Student Representatives

During the first two weeks of the semester, Year Organisers or Degree Programme Conveners should invite students to become Programme Representatives and, where appropriate, hold elections to select the Representatives with consideration to the ratio of the student cohort. Students should be made aware of the purpose of the Programme Representative role, expectations of Programme Representatives, and that their details will be passed to the Students' Association in order to provide them with training and support.

Recruitment of Programme Representatives should happen as early as possible and no later than the end of Week 2 of each semester. Each School Office will collate details of Programme Representatives and send them to the Students' Association during Week 3. Details of Programme Representatives will not be accepted after Week 4.

The Students' Association holds elections in March (followed by By-Elections in October for postgraduate positions and any unfilled positions) each year to elect Undergraduate and Postgraduate School Representatives. These elected School Representatives should be invited as members of SSLC meetings in their School, or at minimum be informed of the business conducted. Their contact details can be obtained at https://edin.ac/2NtW2gH or by emailing reps@eusa.ed.ac.uk. Where appropriate, presidents of relevant academic societies within the

School or subject area could also be invited to SSLC meetings; their details are available via eusa.ed.ac.uk/societies

Schools should share with Student Representatives the University student email address of the students they represent or facilitate alternative ways for Student Representatives to contact classmates e.g. m-list. Guidance is available for Schools which outlines the mechanisms by which Schools should share University student email address to facilitate alternative ways for Student Representatives to contact students in compliance with data protection guidelines.

Please refer to Guidance for Schools regarding communication between Student Representatives and students and the Policy on Disclosure of Student Information

4. Frequency of meetings

The frequency of SSLC meetings should be agreed in consultation with School staff and Student Representatives. However, at least one formal meeting should be held in each semester. This may vary between Schools depending on their size and structure as well as in terms of undergraduate and postgraduate provision.

For example some SSLCs may operate at School, subject or programme level depending on their structure.

At undergraduate level it may be more appropriate to meet once per semester whereas for postgraduate taught students it may be more appropriate to have additional meetings spread over the year.

Some Subject areas and Schools may meet formally once a semester but may operate a more informal system throughout the year in terms of students having access to other meetings such as Director of Teaching meetings, School Undergraduate Learning and Teaching Committee meetings and meetings taking place at different levels (e.g. programme; subject area; school).

Therefore, Schools should operate whichever system is most appropriate to their structure. Schools should must publish the dates of meetings on the School/Subject area webpage, Learn or equivalent ahead of the meeting and communicate this information to email all studentsmembers with this information.

Good Practice

Some Schools list the dates of the meeting on the Rep student timetable. Students receive a note in their student timetable encouraging them to communicate with their Rep.

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5. Agenda items

The agenda must be made available in advance of the meeting.

5.1 Sharing information

Staff are expected to share information with students. This could include information such as themes arising from student surveys, themes from External Examiners reports, Part 3 External Examiner reports (Postgraduate Research), course evaluation and review documentation, School Annual Quality Reports, and TPR/PPR reports. Student Representatives and staff should collaborate to

identify trends, areas for improvement and suggestions to enhance the student experience. Students' views should be sought on new programmes and courses as well as on changes to existing ones and the SSLC could provide a forum for this type of discussion.

5.2 External Examiner summary reports at SSLCs

Schools must provide an opportunity for Student Representatives to view themes extracted from External Examiner reports and the School's summarised response to these themes (section 68 External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy).

In partnership with the Students' Association, Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) has agreed that the SSLC is the best forum for consideration of themes arising from External Examiners' reports and summarised responses of Schools/Subject areas.

In order to streamline material being presented to SSLCs, Schools are encouraged to summarise points from External Examiner reports and group them into themes, together with the response from the School/Subject area/Programme and highlight areas of good practice.

In some Schools, the School-level SSLC may not be the most appropriate forum for discussion of themes and responses as this will take place at department or programme level rather than as part of the School as a whole.

Consideration should also be given to instances where one External Examiner's report might be relevant to more than one SSLC particularly for joint degrees. Therefore, each School should decide which SSLC is most appropriate to their structure for the consideration of the summary reports.

Undergraduate External Examiner reports are received after the summer exam diet. For undergraduate students, the summary reports should be submitted to the first SSLC meeting of the academic year.

Postgraduate Taught External Examiner reports are received at the end of November and the summary reports will be submitted for consideration at SSLCs in the second semester.

The summary reports and responses should be emailed to SSLC members ahead of the meeting and in good time to allow members to prepare responses for discussion.

The consideration of summary reports is an opportunity to be involved in discussion of potential improvements to courses and programmes recommended by the External Examiners. During the SSLC meeting, Students should consider the themes and responses in the summary report and be encouraged to provide comments and suggestions.

However, it should be noted that there may be occasions when an External Examiner makes a suggestion or recommendation that is not possible/practicable for the University to implement. The response from the School to the External Examiner should demonstrate that the University has given full and serious consideration to the comments made and indicates the reason that action cannot be taken forward.

Following consideration of the themes at the SSLC, comments and suggestions should be recorded in the SSLC meeting minutes.

Depending on recommendations, ongoing actions would be reported to SSLC meetings later in the academic year and ultimately through subsequent External Examiner reports.

Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

(Section 68.1- 68.4 External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy)

It should be noted that individual students and members of staff will not be named in the reports.

5.3 Suggested Agenda items

Agenda items can be suggested by students and by staff and should be used as a focal point through which students can be informed about and be involved in decision making processes relating to:

- student-generated items
- standing items : School, College or University wide issues and any updates from School rep
- School Annual Quality report - The shorter school annual quality report will lend itself to discussion of themes and actions being taken by the school in student-staff liaison committees at the start of the following academic year
- themes arising from Student Surveys, course evaluation questionnaires
- processes themes from for mid-course feedback
- Internal Periodic Review preparation, where appropriate
- Internal Periodic Review reports, where appropriate
- themes from External Examiner summary reports
- Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation reports, where appropriate
- Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR), where appropriate
- standing items : School, College or University wide issues and update from School rep
- staff ideas and communications
- Student Partnership Agreement - priorities and any local activities which advance these priorities

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Good Practice

Some Schools ask the Reps to suggest items under the headings of Start, Stop and Continue.

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6. Meeting format

6.1 Chairing of meetings

Schools are encouraged to have a student chairing the meetings. This could be an elected School Representative or another trained Programme Representative. Where Schools decide not to have a student chair they may wish for the chair person to be neutral (e.g. not a student on-programme, Programme Director or Course Organiser teaching on the programme which is being discussed). Some Schools may wish to select a member of staff to support the student chair.

Good Practice

Some Schools have a student chair and a student taking the minutes. It is helpful to assign a member of staff to support the student members and facilitate the student's leadership role within the SSLC.

Some Schools organise a Welcome event at the start of semester so Reps have a clear understanding of the role and expectations and to make them aware of the staff who can offer support.

6.2 Example of meeting outline

Although the exact format of meetings will vary between schools, this is an example of the basic format which many follow, in the order that they occur. The minutes of the meetings should follow the same structure.

Agenda
Minutes of the last meeting
Matters arising
Agenda items suggested by students and by staff including standing items from School and College Committee
Any other business (AOB)
Date of Next Meeting: The date and time of the next meeting should be agreed and recorded by the minute-taker.

6.3 Online Learner (OL) Student participation

At School level, Online Learner (OL) Student Representatives and students should have the opportunity to participate virtually or otherwise input into SSLCs electronically.

Consideration should be given for meetings with remote participants for example, Student Representatives should be able to input into the agenda; receive meeting papers before meetings and minutes afterwards.

Meeting organisers should consider the following when arranging the timing of meetings:
- the availability of students who have work commitments,
- time zone considerations,
- allow students plenty of notice of the meeting,
- ensure in advance that students can access whichever system is being used.

A number of options exist for Schools to set up meetings to enable OL students to participate such as Collaborate, Skype or video conference.

Collaborate, for instance, is an IS-supported system designed to support online classes and meetings. Any member of staff or student can set up Collaborate sessions via MyEd, and a wide range of guidance materials is available and accessible online.
- http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/learning-technology/communication/collaborate/collaborate-students

Skype is not centrally supported but is widely used by staff and students, and like Collaborate requires just a computer/tablet and a webcam. Other similarly 'technology light' tools and environments exist and are valued because they are free, and can be used with a lot of flexibility.
- https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/mscdetech/11.+Skype

Video conference three video conference (VC) suites exist in centrally bookable rooms, and other VC suites are situated in Schools around the university. The VC system is hosted by JANET, and requires registration. Online tutorials are available via the JANET VC webpages, and local support is offered via LTSTS.
- http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/computing/comms-and-collab/videoconferencing

Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

Further information for students on preparing for and chairing meetings, is available on the Students' Association Programme Representative Forum on Learn (a closed area for Programme Representatives), and on the Students' Association website at: www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/classreps

6.3 Communication following the SSLC

Students should not be expected to give an immediate response at meetings to all issues or where they would want to consult further; they may feel it necessary to consult with students in the cohort or with students in other parts of the School. Most important of all, if any action is called for and agreed upon it should be promptly reported back to students via Student Representatives.

Staff and Student Representatives are responsible for reporting back information to the people they represent and taking ownership of any action points agreed at the meeting.

Schools should appoint named academic and Professional Services support staff contacts in each School for Student Representatives to discuss any additional issues as they arise or request additional meetings if required. Student Representatives and the Students' Association (reps@eusa.ed.ac.uk) should be kept informed of the contact details of these staff contacts.

7. Minutes

The minutes should follow the same structure as the agenda outline. Schools must are encouraged to publish the minutes from meetings on the School/Subject area webpages or, Learn; showing clear action points resulting from SSLCs.

> **Good Practice**
>
> **The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies provides a Rep starter pack detailing an example of clear and helpful style of minutes and flowchart detailing the pathway of the minutes.**
>
> **Some Schools record in the minutes the action point, who will action and the target completion date.**
>
> **Some Schools prepare a 'You Said, We Did' response and post it on Learn and inform students via announcements and email,**

Please note that SSLC minutes can be made available to internal review teams if there is a particular theme from the reflective report to be followed up.

8. Equality

Schools should determine appropriate mechanisms for ensuring that all Student Representatives have an opportunity to participate. It is suggested that Schools consider the use of online forums or virtual meetings where appropriate.

Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

23 May 2019

Student Voice Policy update

Executive Summary
This paper asks the Committee to approve the Student Voice Policy which has been reviewed to reflect the changes to the Student Staff Liaison Committee Guidance.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
The paper is relevant to the Committee's responsibility for the quality assurance framework.

Action requested
The Committee is asked to approve the policy.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
The policy will be updated on the Academic Services and Student Voice webpages. An email will be sent to stakeholders to notify them of the guidance.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   Resource implications for mid-course feedback vary according to the School context and methods chosen but clearly do exist (although not quantified). There are resource implications if mid-course feedback is extended to postgraduate taught courses (see LTC Paper 18/19 5F), although a significant number of Schools/Deaneries are either already doing this or are planning to do so. Feedback to date suggests that the positive benefits of mid-course feedback justify this resource.

2. **Risk assessment**
   There are risks associated with ineffectively responding to student feedback.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   The Student Voice Policy Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been updated with the results of the Mid-Course Feedback: follow up evaluation and will be further updated following the discussion and agreement of recommendations by the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (see LTC Paper 18/19 5F). No additional equality and diversity implications have been identified as part of the follow-up evaluation.

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open.

Key words

Student feedback, student voice

Originators of the paper

Gillian Mackintosh, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
15 May 2019

Student Voice Policy

The University of Edinburgh

Purpose of Policy

To outline the University's approach to gathering, learning from and responding to the student voice (the individual and collective views of the student body).

Overview

The Policy establishes key principles for gathering students' opinions on their University experience and for learning from and responding to the student voice.

For the purposes of these principles to reflect the undergraduate, postgraduate taught and research student bodies, 'Programme Representatives' and elected 'School Representatives' will be referred to as 'Student Representatives'.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

The Policy applies to all students and to staff with responsibility for gathering student opinion and for taking action in response.

Contact Officer	Gillian Mackintosh	Academic Policy Officer	Gillian.Mackintosh@ed.ac.uk

Document control

Dates	Approved: 30.11.17	Starts: 30.11.17	Equality impact assessment: 02.11.17	Amendments: 17/08/18	Next Review: 2021/2022
Approving authority	Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)				
Consultation undertaken	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Student Systems				
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Academic Services				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations					
UK Quality Code	UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance : ~~Chapter B5:~~ Student Engagement				
Policies superseded by this policy	Principles and operational notes for Student Staff Liaison Committees Learning from and Responding to the Student Voice Policy Learning from and Responding to the Student Voice Code of Practice				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.				
Keywords	Student voice, Student Staff Liaison Committee, SSLC, Edinburgh University Students' Association, student representation, surveys, feedback, engagement, internal periodic review				

Student Voice Policy

Introduction

The University has a clear commitment to excellence in learning and teaching and enhancing the student experience. To ensure that the University maintains a high quality student experience it is essential that all students have an opportunity throughout their study to reflect on and evaluate their experience of academic life and the wider service offering. To this end the University engages with its students through a variety of mechanisms with a view to learning from and responding to the student voice from students individually, collectively or through their representatives.

Our commitment to working in partnership with students is articulated at the highest level in the University's Strategic Plan and the University Learning and Teaching Strategy. Staff at the University of Edinburgh currently work in partnership with Edinburgh University Students' Association to:

- ensure that students are central to governance and decision making,
- ensure that students are central to quality assurance and enhancement,
- provide opportunities for students to become active participants,
- foster collaboration between students and staff.

The student experience is used throughout this Policy to encompass the learning, teaching and assessment experience and the wider student experience including experience of student support services. This Policy recognises that student views about their experience of the University are an essential part of the University's quality assurance and enhancement framework.

Key Principles for Learning from and Responding to the Student Voice

The primary purpose of gathering student opinion is to assure the quality of learning and teaching and student services, and to enhance the student experience.

The methods used to survey the student opinion should not disadvantage any student from participating. The methods used should provide equal opportunity for all students to feedback on their experience.

Student surveying must be conducted within strict ethical guidelines[1]. Data integrity must be maintained through systematic approaches to collection and management. Confidentiality and anonymity of respondents must be ensured. Students must be informed of the purpose of the survey and the uses that may be made of the data.   Careful consideration should be given to the timing of surveys.

The benefits of surveying student opinion must outweigh the costs[2].

Students should ensure that their feedback does not breach the University's Dignity and Respect Policy[3].

The unit responsible for gathering feedback from students must communicate actions taken in response on a timescale appropriate to student needs

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[1] Student Surveys Ethics Committee http://edin.ac/2gyAUHf
[2] Contact the Student Surveys Unit for an example cost/benefit analysis
[3] Dignity and Respect Policy http://edin.ac/2pQoQ9d http://edin.ac/1Cq0VZY

Student Voice Policy

> **Multiple sources of information will be used to draw insights.** Sources of information include: surveys; the student representative structure; and Staff Student Liaison Committees. Where relevant, the analysis of data should allow for benchmarking.

Communicating Action taken in Response to Feedback

It is extremely important that student feedback is acted upon and that the action taken in response to feedback is clearly and effectively communicated to students. This will ensure that students feel their feedback is valued, shared, reflected upon and used for enhancement and they are clear on the action taken by the University in response to their feedback.

Mechanisms for Listening and Responding to the Student Voice

The following mechanisms underpin the University's approach to listening and responding to the student voice (Schools may supplement these with local arrangements):

- Student Representation
- Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC)
- Student Surveys and Course Enhancement Questionnaires
- Mid-course feedback from Students
- Student participation in Internal Periodic Reviews and Student Support Service/Thematic Reviews
- Student Partnership Agreement
- Student Panel

Student Representation

The University's student representation system provides multiple opportunities for the student voice to be heard. The Students' Association facilitates the student voice through Programme Representatives, School Representatives, Activities Representatives, Section Group Representatives, Liberation Officers and Sabbatical Officers. The student representation system functions through various structures and systems, including Student Council, campaigns, student-led projects, and referenda.

The Senate Learning and Teaching Committee[4] agreed that from 2019/20, all Schools are expected to implement a programme-level representation system for taught provision rather than following a tutorial or class representative model. Exceptions to this will be considered by Academic Services and the Students' Association, overseen by Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)[5].

The number of programme representatives ('student reps') for taught provision in each School should be broadly proportionate to the number of students on programmes in the School. While Schools have flexibility, in liaison with the Students' Association, to determine how they organize their programme reps, a ratio of 1:40 is a useful guide.

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[4] Senate Learning and Teaching Committee 23 May 2018
[5] Academic Engagement Coordinator and VP Education, Edinburgh University Students' Association, Academic Policy Officer, Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance

Student Voice Policy

The Students' Association ~~will~~ provide targeted in-person training for student representatives ('student reps')[6] which focuses on the programme level. Online training will also be available for students on online programmes and students on placement.

In addition to operating ~~P~~programme ~~R~~rep arrangements for taught programmes, Schools will work with the Students' Association to operate appropriate student representational systems for postgraduate research programmes.

Further information:
Student Representation http://edin.ac/2gz69C2
Students' Association https://edin.ac/2wnxO1d

Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLC)

Student Staff Liaison Committees are held in every School and are the main forum for staff and student representatives to discuss matters relating to degree programmes and the student experience.

SSLCs provide a formal mechanism for communication and discussion between academic and administrative staff and representatives of the student body, on all matters related to improving degree programmes (at all levels of study including undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research) and the student experience. In line with the ~~new~~ Programme Rep model~~, it is suggested that~~ SSLCs would benefit from taking a programme-level approach. This would draw on the Student Representatives' feedback and mid-course feedback to identify areas of improvement within the student learning experience which contribute to the degree programme. Schools should ~~are encouraged to~~ have a formal written remit for SSLCs.

At least one formal SSLC meeting should be held in each semester. This should be agreed in consultation with School staff and Student Representatives and ideally avoid clashing with courses students may be taking typically within the School. All SSLC members ~~should~~ must be informed of the date, time, and location of the meeting, and invited to suggest any items to be added to the agenda. Schools ~~should~~ must publish the dates of the meetings ahead of the meeting and agendas should be available in advance of the meeting. Online Learner Students and Student Representatives should have the opportunity to participate virtually or otherwise input electronically http://edin.ac/2gzE25y

Staff and Student Representatives are responsible for ensuring that students are made aware of how their feedback is acted upon after the SSLC meeting.

Operational Guidance: http://edin.ac/2AiKgSo

Student Surveys and Course Enhancement Questionnaires

Student surveys are a key element in seeking feedback from students and obtaining information to improve services and the student experience. Results are analysed and recommendations for change made based on the findings. Some of the findings may prompt further research to gain more of an understanding of how students feel about particular issues. Important student surveys

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[6] Training ~~to be~~ phased in from 2018/19, with desire to train all reps in-person by 2019/20. Online training will continue for online learners, students on placement and in other exceptional cases.

include: the National Student Survey; the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey; the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey; and Course Enhancement Questionnaires.

Further information: http://edin.ac/2i1banf

The main purpose of **Course Enhancement Questionnaires** (CEQs) is to enhance student learning, to provide School staff with information that they can use to guide and evaluate changes in course content and teaching, and to enhance support for learning across programmes and the broader University. All taught, credit bearing courses (UG and PG) that have students enrolled on them and are delivered by the University of Edinburgh, including the taught portion of research courses, should be surveyed using the University's standard survey tool and question sets.

Further information: staff http://edin.ac/2w1vj1o and students http://edin.ac/2gAJEfQ

Mid-course feedback from Students

Mid-course feedback aims to provide students with an opportunity to provide feedback to staff _whilst courses are running_ on what is going well and to identify any problems with the course. Students will receive a response to their feedback, again whilst the course is still running. This allows students to identify issues which staff can adjust during the course so that the current cohort of students can benefit from changes made; and to highlight aspects that are working well. It also allows staff to respond to items raised which cannot be adjusted during the course and to provide reason(s) for this.

Schools must collect and respond to mid-course feedback for all courses at undergraduate level. Schools are responsible for determining how mid-course feedback is carried out, for ensuring that it operates in an appropriate way and encourages constructive feedback. If Schools think that a particular approach to gathering mid-course feedback might raise equality and diversity issues then they should take steps to mitigate the risks.

Further information:
- Examples for students http://edin.ac/2i1J0Z5
- Guidance for staff http://edin.ac/2dOmswH
- Equality and Diversity guidance https://edin.ac/2wlXeMI

Student participation in Internal Periodic Reviews and Student Support Service/Thematic Reviews

Student views are gathered as part of the University's internal periodic review and student support service/thematic reviews. For internal periodic review, mechanisms for engaging with students prior to the review are detailed in the guidance issued by Academic Services and for Student Support Service/Thematic Reviews, a reflection on feedback from students forms part of process.

Further information: http://edin.ac/2gz59hg

Student Partnership Agreement

The Student Partnership Agreement states how students and the University are working in partnership. It is reviewed annually and, over time, will document activity.

The University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh University Students' Association enjoy a long and productive partnership. This agreement builds on the strength of that partnership. It highlights how

the wider University, including all students and staff, can effectively work together to enhance the student experience. It sets out our values, our approach to partnership and the priorities we have agreed to work on together.

Further information: http://edin.ac/2i1pIDg

Student Panel

The Student Panel is intended to provide staff with easy access to a broadly demographically representative sample of the student population for research purposes, whilst insulating the wider student population from ad-hoc insight activity in an effort to prevent survey fatigue.

By signing up for the Student Panel, a student is agreeing to be contacted by the Student Data and Surveys team~~Student Surveys Unit~~ on a regular basis and asked to complete a variety of tasks. These tasks can range from filling out a short survey to attending a focus group. In return for their time, any student that participates in a task is awarded panel points which they can exchange for vouchers.

Contact: Student Surveys Unit student.surveys@ed.ac.uk

15 May 2019~~17 August 2018~~

<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

23 May 2019

Providing Summaries of Student Feedback to School Representatives Pilot update

Executive Summary
This paper outlines the outcomes and proposals following the pilot to provide summary reports of student feedback to School Representatives. The pilot was undertaken as part of activity to support the current Enhancement Theme, Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
The paper is relevant to the Committee's responsibility for assurance and standards, specifically internally and externally derived information and data, including feedback from students and reviews of academic and student support service provision.

Action requested
The Committee is asked to approve the proposals that survey reports are made available to School Representatives.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
Communication with Schools will be managed by Academic Services. Edinburgh University Students' Association will manage communication with students.

Resource / Risk / Compliance
1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   Resources will be required from Schools, Student Data and Surveys, Academic Services, and Edinburgh University Students' Association. Schools will be asked to provide a brief summary to provide context for the reports.
   Additional resource in Student Data and Surveys will need to be considered to review further enhancements to the report format for AY 2020/21.

2. **Risk assessment**
   The process will operate within the University's existing policies and practices and thus no additional risks have been identified.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   This proposal does not present a change to University policy or practice as it seeks to support the provision of information to students in line with current policy.

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open.

Key words
Student feedback, student representation, evidence for enhancement, student surveys

Originators of the paper
Diva Mukherji, Megan Brown and Natalie Hay (Edinburgh University Students' Association),

Gillian Mackintosh (Academic Services),
Paula Webster (Student Data and Surveys)

16 May 2019

Background

At its meeting in April 2018, the Senate Quality Assurance Committee considered a proposal to pilot with three Schools the provision of standard high-level analysis of student feedback to School Representatives.
The Committee supported the proposal and agreed that the pilot should commence in semester 1 of 2018/19.

The pilot involved staff and School Representatives from the Business School, School of GeoSciences and the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies.

During discussions with School staff it was agreed to present the School Representatives with standard student survey reports: National Student Survey (NSS) or Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES). Going forward, Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) reports will also be included. Staff suggested that it would be helpful to include a short overview to clarify the scope of surveys, the survey cohort, and the timing of when data is collected.

In addition, it was agreed to provide contextual information about the School. To support this, the School Director of Quality drafted a short paragraph to include an overview of programmes and courses covered in the survey e.g. the number of programmes, cohort information; numbers, demographics etc. There was no requirement to provide a reflection on the survey results.

Individual sessions were held with the School Representatives, School staff, Academic Services, Student Systems and the Students' Association.
School Representatives were asked for feedback on what information they want the survey report to provide, what they found out from the report, which elements of the report they liked and why and which elements of the report they disliked and why.

Pilot feedback and conclusions
A fundamental aspect of the pilot is to ensure that the School Representatives feel supported in their role and adequately prepared to effectively represent their cohort. Providing School Representatives with a summary of the student survey data at the beginning of the semester is a key way of developing this understanding and giving them the tools to effectively represent their cohort both in committees and in a wider context.

The provision of this information aims to support the induction and ongoing work of School Representatives. It does not replace the many different ways Schools communicate with the wider student body about feedback.

On the whole the School Representatives are of the opinion that access to the student survey reports will be very helpful to them in their role. They noted that the survey reports are clear, however the information is very broad and not specific.
The School context information is useful and for some it helped to confirm their understanding of the School structure.

The School Representatives commented that the student survey reports will be useful in helping them to identify priorities and help to substantiate their position. They noted that often the feedback they receive is based on anecdotal evidence.
Feedback highlighted that the School Representatives are keen to be involved in interpreting student survey results and action planning to help create change. In addition, they are interested in being able to identify which issues are School specific and which are university wide issues.

The [Scottish Funding Council guidance to higher education institutions on quality](#) states the expectation that institutions are encouraged to empower students to use evidence to enhance their own learning. In addition, the [Student Engagement Framework for Scotland](#) identifies 'Students working with their institution in shaping the direction of learning' as a key element of student engagement.

Training for School Representatives is key in supporting this. It is essential that training clearly sets out the expectations for the School Representative around how to engage with and interpret the data and how to effectively represent their cohort. In addition, the expectations around how to approach and engage with restricted or sensitive information.

It was suggested that student survey reports should form part of an induction pack for School Representatives and should be included in any introductory meetings for new School Representatives.
Feedback highlighted that a School specific handover pack would be useful, detailing key points from previous year, noting where survey results may be different, and highlighting where changes were made as a result of the feedback.
Suggestions of a conversation between the School (suggest School Director of Quality) and School Representatives ahead of the committee meeting where the survey results will be discussed will be useful. This could include discussing where the results may be lower or higher than expected, where there have been improvements and to discuss what has changed and why. It would also be useful to note where numbers are lower or higher than expected. The School can also highlight activities/initiatives that they have undertaken to respond to feedback.

School Reports created by the Students' Association (which cover how students in each School have engaged with Students' Association activities such as representation, peer learning and support, the advice place, and societies) are already given to School Reps during their induction and feedback from Reps has been very positive. For next year, the Students' Association will consider the introduction of a repository of School Reports from previous years so that Reps can compare the data from the current Reports with previous years.

A number of suggestions were discussed to improve and enhance the student survey reports.
This was mainly around providing clarification and context on the question format and themes, and benchmarked data.
From 2019/20 the student survey reports will be produced in Power BI and this will help to address a number of the issues noted below.

The School Representatives suggested it would be useful to see responses between different student groups where possible (e.g. full time/part time, online, on-campus, overseas, etc.)
These will be incorporated into the revised report format.

The benchmarking of School data against University data is helpful. It was noted that the PTES report does not provide this benchmark data and that this would be useful. In addition, it would be helpful if the NSS and PTES reports could be presented in the same way.
This will be addressed in the revised format.

Some School Representatives reported that they would find benchmarked data against comparator institutions useful. School staff agreed but with the caveat that this would require interpretation and context from the School to provide clarity on any discrepancies with the data. It was noted that benchmarking is normally against the Russell Group.

During 2019/20, for NSS data, Student Data and Surveys will ensure that reports provide a list of Higher Education Providers that offer different subjects so that users can select relevant institutions for benchmarking. Benchmarking against the Russell Group will also be provided as standard and will be available for all three surveys from this year. Results at provider level are not available for PTES and PRES so these will include the aggregate Russell Group benchmark.

The School Representatives noted some confusion around the understanding of the questions, e.g. what is meant by academic community, does this relate to staff only. It was appreciated that the wording of questions cannot be changed therefore clarity on the questions would be useful.
In addition, comments were noted on whether questions could be displayed separately by themes. This will be addressed in the revised format

Feedback highlighted that the report format may be challenging for some students who are colour blind or dyslexic and suggested whether colour blind software could be used.
The accessibility of Power BI will need to be looked at to review whether report formats work with assistive technology.

Some students reported that displaying the results in chart format may be more useful than radial charts and percentages. They requested that the student survey reports should be made available online. As noted above, the report will be available online.

Trend data covering a longer horizon period would be helpful and would allow students and staff to see results from past five years to get sense of any trends.
As there have been significant changes to the questionnaires it is difficult to provide long term trends however this is being developed.

It was suggested that it would be worth noting where there have been new policies or practices that may have a bearing on results, e.g. any changes in the Personal Tutor system or industrial action. It is suggested that Schools could include this as part of the ongoing conversation with the reps on where there have been developments,

There was feedback from the students that it would be useful to include key themes based on qualitative comments.

Thematic analysis of NSS and PTES will be considered by Student Data and Surveys. during 2019/20, in the meantime qualitative survey data will now be available for NSS/PTES and PRES results.

At this time Course Enhancement Questionnaire qualitative data will not be available however Schools are reminded that they are responsible for making quantitative data available to students, as stated in the [Course Enhancement Questionnaire Policy](#).

Proposal

- Following the publication of the survey results, Student Data and Surveys will set up an online space for School Reps to review the standard survey reports: NSS, PTES, and PRES.

- Student Data and Surveys will work with the Students' Association to help explain the data, its limitations and ways to interpret the analysis.

- July/August 2019: Schools will be asked to submit a short overview to be included as part of the report. This will be collated by Student Data and Surveys.

  It is suggested that the overview is written by the School Director of Quality. It should take the form of a short paragraph to include an overview of programmes and courses covered in survey e.g. the number of programmes & courses, numbers of students, nature of the cohort; international, part-time, online students etc. There is no requirement for the School to provide a reflection on the survey results.

- August 2019: Students' Association will inform Student Data and Surveys of the contact details of the School Reps to enable the Reps to access the online space.

- August 2019: Students' Association will send a communication to the School Reps providing them with a link to the online space. The Reps will be requested to review the reports in preparation for the training session in September/October.

- September 2019: Students' Association hold School Reps training session. This will include a session on interpreting and effectively engaging with the survey reports as part of the School Rep role.

- November 2019: Student Data and Surveys to hold a session with School Reps to review the standard report format and develop and customise reports as part of ongoing enhancements.

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

23 May 2019

Thematic Review of Student Support 2018-19:

Black and Minority Ethnic Students

Executive Summary
The paper provides the Committee with a progress update on this year's Thematic Review.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
The paper is relevant to the University's Strategic Goal of 'provide the highest-quality research-led teaching and learning".

Action requested
For information and discussion.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   Resource implications will be considered as part of the review.

2. **Risk assessment**
   Risks will be considered as part of the review.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   Equality and diversity would be an integral part of the review.

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open.

Key words
Thematic Review, Black and Minority Ethnic, BME

Originator of the paper
Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer

Thematic Review of Student Support 2018-19:

Black and Minority Ethnic Students

Background

The review was established by Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) to understand Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students' experiences of support at the University.

Review Panel

The review is being overseen by a panel convened **Professor Rowena Arshad OBE,** Head of Moray House School of Education / Co-Director of the Centre for Education for Racial Equality in Scotland (CERES), with a membership as follows: **Laura Cattell,** Head of Widening Participation / Deputy Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions (Professional Services representative); **Professor Vicky Gunn,** Head of Learning and Teaching, Glasgow School of Art (External); **Isabella Neergaard-Petersen,** Black and Minority Ethnic Officer, Edinburgh University Students' Association (Student Representative); **Kai O'Doherty,** Vice President Welfare, Edinburgh University Students' Association (Student Representative); **Dr Emily Sena,** Research Fellow, Centre for Clinical Brain Sciences (CCBS) / Co-convenor of The University of Edinburgh's Staff BME Network (Academic Representative); **Brian Connolly,** Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services (Review Co-ordinator).

Student Consultation

The student consultation was conducted between Wednesday 26 February and Thursday 14 March 2019.

Four student focus groups were held on the following dates:
  - Tuesday 26 February 2019 at the Vet School in Easter Bush.
  - Friday 1 March 2019 in the Main Library, George Square.
  - Friday 8 March 2019 at Murchison House, King's Buildings.
  - Thursday 14 March 2019 in the Main Library, George Square.
The second group in the Main Library replaced a scheduled date at Little France which was cancelled due to a lack of responses.

The sessions were conducted by the following Students' Association team: **Isabella Neergaard-Petersen** (Black and Minority Ethnic Officer, Students' Association), **Kai O'Doherty** (Vice President Welfare, Students' Association), **Sarah Moffat** (Welfare and Equality Coordinator, Students' Association) and **Diva Mukherji** (Vice President Education, Students' Association).

Invitations were circulated to the BME Liberation Campaign, Students' Association reps and relevant societies, and the Student Panel. The sessions were held over lunchtime with lunch provided by way of an additional incentive to attend. The invitation included the following guidance on BME terminology (devised by the Students' Association team):

> *This includes students of African, Asian, Arab and Afro-Caribbean descent, as well as those from other minority ethnic groups including Jewish and Romani students, and those who would describe themselves as being of mixed or multiple ethnicities. We are keen to hear from both UK-domiciled and international students, including those from countries such as China and India. We acknowledge that ethnic identities can be complex and so if you are unsure whether you would be included in this review, please contact* liberation@eusa.ed.ac.uk.

The review panel met on Friday 29 March 2019 to consider the findings of the student consultation. The following is a summary of comments and issues raised by the BME students in the focus groups which will be taken forward with key stakeholders across the University in June as part of the next phase of consultation process:

Lack of Diversity

BME students do not perceive the University to be a particularly diverse or inclusive institution.

Some students mentioned that they had expected the institution to be more diverse, particularly given marketing statements regarding the percentage of 'international' students and staff. However, many students were disappointed by the lack of people of colour and felt that the term 'international' can sometimes be used in a disingenuous way to imply diversity when in fact it refers to wealthy, white, middle-class students and staff from other European or North American countries. The students felt that more staff with backgrounds and experiences similar to them could provide role models and inspirational leaders to challenge feelings of isolation, marginalisation, alienation and exclusion sometimes experienced by students from under-represented backgrounds.

BME students suggested the following:

– **Mentoring** - University-wide mentoring system for BME students matching students from the same country or continent pre-arrival so they can offer advice and support transitioning to life at the University.

– **Culture Shock** – additional support and practical advice for students experiencing 'culture shock' where they are likely the only person from their country or continent on a programme or in a School.

– **Vitamin D** – more pre-arrival information and advice on Vitamin D supplements for students from parts of the world who may struggle with the drop in Vitamin D during their initial settling in period in the UK.

– **Cultural Celebration** - more opportunities for culture sharing (e.g. giving a higher profile to cultural celebrations led by Schools and societies) and integrating information on cultural differences into the curriculum (e.g. how you treat an animal as a Vet might depend on the cultural context).

– **Representation** - recruit more BME students and staff as a core element of the University's widening access/participation initiatives.

Experiences of Cultural Insensitivity, Microaggressions, and Racism

BME students feel unsure as to when or how to report or challenge cultural insensitivity, microaggressions, and racism.

The BME students felt that the University leaves the burden of challenging or reporting instances of microaggressions or racism to them and therefore instances often go unreported: '*don't want to let it get to you'.* The students felt that more diversity amongst students and staff at the University could help raise awareness of and willingness to challenge microaggresions if and when they occur.

BME students suggested the following:

- **Benchmarking** – explore examples of best practice across the UK and international sectors.

- **Training** - cultural awareness and sensitivity training for all staff and students (particularly in the first year).

- **Speakers and Seminars** – hosting high profile events to promote academic discussion and engagement with issues of inclusion, equality, and diversity in the curriculum.

The Curriculum (the Review Panel noted that the curriculum is not specifically within the remit of the review – a Senate Learning and Teaching Committee task group addressed the issue earlier this session - however it was agreed that it will be referenced by the review as part of the over-all experience of BME students at the University).

BME students feel unsupported when attempting to address issues of diversity and inclusion in the curriculum.

The BME students cited examples of students being challenged by academics to justify requests for the inclusion of more diverse topics or reading lists in the face of the historic weight and objectivity of the disciplinary 'canon'. In this context some students felt that they were expected to 'consume' the disciplinary status quo instead of being included as partners with staff in a collaborative approach to the curriculum. This was contrasted with the responses of some staff to poor results in student surveys – often decrying the onset of student consumerism and insisting that a collaborative partnership between students and academics is fundamental to higher education. Students cited the lack of inclusion and diversity in the course creation process as an element of the growth of student consumerism and fear of intellectually straying too far from the established path to a 'good degree'. The students felt that their initial desire to seek reform is replaced by a tacit acceptance that to get a qualification the individual simply has to learn to 'play the game' within the confines of the existing curriculum.

The BME students were in agreement that courses and programmes could be rooted in their disciplinary history while also focused on what is happening now and where a discipline should aspire to be in the future. However, the students felt that if issues of diversity and

inclusion are to be addressed then they have to make all the effort to challenge the academic status quo. The BME students felt that going against the prevailing approach can be a daunting undertaking particularly if the academic community is not a willing collaborator. The students felt that if an individual student chooses to pursue a subject of inquiry not on the prescribed curriculum or reading list then they risk spending time and effort on a task that may not directly contribute towards their course marks. The BME students were in agreement that this places the burden of risk wholly on the individual student.

The BME students regarded the lack of diversity across the University as a barrier to innovation and new radical approaches to research and teaching. The students felt that a more diverse academic staff population, with diverse research interests, driving the design of a diverse range of courses and programmes could ensure diversity in the curriculum.

BME students suggested the following:

– **Reading Lists** – subject areas committing to review reading lists and increase the diversity of texts (if not in the core canonical reading lists then at least ensuring that more diverse secondary readings lists allow students to explore issues of diversity within the prescribed curriculum).

– **Speakers and Seminars** – hosting high profile events to promote academic discussion and engagement with issues of inclusion, equality, and diversity in the curriculum.

– **Representation** – commitment to increase the percentage of BME academic staff (and in doing so, the potential for a more diverse curriculum and academic culture).

Accessing Support Services

BME students reported experiencing inconsistent levels of support. Concerns were expressed in regard to a perceived lack of cultural awareness around issues of race, culture, faith leading to a perception that staff are unable to understand or empathise with the needs of BME students.

BME students suggested the following:

– **Training** - cultural awareness and sensitivity training for staff to enable them to better support students.

– **Representation** – commitment to increase the percentage of BME staff in professional services.

– **Visa Guidance** - for staff communicating sensitive information regarding visas (including consideration of how stressful last-minute changes can be for students).

– **BME Spaces** – more investment in and better promotion of spaces where BME students can connect (including the BME Campaign, relevant societies, professional bodies relating to diversity etc.).

- **Faith Space** - more support and spaces for students of faith (in particular, more prayer space for Muslim students at King's Buildings).

- **Catering** - more halal/kosher food options on campus.

- **Financial Support** - more financial support for international students who may struggle to access the extracurricular activities which would help them make friends and feel part of a community. In particular, greater investment in and promotion of the Activities and Sports Participation Grant (which aims to support students to take part in extra-curricular activities by reducing financial barriers) and "go abroad" opportunities (society trips, peer support projects) which international students struggle to participate in due to additional visa costs and lack of advice.

- **English Language Support** - more advice and support for international students, particularly those who don't have English as a first language, or who come from different educational contexts.

Staff Consultation

Staff stakeholder meetings will be held by the review panel to examine issues raised by students. These staff stakeholder meetings are essentially formative, helping the review panel to understand the issues from a service delivery perspective and to seek staff suggestions on existing good practice and possible areas for enhancement. The dates for the staff consultation meetings are **Friday 14 and Friday 28 June 2019**.

Brian Connolly
Thematic Review Coordinator
May 2019

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

23 May 2019

Update on Actions from College Quality Reports

Executive Summary

The paper provides an update on actions from College Quality Reports considered at the February meeting of the Committee.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?

The paper is relevant to the University's aim to "provide the highest-quality research-led teaching and learning", and the strategic objective of 'Leadership in learning".

Action requested

For Information.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   No.

2. **Risk assessment**
   The paper is for information and risk assessment is not required.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   The paper is for information and equality impact assessment is not required.

4. **Freedom of information**
   Yes.

Key words

Quality Reports, Space, Timetabling, Student Systems

Originator of the paper

Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer

Update on Actions from College Quality Reports

The Committee considered the Annual College Quality Reports at the meeting held on Wednesday 27 February 2019 and agreed actions in response to issues raised by the Colleges. The following responses were received:

Agenda Item	Action	Response
Widening Participation Across all three Colleges the course fail rate/percentage of withdrawals for students from WP backgrounds remains higher than the University average.	Colleges to identify actions to address the relatively higher fail rate/percentage of withdrawals for students from WP backgrounds.	Under consideration by the Colleges. However, Colleges have raised concerns that reliable WP data may not be readily available.
Reporting and Feedback To ensure the communication loop is closed on University level actions in future an action response report will be circulated to College offices. College representatives will also ensure that the outcomes of the Committee's discussions are made available to and considered by the relevant College committee(s). The Committee also agreed that the timing and structure of the report should be reviewed.	Academic Services to consult with the Colleges on the timing of the annual College reports and report back to a future Committee meeting.	Academic Services is hosting a meeting with the College Deans of Quality on Friday 17 May 2019 to discuss proposed changes to College annual quality reporting.
	Committee Secretary to ensure that the action update report (responding to the College Reports) is circulated annually to the College Offices.	This action report will be circulated to the College offices after the meeting of SQAC (23 May 2019) and then on an annual basis after the last meeting of each session.
University Initiatives The pace and extent of changes can be very time consuming and detrimental to staff (both academic and professional) seeking to	Committee Secretary to request a response from Deputy Secretary Student Experience.	In order to maintain its position as a world class University the University is committed to transforming the way it delivers professional services across HR, finance, student administration and support and student recruitment and admissions. Better, smarter ways of working across all

maintain the quality of student experience, learning and teaching in Deaneries, Schools and other local areas.		these areas are intended to ensure that academic staff can focus on research and teaching (not "admin"); that students get better and easier access to high quality support and services; and that professional services staff no longer have to deal with inefficient, duplicate or out of date systems and processes that waste lots of time. Supported by our advisers KPMG, we are working to a methodology in all these areas that aims to deliver substantial change at pace rather than incrementally over many years. While this does have risks in terms of impact on staff time and change fatigue, we believe the risks of slow, incremental change ("death by a thousand cuts") are greater.
Increasing Admissions Increasing number of students (and push to increase further) is putting notable pressure on staff (academic and professional) in regard to teaching, feedback, admin but also provision of Personal Tutors.	Committee Secretary to request a response from University Senior Management to College concerns.	Update at meeting.
Timetabling Errors in course timetables has had a significant impact on the student and staff experience, particularly in regard to a notable number of inappropriate rooms and locations.	Committee Secretary to request a response from the Head of the Timetabling and Examination Services to College concerns.	Providing a comprehensive core teaching allocation and day-to-day booking service across a large and diverse teaching estate is challenging. Whilst the Timetabling Unit works hard to provide space that meets all requirements and preferences, an element of compromise is required to ensure the successful allocation of over 150,000 booking activities each academic year. The University is working hard, through a rolling investment programme, to improve the quality and accessibility of teaching space, but we accept there remains pockets of space that can still deliver a negative experience to students and staff. There are additional factors around class size, travel time

		requirements and over-subscribed demand for peak popular periods that contribute to this challenging environment, which can also lead to frequent room changes to address preferences and competing demands, which can also prove disruptive to students. It's more difficult to feedback regarding the issue of errors in course timetables, as there is not yet fully centralised support for all aspects of timetabling within CMVM, although fully centralised support is planned for 19/20. The TTU did recently engage with the Vet School regarding the volume of changes to timetabled activities, which was identified as primarily due to changes to, or uncertainty surrounding, teaching staff availability. The TTU is working closely with the School to identify a timetable planning timeline that can ensure a more timely delivery, and subsequent confirmation, of timetable requirements that ensures a more stable and consistent timetable for students. Despite best efforts, challenges do remain and errors can occur. The TTU has a suite of exception reports that help identify and mitigate issues, but there remains a key dependency on a close working relationship with Schools to ensure the best possible outcome and experience for students in respect to their timetable. Schools should continue to ensure they liaise directly with the TTU to discuss options around emerging issues.
Estates and Space Ongoing challenges regarding the availability of high quality teaching space and social spaces for students.	Committee Secretary to request a response from Space Strategy Group to College concerns.	The Learning and Teaching Spaces Strategy (LTSS) was approved by the University Executive on 19 March 2019 and the Estates Committee on 20 March 2019. The aim of this strategy is to provide the best possible facilities for learning, teaching and study over the next 5-10 years.

		Space Strategy Group is now developing the LTSS implementation plan to identify and track the actions required to deliver the strategy. The LTSS will complement the University Student Experience Action Plan and in particular help to address two key themes in the Plan: • Excellent facilities (including the estate, IT and transport); and • Strong sense of community and belonging. Space Strategy Group will meet on 15 August 2019 to approve the final LTSS implementation plan (which will also include a communication plan).

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

23 May 2019

ELIR 4 – Outcomes of Reviews

Executive Summary
This paper, produced by the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland, identifies the key themes arising from the recommendations and commendations identified in the first four reviews completed in the ELIR 4 cycle and compares the ELIR 4 outcomes with the themes identified in the ELIR 3 cycle. It should be noted that the wording of the recommendations and commendations have been edited to reduce their length.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
Relevant to the Committee's responsibility for the University's engagement with periodic Quality Assurance Agency Enhancement-Led Institutional Reviews, including monitoring the effective implementation of review recommendations.

Action requested
The Committee is asked to note the key themes.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
No actions are proposed, the paper is presented to the Committee for information.

Resource / Risk / Compliance
1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   Not applicable. This paper is presented to the Committee for information and no actions are proposed.

2. **Risk assessment**
   Not applicable. This paper is presented to the Committee for information and no actions are proposed.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   Not applicable. This paper is presented to the Committee for information and no actions are proposed.

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open.

Key words
ELIR, ELIR 4, outcomes

Originator of the paper
Nichola Kett (Academic Policy Manager, Academic Services)
10 May 2019

SHEEC | Scottish
Higher Education
Enhancement Commitee

ELIR 4 – Outcomes from review activity

Purpose

1. This paper identifies the key themes arising from the commendations and recommendations identified in the first four reviews completed in the ELIR 4 cycle. It compares the ELIR 4 outcomes with the themes identified in the ELIR 3 cycle.

ELIR 4 cycle to date

4. Two ELIR 4 reviews were completed in 2017-18 (Queen Margaret University and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland). In 2018-19 five reviews were scheduled, two of which are completed (Aberdeen and Dundee) with three further reviews in progress (Strathclyde, Glasgow and Scotland's Rural College). This paper draws on the outcomes of the first four ELIR 4 reviews to be published.

5. In ELIR 4, each review includes a clear threshold judgement relating to the effectiveness of the institution's arrangements for securing academic standards and enhancing the student learning experience. Each ELIR 4 report also includes a set of differentiated commendations and recommendations.

Themes arising

6. The table immediately below compares the key areas of 'positive practice' from the ELIR 3 cycle (which completed in 2015-16) with the commendations identified in the first four review reports published in the ELIR 4 cycle.

Positive practice in ELIR 3 cycle (key themes)	Commendations in first four ELIR 4 Outcomes
Clarity of institutional culture and strategy	The Culture of promoting equality and diversity was commended at RCS QMU was commended for having an institutional strategy which is dynamic, iterative and embedded in the student experience

	Dundee was commended for bringing about greater institutional oversight and opportunities for systematic enhancement through the introduction of the pivotal associate dean role. Associate deans enhance communication within and between schools, for example through their membership of school committees, bringing greater consistency in the student experience. Together they form an effective cross-school community which serves to enhance learning and teaching and share good practice across the University.
Partnership with students	QMU was commended for engaging in a partnership with its students to continue developing its strategic approach.

Aberdeen and its Students' Association were recognised for having made considerable progress in developing strong partnership working including establishing an ambitious Student Partnership Agreement and implementing a Student Engagement Development Plan.

Dundee and its Students' Association were commended for their productive and collaborative relationship which brings a wide range of benefits to the student experience, for example the well-established Student Partnership Agreement which the University and DUSA monitor through mutually-agreed key performance indicators (KPIs). |
| Student support | RCS was commended for provision a strongly student-centred, personalised experience and being responsive to student feedback.

Aberdeen was commended for proactively developing its student services to effectively support the requirements of its increasingly diverse student population.

Aberdeen was also recognised for effective implementation of a Student Communication Policy, resulting in students recognising they are provided with targeted information on matters relevant to them. |
| Academic and educational development | RCS was commended for the positive impact of educational development inside the institution and in the educational community more widely. QMU was commended for its wide range of staff development opportunities which are responsive to the needs of staff and the University's strategic direction.

The University of Dundee's Academic Skills Centre (ASC) was commended as a centre of excellence with a wide-ranging, innovative, responsive and proactive portfolio for students and staff. In addition to the Academic Induction Programme, the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice in Higher Education and a shorter Learning to |

	Teach in Higher Education programme, the ASC provision includes liaison staff dedicated to schools. For students, ASC offers a comprehensive selection of academic skills support and also works with the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning to provide bespoke training in response to topics identified by the schools.
Widening participation and student transitions	RCS was commended for its substantial strategic commitment and range of support in place to promote student access. QMU was commended for its holistic and student-centred approach to widening participation. Aberdeen was commended for its strategic focus on widening access which has resulted in the development of a broad range of activities and measures including pre and post-entry support, with students confirming they are positively supported and prepared to succeed with their studies.
Graduate attributes and employability	Both institutions were commended in this area. RCS for providing a 'proto-professional environment' in which students are immersed in an environment which is very close to the professions they are preparing to enter. QMU was commended for the extent to which programmes and staff are focused on preparing students for employment including providing work-related learning experiences.
Internationalisation	
Institutional self-evaluation	QMU was commended for its responsive annual monitoring arrangements and for the training and support provided for staff and students on validation and review panels. Aberdeen was recognised for having undertaken significant development of its quality processes to ensure these support self-evaluation and enhancement.
Management of learning and teaching	RCS was commended for its strategic approach to inter-disciplinary collaboration inside and outside the curriculum. Dundee was commended for prioritising learning and teaching across the institution. Staff are recognised for the delivery of high-quality learning and teaching, for example through the promotions policy, and are supported through opportunities to develop their practice provided by the Academic Skills Centre and the Organisational and Professional Development team.
Sharing good practice across the institution	Dundee was recognised for having in place a wide variety of systematic approaches for identifying and sharing good practice including those linked to its regular quality processes, supplemented by innovative practice such as the

	presentations by Teaching Award winners at Discovery days.
VLE policy and practice	
Use of data	
	Oversight of collaborative provision QMU was commended for its effective oversight of collaborative provision.
	Postgraduate student experience QMU was commended for making significant enhancements to the role and operation of its Graduate School since the previous ELIR, including strengthening the research environment and attracting positive student feedback. Dundee was commended for the excellent postgraduate research student experience provided across the University including monitoring which takes place at least twice-yearly through thesis monitoring committees, independent of the student's supervisor, and includes both academic progress and pastoral support needs. In addition, a range of imaginative support is available to students such as the Thesis Bootcamp.
	Engagement with the Enhancement Themes QMU was commended for successfully embedded learning from the Enhancement Themes, enabling Theme priorities to be realised in a wide range of institutional policy and practice.
	Equality and diversity See RCS commendation on its culture of promoting equality and diversity (listed under institutional culture and strategy above). Aberdeen was commended for its strong institutional commitment which has ensured that equality and diversity is embedded across University policies, procedures and activities, and is also underpinned by a comprehensive range of initiatives involving both staff and students.
	Management of assessment Dundee was recognised for having embedded the use of the Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessment (TESTA) approach across all of its academic

	schools, integrating the use of TESTA with the institution's periodic programme review method. This has had a positive impact on assessment design and the experience of students.

7. This next table compares the 'areas for development' identified in the ELIR 3 cycle with the recommendations identified in the first four ELIR 4 reports published.

Areas for development in ELIR 3 cycle	**Recommendations in first two ELIR 4 Outcomes**
Postgraduate student experience – ten ELIR reports identified topics such as postgraduate transition, postgraduate community, student representation, the need for supervisor training, and the research culture	Aberdeen was asked to continue its work aimed at defining the role of the Postgraduate Research School and its relationship to the academic schools, enabling the University to ensure that all research students have an equivalent experience. The University was also asked to ensure that new postgraduate research supervisors undertake the training provided by the University.
Training and support for postgraduates who teach – in most cases, training was available but the development point related to ensuring those who teach were always trained in advance and supported throughout their teaching practice.	QMU was recommended to consider introducing a centralised system for monitoring when Graduate Teaching Assistants complete the skills development course provided to support them in their teaching.

Aberdeen was asked to ensure all new staff and postgraduate students who teach and assess complete, as a minimum, the University's 'Learning and Teaching in HE' course before taking up teaching responsibilities. |
| Feedback on assessment – identified in six ELIRs including topics such as consistency in the nature and timeliness of feedback. | QMU was asked to continue working with students to improve consistency in the quality of the feedback provided. RCS was asked to establish an institutional strategy for assessment and bring greater clarity and consistency to the design and delivery of assessments including assessment weighting and marking practices. |
| Implementing institutional strategy and practice consistently across schools/departments | RCS was recommended to continue with plans to ensure institutional strategies are aligned more closely with the Strategic Plan and with each other. It was also asked to improve the communication of key institutional policies and regulations to staff and students.

Aberdeen was recommended to reflect on the balance between institutional and school responsibilities for establishing and implementing policy and practice to assure itself that all those studying for a University of Aberdeen award have parity of experience. |
| Optimising the use of technology in learning and teaching | RCS was asked to ensure there is more consistent use of learning technologies across the curriculum and consider how these could be used to promote engagement and to |

	facilitate sharing key information between staff and students. Dundee was asked to develop guidance for programme teams on expected good practice for the design and use of its virtual learning environment in order to provide greater equivalence of experience across programmes and schools.
Establishing representation arrangements for students from all modes of study and, in a number of cases, enhancing arrangements for representation at class or programme level	Dundee was asked to progress its work aimed at improving student engagement, representation and support for distance learning students.
Enhancing aspects of managing collaborative provision	QMU was asked to extend the use of periodic review across all collaborative partners, recognising proportionality in the approach adopted. In addition, where programmes are delivered in Greek, QMU was asked to ensure students are able to make effective use of the academic literature throughout their programme of study. Dundee was recommended, as a matter of priority, to improve its oversight of collaborative activity to ensure it has effective arrangements in place for identifying and mitigating academic risks. Aberdeen was asked to review its processes for maintaining the Register of Partnerships and Collaborative Provision, to ensure its ongoing currency and completeness.
Addressing a collection of technical aspects of quality arrangements	Aberdeen was asked to continue with its plans to develop processes for the routine review of student-facing professional services. Aberdeen was also encouraged to reflect on the effectiveness of its current arrangements for monitoring the training and induction provided for external examiners at school level. In addition, it should ensure that all students have easy access to the external examiners' reports for their programme.
	Approach to evaluation and review RCS was asked to reflect on its approach to self-evaluation and review to ensure it is able to optimise the learning from its review activity while streamlining the conduct of multiple reviews.

	Personal tutor system
	QMU was asked to progress its plans to review and revise the Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) system.
	Aberdeen was asked to continue monitoring its personal tutoring arrangements to ensure they remain fit for purpose, in the context of the University's changing student population. It was also asked to extend personal tutoring for postgraduate taught students, including those studying online.
	Recognising and recording student skills and achievement
	QMU was asked to continue reflecting on the ways it can recognise and record the skills and activities students gain outside the formal curriculum.
	Use of evidence to enhance the student experience
	While recognising QMU has made significant progress in the availability and use of data to support decision-making, the University was encouraged to support staff in using that evidence to understand the extent to which there is potential variation in the student experience across disciplines.
	Widening participation and flexible entry
	Dundee was asked to take an overview of the wide range of very positive initiatives the University has in place to support fair access and flexible entry routes. This would enable the University to form a clear view of the approaches that are most effective in helping students to enter from different academic backgrounds. It would also ensure students have an equivalent experience of key stages such as welcome and induction.

ELIR outcomes

8. ELIR 4 outcomes are followed up individually through annual discussions with QAAS officers and by institutions producing a Follow-up report one year after publication of their ELIR Outcome and Technical reports. In addition, ELIR 3 outcomes were taken forward in Follow-up events where institutions which were reviewed in the same year were brought together to discuss the ways in which they had addressed their ELIR outcomes. Follow-up events are not a formal part of the ELIR 4 methodology. Instead it was determined that institutions would engage with Focus On projects and that, over the cycle, the Focus On project scope would facilitate the follow-up of ELIR outcomes.

<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

23 May 2019

Internal Periodic Review Reports and Responses

Executive Summary
The following final reports from Internal Periodic Reviews 2018/19 are published on the
[Committee wiki](#)

Postgraduate Programme Review of GeoSciences
Postgraduate Programme Review of College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Teaching Programme Review of Earth Sciences
Teaching Programme Review of History of Art

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
The paper is relevant to the Committee's responsibility for the quality assurance framework.

Action requested

Reports: for approval. The Committee is asked to note the commendations and
recommendations. The full reports are published on the [wiki](#)

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
The reports will be published on the Academic Services website.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   No additional resource implications.

2. **Risk assessment**
   No risk associated.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the internal review process.

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open.

Key words

Postgraduate Programme Review, Teaching Programme Review, PPR, TPR,

Originator of the paper
Gillian Mackintosh
Academic Policy Officer,
Academic Services

15 May 2019

PPR/TPR	No	Commendations	Recommendations	Responsibility
PPR GeoSciences	1	Postgraduate research provision is more integrated into the School than it was at the time of the previous review, and this is **commended** by the review team.	The review team strongly **recommends** that the planned model for Advisors is implemented and that Advisors meet students twice per year, and be available as needed for pastoral support.	School of GeoSciences
	2	The administrative PGR office is **commended** by the review team for their dedication and hard work.	The review team **recommends** that the first year confirmation process is used as the basis for the first year annual review, and subsequent reviews should take place annually.	School of GeoSciences
	3	The review team **commends** the School for organising the annual PGR conference.	The review team **recommends** a system of oversight to ensure the minimum threshold of supervisory meetings is met, as stated in the University's Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students.	School of GeoSciences
	4	The Student-led GradSchool conference is an important part of building a research culture and preparing students for the PGR conference, and the students are **commended** for organising such an event.	The review team **recommends** that a workload allocation model is implemented that reflects the work of co-supervision.	School of GeoSciences
	5	The School is **commended** for holding focus groups recently for PGR students	The review team **recommends** that the School identifies appropriate space for informal/social discussions, including coffee/tea facilities on each of their sites.	School of GeoSciences
	6	The review team **commends** the huge amount of work done in the School to overhaul the tutor and demonstrator system, and to make the application process much more transparent.	The review team **recommends** that the School ensures that Course Organisers adopt best practice consistently in inducting, training, and supporting tutors and demonstrators.	School of GeoSciences
	7	The tutors and demonstrators who met with the review team showed an obvious motivation to do a good job in teaching, and they are **commended** by the review team. The review team were very impressed by their enthusiasm.	The review team **recommends** that the School resources additional supports for the anticipated increase in international student numbers.	School of GeoSciences
	8	The review team **commended** the good practice identified in parts of the School on grading students in assessment, through co-marking and feedback on feedback.	The review team **recommends** that the School ensures that students are aware that clear structures exist for elected student reps to feed into School level meetings, including the Equality and Diversity Committee.	School of GeoSciences

	9	The review team **commends** the work of the School in promoting equality and diversity: the activity of the Equality and Diversity committee; inviting a female keynote speaker to the PGR conference; and the consideration of students' requests regarding the gender balance of their supervisory/advisory team.	The review team encourages any planned activity to streamline and edit the website content, and **recommends** that there is a strategic review of the website to include scope for self-editable research student profiles, an overview of current activities, opportunities, and funding across the School.	School of GeoSciences
	10	The review team **commends** the School for the development of the LEARN (virtual learning environment) hub for PGR, rolled out recently. Information on LEARN now provided a resource library for students, and included a noticeboard about training opportunities, progression and milestones, the programme handbook, information about how to use the Research Training Support Grant (RTSG), and signposting to various sources of help and support.	The review team **recommends** that the Service Excellence Programme prioritise required changes to the EUCLID system to ease administrative burden on managing annual reviews.	Service Excellence Programme
	11	Careers advice has been made available to students at induction, and students have been advised generally on non-academic career pathways, and this has been really appreciated by the students who met with the review team. Careers service representatives were in attendance at the recent annual PGR conference. This provision of careers advice to students is **commended** by the review team.		
	12	The review team **commends** the work of the School in promoting associate fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (HEA).		
PPR Medicine	1	The review team **commends** the introduction of the Director of Experience role to separate the student experience portfolio from the financial role and the Director's commitment to the role.	**Thesis Committee** The review team **recommends** that Thesis Committees are implemented consistently across the College and in particular, the role of the Principal Supervisor in these committees should be clarified.	College

				The review team **recommends** that the 10 week review meeting should be standard practice across the College and that it includes training needs analysis discussion with students. Training needs analysis should also be a standard part of all annual progression reviews. The review team **recommends** that there should be clear procedures for the formation of Thesis Committee membership and in particular, membership should not be allocated by the supervisor. The College should ensure consistency of allocation, clarity of roles and a truly independent Thesis Committee Chair. This will support the College remit item on equality of student experience.	
		2	The review team **commends** the College for the way it is managing a large student population and complex structure.	The review team **recommends** that the College considers separating pastoral support from the Thesis Committee and ensures support for pastoral issues is available in all areas.	College
		3	The review team **commends** the Thesis Committee structure, which provides a robust quality assurance process for postgraduate research study.	**Communication** The review team found evidence of variable student experience of induction, particularly where students arrive before or after the start of the academic year. There was also evidence of inconsistency in the information available to new students. The review team **recommends** the College ensure standardisation of induction and that all students have access to induction. The review team **recommends** that the College consider developing a central repository for information relevant to all postgraduate research students, such as tutoring opportunities, seminars and student representatives and ensures that students are aware of where to find this information.	College
		4	There was evidence of good practice of student peer support through Postgraduate Societies. These are student-led activities and the review team **commends** the College for encouraging this type of activity.	**Student Voice** The review team **recommends** that the College explore ways to support sustainability of societies, including administrative support and formalised constitution of societies to promote transparency. The review team **recommends** that the College consider a more formalised structure for using the Postgraduate Student Reps in reporting up and down between students and College. The College	College

				should ensure appropriate training is available for all Reps, the sustainability of these roles and that Rep contact details are communicated to the student body.	
		5	The review team **commends** the student-led "SolidariTea" initiative, which aims to provide an informal support and advice network for students.	The review team **recommends** the College ensures there is visibility and transparency in the publicising of and recruitment to teaching and tutoring opportunities for students. There may be opportunities for the College to explore the availability of demonstrating positions in the College of Science and Engineering to increase opportunities for its students. Supervisors should offer encouragement to all students to take up these opportunities.	College
		6	The review team **commends** the College wiki as a good initiative for static information such as procedures and forms	The review team **recommends** the College ensures that the University Mental Health Strategy and its implementation, are relevant for the specific issues faced by postgraduate research students within the College. The College should ensure that College support and activities related to wellbeing are better communicated to students, with clear sign-posting to support routes within Deaneries.	College
		7	There are Postgraduate Student Reps within the College and the review team **commends** their enthusiasm and engagement.	The review team **recommends** the College ensures clarity on supervisory team appointment and responsibilities and monitors support for students during medium term supervisor absences.	College
		8	The review team **commends** the development of cohorts in Doctoral Training Programmes as good practice in providing integrated postgraduate research training.	The College and the review team identified obtaining clear, relevant progression and completion, and equality and diversity data to inform quality assurance and management decisions as a challenge. The review team **recommends** that the College explore with Student Systems how data provision might be improved and supplied to the College in a more usable format.	College liaise with Student Systems
		9	The review team **commends** the 10 week review meeting as positive practice.	The review team **recommends** that the College consider with Academic Services the value of restructuring future postgraduate programme reviews.	College with Academic Services
		10	The review team **commends** the College Office Graduate Hub team, which is key to College operations.		
		11	The review team **commends** the support in Biomedical Sciences for postgraduate student tutors and demonstrators as an area of good practice. Of particular		

		note, was the Deanery's mentoring training programme for their joint provision with Zhejiang University.		
	12	The review team notes that issues with recruitment and admissions processes from the previous review had been resolved and **commends** the standardisation of recruitment procedures.		
TPR Earth Sciences	1.	The panel **commends** the School's culture of reflection.	The panel **recommends** that the School review its processes for maintaining student welfare by instituting uniform attendance monitoring at least for practicals, record keeping and triage systems; in particular, it is recommended that the School maintain formal attendance monitoring for practicals, using University systems to support this.	School
	2.	The panel **commends** the quality of the Earth Sciences Student Support Coordinators	The panel **recommends** that the School institute mechanisms to improve the collection of data in order to make informed decisions and implement change. The data should include information on student retention, transfers, progression and graduate destinations.	School
	3.	The panel **commends** the School for the inspirational quality of its academic teaching	The panel **recommends** that the School re-purpose the Teaching and Assessment Working Group to focus on enhancing the staff and student experience, to include the following remit items: timing and modes of assessment, curriculum review including thread review, academic guidance, and optimising spaces and resourcing.	School
	4.	The panel **commends** the GeoPhysics subject area for demonstrating various examples of good practice which have been highlighted by both staff and students, notably the quality of the academic guidance by lecturers to students, the emphasis on the relevance and application of teaching, and the incorporation of social events.	The panel **recommends** that the School introduce more clarity and better communication on the Personal Tutor role to staff and students, more in line with the University's guidance on Personal Tutors.	School
	5.	The panel **commends** the School for its field trip provision.	The panel **recommends** that the University increase provision of support services, including counselling services, on site at King's Buildings.	University – Deputy Secretary Student Experience
	6.	The panel **commends** the School's policy of providing full funding for students for compulsory field trips.	The panel **recommends** that the School improve information to staff and students on feedback dates, have a uniform approach to the of quality of feedback provided within and across courses, and that it abide by the 15 working day rule set by the University.	School
	7.	The panel **commends** the School's use of its available teaching space	The panel **recommends** that the School improve academic guidance on course choice in pre-honours years, particularly courses in or	School

			adjacent to Schools which consolidate essential skills for honours years.	
	8.	The panel **commends** the School's good practice of senior students and alumni/alumnae assisting in evening sessions about placements	The panel recognises the challenge of building the identity of the Earth Sciences cohort when operating across multiple sites, and **recommends** that the School review and seek to improve the provision of spaces to enhance the student and staff experience, this to include social space, teaching space and quiet study space.	School
	9.	The panel **commends** the School for recognising and rewarding teaching excellence through promotion	The panel **recommends** that the University support the long-term in-position career progression, development and promotion of the Earth Sciences professional services staff in order to allow continuity in Schools.	University - Human Resources
	10.		The panel **recommends** that the School continue to improve training for tutors and demonstrators by encouraging them to engage with CPD, including Higher Education Academy (HEA), Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PgCAP), and The Edinburgh Teaching Award (EdTA).	School in conjunction with IAD
	11		The panel **recommends** that the School institute and communicate to tutors and demonstrators a process for them to provide feedback to the School and that it address issues relating to the common marking scheme, payment for tasks undertaken and staff-student ratios raised during the review.	School
	12		The panel **recommends** that academic staff members (non-tutors and demonstrators) be present and engaged with all practical sessions	School
	13		The panel **recommends** that the School highlight the rich information which already exists on their webpages to the incoming cohorts, to provide them with sufficient knowledge and background to make well-informed course choices on arrival.	School
TPR History of Art	1.	The breadth of the curriculum and the Subject Area commitment to it	Review of the governance structures and decision making processes in History of Art, and how it relates to Edinburgh College of Art, including how to ensure student representation is fully considered	Subject Area and School level Senior Management Teams
	2.	The teaching quality within the Subject Area and the enthusiasm of the teaching teams.	Review communication channels to ensure effective discussion and information-sharing between all stakeholders across the subject area.	Subject Area and School level Senior Management Teams

		3.	The effort and consciousness of the need to redevelop and bring together the student body on one campus	Steps are taken to focus on the restructuring of History of Art 1 and 2, specifically that they should be developed to become a suite of four, 20 credits courses rather than two 40 credit courses, and consideration of allowing teaching sabbaticals in order to develop this	Subject Area and School level Senior Management Teams
		4.	The work of the Undergraduate Teaching Office and Student Support Officers in recognition of the work that they do	The appointment of a Senior Tutor for History of Art	Subject Area Senior Management
		5.	The History of Art Society and how it contributes to the sense of community	Postgraduate Tutor system a. The introduction of formalised training for all Postgraduate Tutors, including marking and feedback to ensure parity between markers b. Appoint a Tutor Co-ordinator, permanent staff member, with responsibility for oversight and ongoing training and monitoring c. Ensuring a voice for tutors, including Guaranteed Hours, to formally feedback to course teaching teams	Subject Area
		6.	The work of the Work Placement Co-ordinator for their liaising with employers, supporting students and maintaining quality	Subject Area senior management should take steps to ensure an equity of workload that is demonstrably fair	Subject Area and School level Senior Management Teams
		7.	The commitment of Postgraduate Tutors	Review of teaching and assessment methods used in Years 1 and 2 by encouraging lateral thinking and innovation, speaking with colleagues in other Schools and Colleges across the University regarding alternative teaching and assessment practices, explore the potential for collaboration with pre-honours UG teaching within the wider School community	Undergraduate Director and History of Art Teaching Committee
		8.	The process of recruitment for Postgraduate Tutors	Due consideration and attention be given to the Student Voice and Student Representation mechanisms, in order to increase the visibility of the Student Voice and closure of the feedback loop	Staff-Student Liaison Committee, Teaching Office and Head of Subject Area
		9.	The Art History toolkit	The Subject Area should develop a plan and timeframe to address the further incorporation of graduate attributes and employability into teaching	History of Art Teaching Committee, History of Art

				Careers Champion
	10.	Student Support Officer involvement in subject level meetings	The Subject Area should engage with alumni and employers	Subject Area Senior Management
	11.	Analytical projects which students report finding very helpful in feeding forward into their dissertation writing.	The Art History Toolkit should be embedded into the curriculum	History of Art Teaching Committee
	12		SSOs have easy access to a room for difficult conversations with students in private	Subject Area and School level Senior Management Teams