APRC 23/24 3

**Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee
to be held on Thursday 23 November 2023
at 2:00pm via Teams**

AGENDA

1.	**Welcome and apologies**	
2.	**Minutes of the previous meeting** To approve • 21 September 2023 (open minute enclosed)	**APRC 23/24 3A** Closed minute circulated via email
3.	**3.1 Matters Arising** • Convener's communications • Actions log • Academic Year Dates 2026/27 **3.2 Report of Convener's Action** • Summary of approved concessions • Addition of a second day with two exam sessions for the December exam diet	**Verbal Update**
4. SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS		
4.1	**Programmes with non-standard semester dates (CMVM)** To approve	**APRC 23/24 3B**
4.3	**APRC annual concessions report 2022/23 - CLOSED** To note and comment **This paper is closed.** Its disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act.	**APRC 23/24 3C**
5.	**Any Other Business**	
Date of next meeting Thursday 25 January 2024, 2-5pm, Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House, Central area		

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

Unconfirmed minute

Present:	
Dr Aidan Brown	Elected member of Senate (CSE)
Dr Adam Bunni	Head of Academic Policy and Regulation, Academic Services
Philippa Burrell	Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)
Professor Jeremy Crang	Dean of Students (CAHSS)
Professor Jamie Davies	Dean of Taught Education (CMVM)
Lisa Dawson	Academic Registrar, Registry Services
Lucy Evans	Deputy Secretary, Students (Co-opted member)
Dr Murray Earle	Elected member of Senate (CAHSS)
Professor Patrick Hadoke (Convener)	Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM)
Clair Halliday	The Advice Place, Deputy Manager
Karen Howie	Head of Digital Learning Applications and Media, ISG
Alexandra Laidlaw	Head of Academic Affairs (CSE)
Professor Antony Maciocia	Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE)
Dr Donna Murray	Head of Taught Student Development (IAD)
Callum Paterson	Academic Engagement Coordinator, Students' Association (Co-opted member)
Rachael Quirk	Head of Taught Student Administration and Support (CAHSS)
Dr Deborah Shaw	Dean of Students (CMVM)
Professor Tim Stratford	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE)
Dr Uzma Tufail-Hanif	Elected member of Senate (CMVM)
Prof Stephen Warrington (Deputy-Convener)	Dean of Student Experience (CSE)
Kirsty Woomble	Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)
Substitute members present:	
Dr Lisa Kendall (on behalf of Emily Taylor)	Director of Academic and Student Administration (CAHSS)
In attendance:	
Dr Louise Buckley	Deputy Programme Director for ChM Urology
Olivia Hayes	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Cristina Matthews	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Apologies:	
Carl Harper	Vice President Education, Students' Association
Dr Emily Taylor	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS)

1.	**Welcome and apologies**	
	The Convener thanked everyone on the Committee for attending the first ordinary meeting of APRC in 2023/24. The Convener formally welcomed new members for the 2023/24 academic year. Lisa Dawson joins the Committee as	

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	an *ex-officio* member, Dr Emily Taylor as a College representative member, and Lucy Evans as a co-opted member.	
2.	**Minutes of the previous meeting** • **8 August 2023** The Committee approved the minutes of 8th August meeting as presented and no objections were raised.	**APRC 23/24 2A**
3.	**3.1 Matters Arising** • **Convener's communications** - The outcome of the September e-business meeting item was confirmed as approved. There was feedback from the Committee conveying its concern that approval from APRC was not sought sooner. Comments will be returned to the College/School to this effect. - The Convener expressed a preference that meetings take place in-person where possible; however, the Committee will continue to support a remote attendance option for those unable to attend in person. - The Committee accepts substitute members for meetings this year; they are welcome to attend and participate in full as necessary. - The Committee received an update on paper APRC2223 9G discussed at a previous meeting. The update is included as closed minutes, as it was not possible to maintain anonymity. - To note that, at present, Convener's action is taken for routine concessions. Academic Services are preparing a report regarding the type of concessions that are reviewed by Convenor's action and guidance on handling of concessions, to be discussed at the November APRC meeting. • **Actions log** The Convener notified the Committee that Academic Services are starting an action log for the Committee and that a link to this will follow. The aim of this is to help the Committee to keep track of actions and how these are followed up. This is part of the actions to be taken in response to feedback from the Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review 2022/23 (see item 5.1. for further information). • **Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedure, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group – note extract for APRC** The Convener reported the update from this Group. The Committee had tasked the Group with exploring issues around late assessment submissions, specifically related to issues with Learn not uploading submissions instantaneously. The Group agreed to change the threshold from the uploaded time to the submitted time in order to address this issue, and will follow up with the necessary guidance and communications with Schools in order to implement this. The Group would also welcome the submission of example cases for IS to work through the operational detail. This item is, therefore, resolved and no action is needed from APRC.	**Verbal Update** **APRC 23/24 2B**

There was a query regarding whether or not this paper should be closed. The Convener confirmed that there was no justification for it to be closed, and reiterated that papers should be open unless there is a clear rationale for the item to be closed.
 	
The suitability of using the Learn VLE as a platform for online exams was discussed. This is also being discussed as part of the University's digitisation strategy in relation to assessment and feedback.
 	
3.2 Report of Convener's Action
   • **Student Discipline Officers**
The Committee agreed that further updates to the Student Discipline Officers (SDO) list could be taken by Convener's action. Since the previous meeting there have been further updates to the SDO list, which were approved by Convener's Action.
 	
   • **Exam Hall Regulations**
A minor amendment to the Exam Hall Regulations has been approved by Convener's Action. The amendment, requested by the Students' Association, was to remove gendered pronouns from the Exam Hall Regulations.
 	
There are 60,000+ script books remaining that still have gendered pronouns. The decision regarding what to do with these script books is an operational one for the Exams team, rather than for APRC. The Convener's suggested course of action to the Exams team was to phase these out, rather than destroy them, given that the latter approach would be hard to justify from a sustainability perspective. There were no objections raised to this course of action.
 	
   • **Summary of approved concessions**
Since the last ordinary APRC meeting (25th May 2023), 27 individual student concessions were approved in 2022/23, and 7 individual student concessions have been approved so far in 2023/24. The Convenor gave a broad overview of concessions approved by category:
   - Extensions and AIS (13 for 2022/23; 7 for 2023/24)
   - Study abroad (11 for 2022/23)
   - Concessions required due to School error (3 for 2022/23)
In this period there has been one cohort concession approved for an External Examiner on health grounds. This cohort concession was considered and supported by the Committee before being approved.	

4. SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS	

4.3	**ChM – inclusion in Period of Study Table and Model for Degree Types and Policy** For approval This item was chaired by the Deputy Convener as the paper is for CMVM. This item was moved up the agenda due to teaching commitments for the Deputy Convener.	APRC 23/24 2E

The paper was introduced by Dr Louise Buckley, Deputy Programme Director ChM Urology. The paper is seeking approval for the maximum period for an authorised Interruption of Study for the Master of Surgery (ChM) programmes to be for 12 months (part-time continuous programmes) or 24 months (part-time intermittent programmes). The ChM programmes have a non-standard structure and the authorised interruption of study period is currently 9 months for part-time continuous programmes.

This paper is seeking approval for the ChM degree awards to be included in the Study Period Table and the Model for Degree Types, in order to enable the extension of the period of authorised interruption of studies and still comply with PG DRPS 33.

The Committee noted that not all types of degree are included in the Study Period Table and Model for Degree Types. The Committee also noted that these cannot be updated in cycle, so using this as a mechanism would delay the implementation of the update. Academic Services intend to undertake a review of the Study Period Table and Model for Degree Types which will align with the outputs from Curriculum Transformation. The Committee further noted that programme handbooks have the same status as the regulations within the regulatory framework.

Members of the Committee noted that issues in relation to 9-month PG Diplomas come up regularly and agreed to return to this issue again in the annual review of the DRPS.

The ChM programmes are also due to be reviewed and it is likely that there will be changes the short/medium term across the programmes. The Committee noted that this would be a good opportunity to embed these changes.

The Committee approved the extension of the period of authorised interruption of study, with immediate effect. This should be reflected in the Programme Handbook; however, it will not be included in the Models for Degree Types or Study Period Table. Staff within the College who authorise interruptions of study for this programme should be made aware of this approval and that the information will be reflected in the Programme Handbook.

Action: Academic Services, on behalf of APRC, to communicate the outcome via the College
Action: Academic Services to add the interruption of study available in 9-month programmes to the list of regulations for review in 2023/24

4.1	**Students' Association Sabbatical Officer Priorities 2023-2024** For discussion The paper was introduced by Callum Paterson, Academic Engagement Coordinator, Students' Association. This paper notes the priorities of the Students' Association Vice President Education and the Sabbatical team for 2023-24, which were recently presented at Senate Education Committee (SEC). The Convener noted that the paper was well received at SEC. The Students' Association Sabbatical team have a particular focus this year on improving inclusion of students based on campuses outside the Central area,	**APRC 23/24 2C**

	and are planning on holding more events at these campuses. The Advice Place is also now open three days a week at King's Buildings. Some members noted that events on these campuses usually have very low turnout, and that it would be good if Schools could help to promote these events. The Students' Association are aware of concerns from students regarding the University's move to a default three-day extension in some parts of the University, and are discussing these with student representatives.	5
4.2	**Operation of the December 2023 Exam Diet** For approval The paper was introduced by Lisa Dawson, Academic Registrar, Registry Services. The paper discusses dates for the December 2023 exam diet and outlines the existing principles which underpin the exam timetabling process. The request for the Committee is to consider the options covered in the paper and agree a position regarding the dates of the December 2023 exam diet. The current dates for the December 2023 examination diet, as approved for the 2023/24 academic year, only cover a 10-day period. Timetabling and Examinations have indicated that a minimum of 11 exam sessions are required in order to set an exam timetable which is free of clashes and allows appropriate spacing of exams for individual students. The Committee discussed the options presented in the paper. College representatives indicated that the Schools and Deaneries with whom they had consulted had broadly expressed a preference for the option of running two exam sessions on one day of the diet. The member representing the Students' Association agreed that this option was preferable overall. The Students' Association requested that if the outcome were to allow two examination sessions in one day, that the additional session be added towards the end of the diet so that students could maximise their revision time. Members discussed some of the operational issues regarding the implementation of this option, including how to accommodate learning adjustments for extra time if these are necessary for any students who end up having two exams in one day. It was noted, however, that the Exams team try to avoid scheduling two exams in one day for an individual student as far as possible. Members discussed whether or not adding a single additional examination session into the diet would be sufficient to meet the increased demands on the December 2023 examination diet due to the marking and assessment boycott. There was confirmation that the additional capacity needed for this diet had been built in to projections and that 11 sessions would most likely be sufficient. However the Timetabling and Examinations team would need to keep this under review and there was agreement that the Committee would be informed if there was a need for further sessions. The Committee noted the challenges relating to the late publication of the resit examination timetable, and that this continues to be a source of student dissatisfaction.	**APRC 23/24 2D**

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	The Committee agreed to approve the introduction of a second examination session into one day of the exam diet, as outlined in option C of the paper. The Committee also agreed that if one further two-session day were necessary (i.e. a total of 12 exam sessions), that this could be approved via Convener's action, rather than requiring further review from the Committee. The Convener will update the Committee on any further actions required at the next meeting.	
5. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NOTING		
5.1	**Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review 2022/23** To note and comment This paper was presented by Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services. The paper provides the relevant Senate Standing Committee with analysis and proposed actions drawn from the responses received to the light-touch Senate Standing Committees internal effectiveness review conducted in summer 2023, which is intended to aid continuous improvement of the University's approach to academic governance. There was a 59% response rate to the survey. The Convener thanked all members who completed the survey but noted that it would be good to obtain a higher response rate in the survey this academic year, in order to ensure it is capturing feedback from all members. The proposed actions are based on the survey feedback received and relate primarily to communications with stakeholders and EDI training identified in order to empower members to appropriately scrutinise Committee business from an EDI perspective. Members raised no comments on the proposed actions in the paper.	**APRC 23/24 2F**
5.2	**Committee Administration** For information - APRC Membership - APRC Terms of Reference This information is provided to members for information. The membership has had some minor amendments since the Committee last saw this in June. The Committee priorities were provided as a reminder to the Committee: - Policy and regulatory arrangements for the Curriculum Transformation Programme - Strands of work relating to the Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group (particularly in relation to academic policy and regulation). - Ongoing work around Coursework Extensions and Special Circumstances - Receive policies for approval in line with agreed updated schedule of review of policies, regulations and guidance	

6.	**Any Other Business**	
	6.1. Query regarding industrial action guidance for staff and Boards of Examiners	
	A member of the Committee raised a query regarding the industrial action guidance for staff and recent communications to Heads of School. The query was also raised during a discussion at 14th September meeting of the Senate Education Committee (SEC). The query related to the level of discretion open to Boards of Examiners when applying variations to the regulations. It suggested a perceived inconsistency between the discussion at SEC and a section of the minutes from a previous APRC meeting which related to the approval of variations to regulations.	
	The Convener clarified that the APRC meeting minutes are a reflection of the discussion that takes place at the Committee and are not intended as a substitute for the approved variations of regulation or specific guidance agreed by the committee. He also reminded the Committee of the principles laid out in Regulation 70 (Taught Assessment Regulations). The minutes provided information about each variation, including areas where Boards of Examiners may need to apply academic judgement in the application of the regulations. The guidance provided by the Academic Contingency Group (ACG) outlines in more detail the parameters for the application of individual variations, in line with the decisions taken by APRC. If Boards of Examiners are not clear on whether or not there is discretion for the application of specific regulations, staff should consult the guidance on industrial action, or contact their College in the first instance. The Convener noted that the Committee had not received any queries from Schools or Colleges regarding the application of the guidance.	
	Any operational issues relating to industrial action should be reported to ACG, who will raise issues with APRC as required.	
	The Deputy Secretary Students confirmed that the University's expectation is that the temporary variations to regulations are applied as these variations were not optional – they are the University Regulations, and this position has not changed. There have been clarifications to the guidance where feedback from colleagues noted that the language was ambiguous. This is not a change in position, rather a clearer use of language to reflect the University's agreed position. The Advice Place (TAP) noted that the clarification of position had been welcomed by students, many of whom had contacted them to query why mitigations had not been applied at Boards of Examiners. Another member noted the authority of the VP Education in communicating expectations to Heads of Colleges and Heads of Schools, who have a responsibility for the governance and implementation of policies and regulations in their respective areas.	
	Following receipt of a complaint made to them, the QAA undertook an investigation of the variations put in place by the University in response to the industrial action, including a review of the variations to the regulations and guidance provided. The QAA found no case to answer against the University, and stated that there was no evidence of risk to academic standards arising from the variations APRC put in place.	
	A member recommended that, in the event that the Committee approves further variations to regulations in the future, it should take extra care to ensure that	

there is a common understanding among members of the extent of any discretion relating to the application of variations.

6.2 Impact of changes made due to industrial action

A discussion took place on assessing the impact of changes made in response to industrial action. This is primarily in the remit of the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) and is also embedded in the annual quality assurance monitoring processes, which include a specific requirement for Schools and Deaneries to report on the impact of industrial action. There was confirmation that the University has data regarding students affected by the industrial action.

The Committee agreed that it would be useful to receive a 'for information' update from SQAC on the annual quality assurance monitoring processes to understand the impact on programmes of the temporary variations to the regulations.

Action: Academic Services to request a 'for information' update from SQAC on the output of annual quality assurance monitoring processes and the impact of the temporary variations to the regulations.

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Date of next meeting
Thursday 23rd November 2023, 2-5pm, Liberton Tower Meeting Room, Murchison House, King's Buildings or Teams

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

23 November 2023

Non Standard Semester Dates

Description of paper
To align CMVM online programmes semester/term dates.
The proposal will contribute to the following Strategy 2030 outcomes

- We will be leading Scotland's commitment to widening participation.
- We will be a destination of choice, based on our clear "Edinburgh Offer". All of our staff and students will develop here, whether they are from Leith, Lisbon, Lahore or Lilongwe.
- Multidisciplinary postgraduate education pathways will support flexible whole-life learning.

Action requested / recommendation
1. Seeking APRC approval for non-standard semester/term dates for 5 online PGT programmes in CMVM to align with other CMVM online programmes

Background and context
2. When the University moved to a two semester structure this did not align with the tradition of PGT programmes running for the full academic year.

3. In CMVM PGT students are on the whole working full time and studying part time. The result was that PGT programmes in CMVM were running a range of 3 semester/term dates for their students.

4. In the last few years the College Director of PGT, in collaboration with the School/Deanery Directors of PGT, had taken forward work to agree a set of semester/term dates for the CMVM PGT online programmes to create consistency for our students and the university.

5. There are only a couple of programmes that don't align to the CMVM online programme semester/term dates but this is the direction of travel, i.e. that all online programmes have the same non-standard semester/term dates in CMVM.

Discussion
6. Recently it has come to light that the 5 programmes listed under point 8, had obtained College approval for non-standard semester/term dates that aligned with most of the CMVM portfolio of online programmes but then the request for approval had not been submitted to APRC. This was an oversight of College.

7. The staff and students are currently working with the non-standard dates so we seek retrospective APRC approval for these programmes to be added to the University's non-standard semester/term approved list.

8. Appendix 1 details all CMVM programmes with approved non-standard dates, most relate to online programmes. Please note the programmes highlighted are the ones that CMVM are requesting APRC approval. For ease of reference the five programmes are listed below:

    <u>Edinburgh Medical School: Medical Education</u>
    *   Simulation Based Clinical Education (Online Learning) (PG Cert)

    <u>Edinburgh Medical School: Deanery of Clinical Sciences</u>
    *   Applied Medical Image Analysis (Online Learning) (PG Cert)
    *   Neuroimaging for Research (Online Learning) (MSc)
    *   PET-MR Principles and Applications (Online Learning) (PG Cert)
    *   Surgical Writing and Evidence Based Practice (Online Learning) (PG Cert)

Resource implications
9. None

Risk management
10. None

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
11. No direct implications.

Equality & diversity
12. No specific implications for equality and diversity.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed
13. College will communicate APRC decision to the relevant School/Deanery. As this is a retrospective approval request, the students will have already been communicated the semester dates for the programmes, which align with the non-standard dates for CMVM online programmes.

<u>Author</u>   **<u>Presenter</u>**
Philippa Burrell   *Philippa Burrell*
13 October 2023

Freedom of Information *(Is the paper 'open' or 'closed')*
Open paper

Appendix 1
CMVM Non-Standard Semester Dates

Edinburgh Medical School: Medical Education
Undergraduate
MBChB Medicine (6 year programme)

Postgraduate online learning
Clinical Education (Online Learning) (MSc)
<mark>Simulation Based Clinical Education (Online Learning) (PG Cert)</mark>

Edinburgh Medical School: Biomedical Sciences
Undergraduate
Biomedical Laboratory Science (Professional Practice) (Part-time) (BSc)

Postgraduate
MScR in Biomedical Sciences (Life Sciences)
MScR in Integrative Neuroscience

Postgraduate online learning
Anatomical Sciences (Online Learning) (PgDip)
Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health (Online Learning) (MSc)
Cancer Biology and Precision Oncology (MSc) (Online Learning)
Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (Online Learning) (MSc)
Global Health and Infectious Diseases (Online Learning) (MSc)
Global Health Studies (Online Learning) (PgCert)
International Animal Health (Online Learning) (MSc)
Science Communication and Public Engagement (Online Learning) (MSc)

Edinburgh Medical School: Deanery of Clinical Sciences
Undergraduate
Oral Health Sciences

Postgraduate
Endodontology (DClinDent)
Orthodontics Dentistry (DClinDent)
Paediatric Dentistry (DClinDent)
Prosthodontics Dentistry (DClinDent)

Postgraduate online learning
<mark>Applied Medical Image Analysis (Online Learning) (PG Cert)</mark>
Clinical Management of Pain (Online Learning) (MSc)
Clinical Ophthalmology (Online Learning) (ChM)

Critical Care (Online Learning) (MSc)
General Surgery (Online Learning) (ChM)
Imaging (Online Learning) (MSc)
Internal Medicine (Online Learning) (MSc)
Neuroimaging for Research (Online Learning) (MSc)
Paediatric Emergency Medicine (Online Learning) (MSc)
Patient Safety and Clinical Human Factors (Online Learning) (MSc)
PET-MR Principles and Applications (Online Learning) (PG Cert)
Primary Care Ophthalmology (Online Learning) (MSc)
Restorative Dentistry (Online Learning) (MSc)
Stem Cells and Translational Neurology (Online Learning) (MSc)
Surgical Sciences (Online Learning) (MSc)
Surgical Writing and Evidence Based Practice (Online Learning) (PG Cert)
Trauma and Orthopaedics (Online Learning) (ChM)
Urology (Online Learning) (ChM)
Vascular and Endovascular Surgery (Online Learning) (ChM)

Edinburgh Medical School: Deanery of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences
Postgraduate online learning
Clinical Trials (Online Learning) (MSc)
Data Science, Health and Social Care (Online Learning) (MSc)
Epidemiology (Online Learning) (MSc)
Family Medicine (Online Learning) (FMF)
Global Health Challenges (Online Learning) (PgCert)
Public Health (Online Learning) (MPH Full-time and Part-time)

Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies
Undergraduate
BVM&S Veterinary Medicine (5 year programme)
BVM&S Veterinary Medicine (Graduate Entry Programme – 4 year programme)

Postgraduate online learning
Advanced Clinical Practice (Online Learning) (MVetSci)
Advanced Veterinary Practice (Online Learning) (RCVS Certificate)
Applied Conservation Genetics with Wildlife Forensics (Online Learning) (MSc)
Applied Poultry Science (Online Learning) (MSc)
Clinical Animal Behaviour (Online Learning) (MSc)
Conservation Medicine (Online Learning) (MVetSci)
Equine Science (Online Learning) (MSc)
Food Safety (Online Learning) (MSc)
Global Food Security and Nutrition (Online Learning) (MSc)
International Animal Welfare, Ethics and Law (Online Learning) (MSc)
One Health (Online Learning) (MSc)

Veterinary Anaesthesia and Analgesia (Online Learning) (MSc)
Veterinary Epidemiology (Online Learning) (MSc)