<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>

Senate Education Committee
Wednesday 24 June 2020, 9.00 to 10.30am
Conducted via Microsoft Teams

A G E N D A

1.	**Welcome and Apologies**	
2.	**Minutes of Meeting held on 25 May 2020**	**EC 19/20 5 A**
3.	**Convener's Communications**	
3.1	Update on COVID-19 Recovery – Adaptation and Renewal	Verbal Update
4.	**For Discussion**	
4.1	Proposals for Student Support and Personal Tutors in MBChB	**EC 19/20 5 B**
4.2	Online Assessment 2020-21 – Discussion Paper from CMVM	**EC 19/20 5 C**
4.3	Consultation on Proposals to Alter the Teaching Day / Week for Semester 1 2020/21	**EC 19/20 5 D**
4.4	COVID-19 Undergraduate Survey Results	**EC 19/20 5 E**
4.5	Learning Technology:	
	4.5.1 LTW Learning Technology Update for Semester 1	**EC 19/20 5 F**
	4.5.2 Virtual Classroom Policy	**EC 19/20 5 G**
5.	**Standing Items**	
5.1	Research Postgraduate Matters / Doctoral College Update	
6.	**For Information**	
6.1	Annual Monitoring: Changes due to COVID-19 Outbreak	**EC 19/20 5 H**
7.	**Any Other Business**	

**Minutes of the Meeting of Senate Education Committee
held via Microsoft Teams at 2.00pm on Monday 25 May 2020**

1. Attendance

Present	Position
Colm Harmon	Vice-Principal Students (Convener) – Ex Officio
Tina Harrison	Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance (Deputy Convener) – Ex Officio
Sabine Rolle	Representative of CAHSS (Learning and Teaching)
Lisa Kendall	Representative of CAHSS (Learning and Teaching)
Stephen Bowd	Representative of CAHSS (Postgraduate Research)
Judy Hardy	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Michael Seery	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Antony Maciocia	Representative of CSE (Postgraduate Research)
Neil Turner	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, UG)
Paddy Hadoke	Representative of CMVM (Postgraduate Research)
Fabio Battaglia	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Postgraduate Research Representative
Iain Gordon	Head of School, CSE
Richard Andrews	Head of School, CAHSS
Mike Shipston	Head of Deanery, CMVM
Sue MacGregor	Director of Academic Services – Ex Officio
Velda McCune	Representing Director of Institute for Academic Development – Ex Officio
Shelagh Green	Director for Careers & Employability – Ex Officio
Melissa Highton	Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division of Information Services – Ex Officio
Sian Bayne	Co-opted Member – Digital Education
Philippa Ward	Academic Services (Secretary)
Apologies	
Sarah Henderson	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, PGT)
Steph Vallancey	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Vice-President Education – Ex Officio
Stuart Lamont	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Permanent Staff Member – Ex Officio
Rebecca Gaukroger	Director of Student Recruitment & Admissions – Ex Officio
In Attendance	
Laura Cattell	Widening Participation, and Representing Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions
Sarah Moffat	Representing Edinburgh University Students' Association, Vice-President Education
Paula Webster	Head of Student Data and Surveys

2. Papers Considered by Electronic Business

The following papers were considered by electronic business in advance of the 25 May 2020 meeting:

<u>For Approval</u>

- Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2020 – *approved*
- Support for Doctoral Supervisors – Development of an Online Course – *approved*

<u>For Comment</u>

- Opt-In Consent for use of Coursework and Dissertations as Examples – *agreed that the consent form would be disseminated via the College Deans*
- Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees – *no comments received*
- Senate Themes for 2020/21 Meetings – *Covid-19 Recovery was proposed*

<u>For Noting</u>

- Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees
- Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2020 – Update
- Report from the Meeting of Knowledge Strategy Committee – 24 March 2020
- Education Committee Meeting Dates 2020/21

3. For Discussion

3.1 Planning for Academic Year 2020/21

<u>Widening Participation Considerations</u>

The Convener welcomed the Head of Widening Participation to the meeting. Members recognised that widening participation is a key priority for the University, and will remain so in the coming months, despite the challenging circumstances.

Paper A highlighted the particular issues that widening participation students, those with caring responsibilities, and those who are care-experienced or estranged from their families are experiencing as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Committee discussed:

- <u>Postgraduate employment</u> – finding postgraduate employment is often more difficult for those from widening participation backgrounds, who tend not to have access to the same networks as non-widening participation students. The Careers Service is making an enhanced package of support available to this year's graduates including providing virtual recruitment preparation, a virtual graduate jobs fair in July and virtual delivery of the 'Insights' Programme. University of Edinburgh graduates are being offered a 20% discount on taught postgraduate fees in Academic Year 2020/21 to make postgraduate study more accessible.

- <u>Liaison with Edinburgh College (and other Colleges across Scotland)</u> – to ensure that the material currently being created for those entering the University in September 2020 with limited examination experience has lasting value.

- <u>Making Transitions Personal</u> – it was noted that the Framework would be particularly useful as a mechanism for supporting students in the coming academic year.

- <u>Opportunities presented by hybrid teaching</u> – members noted that the current shift towards a hybrid model of curriculum delivery is likely to have long-term benefits for those students who find it more difficult to engage with a traditional, campus-based approach.

- <u>Student Personas</u> – the Assistant Principal for Digital Education is developing student personas to help the University understand what a journey through hybrid teaching might look like in the coming year. It was agreed that the Head of Widening Participation and the Students' Association would provide input to ensure that the personas took widening participation considerations into account.

- <u>Student support:</u>
  - The possibility of seeking targeted financial support for widening participation students through Development and Alumni was considered.
  - The Head of Widening Participation was encouraged to raise any specific student support needs for the coming academic year with the Deputy Secretary Student Experience.
  - Members discussed the issue of technological equality and agreed that all programme descriptors should include details of the minimum technological requirements for full engagement. It was noted that Information Services is taking this work forward, and College representatives on the membership were asked to encourage their Schools to provide College IT Officers with details of the technological requirements for their programmes.

- <u>Identification of widening participation students</u> – members noted that Schools can find it difficult to provide targeted support for their widening participation students on account of not always knowing who they are. The Head of Widening Participation advised members that her team is considering how this issue might be addressed.

Actions:
1) Assistant Principal for Digital Education, Head of Widening Participation and the Students' Association to liaise about student personas
2) Head of Widening Participation to discuss student support needs with the Deputy Secretary Student Experience
3) College representatives to encourage their Schools to provide College IT Officers with details of the technological requirements for their programmes.

<u>Broader Planning Issues</u>

The Convener advised members that all Schools and Subject Areas had been asked to provide details of the programmes and courses they were planning to deliver in academic year 2020/21 and to consider where rationalisation might be possible. At present, around 500 courses – approximately 10% of the University's current offering – would not be offered in the coming academic year. It was noted that further prioritisation may be necessary, and members agreed that if this was the case, Schools should be notified as soon as possible to facilitate planning.

The Committee discussed the management of the estate in the context of social distancing and the way in which limited teaching space would be allocated. It was recognised that a degree of central allocation would be necessary, but that Schools should then be permitted to take local decisions on how best to use the allocated space for their courses. Members also discussed the equipment required for synchronous, hybrid teaching, microphone use, air circulation within teaching rooms and other hygiene considerations. It was noted that many members of teaching staff are keen to be granted access to their offices and other School facilities to allow them to collect the equipment they need to prepare for Semester 1 teaching.

<u>End of Semester 1 2020/21 Assessment (Paper B)</u>

The Committee discussed the circulated paper. The value of reducing the amount of assessment overall; using a variety of assessment methods; being flexible about the timing of assessment; and ensuring that assessment is, wherever possible, *for* learning and not *of* learning was highlighted. Members discussed the nature of exams and the fact that external stakeholders consider exams to be a robust form of assessment. The Committee was generally comfortable with the idea of removing or limiting the number of exams at pre-Honours level, but was less comfortable with the idea of not examining at Honours level. The potential value of moving away from the current degree classification system and towards a Grade Point Average system to give a clearer indication of a student's performance over time was discussed.

Members agreed that:

- there should be careful analysis of the Semester 2 2019/20 exam diet to ensure that all possible learning from this is captured.
- the planned end of Semester 1 2020/21 assessment period will remain in place. However, Schools will be encouraged to use in-course assessment and alternative assessments to exams wherever possible.

3.2 Postgraduate Research Matters

<u>Doctoral College and Governance Structures</u>

The Dean of Postgraduate Research in the College of Science and Engineering provided an update on the development of the Doctoral College. This now involved around 160 members of staff and numbers were continuing to increase.

The current circumstances had exposed some weaknesses in governance structures, and the Convener agreed to address this with the Adaptation and Renewal Team.

> **Action:** Convener to discuss PGR governance structures with the Adaptation and Renewal Team.

Planning for Academic Year 2020/21

Schools had been consulted about PhD programmes in the coming academic year. All programmes were planning to start on time, although it was recognised that some students would arrive late. A small number of Masters by Research Programmes – primarily those in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine – were planning to start late, but the majority would start on time.

It was recognised that funding issues, including scholarships and the extension of PhD funding, required urgent, further consideration.

Support for Doctoral Supervisors – Development of an Online Course

Members expressed strong support for the online course.

3.3   Governance Arrangements During COVID-19 Recovery

The University has established an Adaptation and Renewal Team (ART) to lead the work required to respond to the short, medium and longer-term challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

ART has four main strands:

- Research
- **Students**
- Estates and Infrastructure
- Re-shaping.

The Students strand will be led by the Convener of Education Committee and will be built around three delivery sub-teams: Recruitment and Admissions; Curriculum Resilience; and Student Support. Work relating to the delivery of learning and teaching will be overseen by Senate Education Committee.

The Convener advised members that ART was now working through the issues raised by the pandemic systematically and rigorously, facilitating conversations with Schools and disciplines as required. It was noted that stronger student representation on ART was required and, as discussed previously, that more consideration needed to be given to PGR-related issues.

Philippa Ward
Academic Services
27 May 2020

Senate Education Committee

24 June 2020

Proposals for student support and Personal Tutors in MBChB

Description of paper

1. A proposal for changes to the Personal Tutor and student support system for MBChB students in 2020-21.

Action requested / recommendation

2. To approve a proposal to implement changes to students support and personal tutor roles for MBChB, deviating from current practice, but similar to the recommended model in the Student Support and Personal Tutoring Review (SEC December 2019).

Background and context

3. COVID-19 changes to working practices and volume for many personal tutors in Medicine have emphasised underlying challenges and difficulties in providing a consistently high quality service for students.

Discussion

4. Pros and cons.
5. Changing from the named Personal Tutor (NHS staff) to the Year Coordinator (UoE staff), as recorded on Euclid – streamlining the support process so that all queries come into the Medical Teaching Organisation and are supplemented by the Student Wellbeing Team.
This could be useful as a pilot of the 2019 Review's recommended model.

Resource implications

6. We expect some efficiencies as a consequence of these proposals.

Risk management

7. There is a high probability of degraded student experience without changes.

Equality & diversity

8. No new implications.

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

9. Implement in August 2020. Report back to Education Committee in late 2020-21.

Author
Nicola Crowley, Neil Turner
17 June 2020

Presenter
Nicola Crowley

Freedom of Information – open

Proposals for student support and Personal Tutors in MBChB

Proposed pilot for 2020-21

Background

The current personal tutor (PT) system is currently under review, though action on it has been suspended by the need to focus on adaptations to pandemic precautions and switch to hybrid teaching for 2020-21.

Previous issues in Medicine

Most Personal Tutors (PTs) in Medicine are practising clinicians, employed by the NHS, and receiving payments from the University for undertaking the role. The low uptake of this role by University staff creates a financial burden on the School and reduces student contact with core staff that may be involved with their teaching. The advantage of using NHS staff is that they are able to be professional mentors as well as providing academic support. The disadvantage is that most do not have close knowledge of university systems or processes.

Two local reports on student support and on personal tutoring in Medicine have highlighted problems and inefficiencies with the current system.

In 2016, an External Adviser, Dr Alun Hughes from St Andrew's University reported marked inequality of experience across PTs. The ways in which the exemplary PTs engaged with their students may inadvertently be highlighting this to students who aren't receiving the same experience. When asked at that time what students wanted from their PTs, their aspiration was for someone that "knows me", monitors their assessment performance, and is both reliable & confidential. Medicine currently has strong academic leadership through year groups, with Year Directors who become actively involved in student issues, both academic and pastoral. The reviewer felt that there was a potential disconnect between the messages they conveyed to students relating to their year, and that given by PTs who were not so much in touch with the academic aspects. It was felt that there was an opportunity to "join things up".

In 2018, an internal review by Professor Bill Reid again noted that the performance management of PTs is difficult, and that standards of care covered a spectrum, from clear and inspirational coaching/mentorship at one end, to neglect and apathy at the other. He also highlighted confusion over the lack of standardisation of referral or follow up to student support, and that signposting of services to students should be more systematic.

Both reviews remarked that the MBChB Student Support team was an excellent resource but is bogged down by administrative burden with recruitment, training, and tracking payments to Personal Tutors (150+), and other administration. Widening out the work to include Year Coordinators (as was done in the past) would reduce duplication and free up time for more student interaction and training, for example, courses such as Mental Health First Aid that may best prepare the staff for contact with students in distress.

Additional impact of COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, clinician time has become very hard to secure, because of additional work during the Spring 2020 peak of COVID-19 outbreak locally, and because new ways of working post-peak are much more time-consuming, and frequently changing. A substantial backlog of non-urgent work has built up. Meetings between students have in general not been taking place for reasons of time, and because NHS staff have limited access to online systems (such as Microsoft Teams or Blackboard Collaborate). Recruitment

of new tutors is difficult at this time. There can be no certainty about these difficulties resolving during the next academic year.

Proposed pilot for 2020-21

Year coordinators are the members of staff most consistently in touch with students and placement staff who raise concerns about a student's wellbeing, and before the current student support system was introduced, and dealt with many low-level support issues, in discussion with academic leads (module leads and year directors) and with the Dean for Student Affairs. The introduction of more formal student support structures meant that student support questions went or were forwarded to the student support team, or students were directed to contact their PTs. Often this leads to enquiries coming back to Year coordinators and academics involved in teaching, a notable duplication of effort and communication.

The student support team has however been notably effective in the management of serious or ongoing issues for students. It refers students on to other support services, such as the Disability service or NHS Lothian Occupational Health, and can provide a continuous one to one support structure.

Strengthening the role of professional support staff

We propose to redefine the role of Year Coordinators, giving them the authority to triage student support issues. This mirrors current practice when the students are on clinical placement. It should also be noted that Year Coordinators currently confirm attendance and make notes on Euclid instead of PTs. Many issues will be able to be dealt with immediately. Recurrent or serious problems will be referred to the student support team as now.

We propose to expand the Student Wellbeing team to ensure that we can provide adequate support to students in need, and ensure that student support services are clearly aligned with teaching support needs and professional requirements.

In place of Personal Tutors, professional mentors

We will recruit an experienced additional member of academic staff to support professional staff, in addition to the current arrangement of deputy senior tutors supporting Years 1-3 or 4-6 of the programme. Year Directors will also be involved where academic input is required.

We propose to secure the support of a diverse group of NHS staff to act as professional mentors to empower, encourage, and be role models. Initially many of these may have been Personal Tutors, but this is not essential. It is hoped that students with a good relationship with their current PT will be able to continue that role with them becoming their professional mentor.

The list of Professional Mentors will be held and managed by the Student Wellbeing team and students will be encouraged to speak to staff they feel will be able to guide and support them throughout their medical studies.

Timing

We would implement the new changes for the beginning of the MBChB academic year and have a gradual move from PT to Professional Mentor after a consultation period.

Review

It is proposed to review the new system continuously during the year, with formal reporting to the Programme Management Committee, and to compile an end-of-year report for Senate Education Committee and others.

Nicola Crowley
Neil Turner

Senate Education Committee

24 June 2020

Online Assessment 2020-21 – Discussion paper from CMVM

Description of paper
1. This short paper outlines some risks arising from a shift to mostly-online assessment for Semester 1 2020-21, and suggests possible responses.

Action requested / recommendation
2. To consider whether further work is required to ensure that assessed coursework and examinations for 2020-21 will be regarded as fair and robust by students, staff, and external observers and regulators; and whether our regulatory framework is appropriate to the new circumstances.

Background and context
3. Online assessment carries particular risks associated with different connectivity of students, different environments in which assessments are undertaken, and with ensuring that the answers or work returned have come from the intended student.

Discussion
4. Points listed in paper

Resource implications
5. The directions that may be suggested could have resource implications.

Risk management
6. This is a response to the serious risk that our degrees could lose credibility externally and internally if there is a perception that our assessments are flawed.

Equality & diversity
7. The implications of any proposed actions would need to be assessed.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed
8. Will require additional consideration depending on actions recommended.

Author
Neil Turner
15 June 2020

Presenter
Neil Turner

Freedom of Information – open

Issues raised by online assessment in 2020-21

Discussion paper from CMVM

A large part of assessment next semester/year is likely to be online-remote, even for students in Edinburgh, and there are risks around that. Bearing in mind:

- Where summative, we need it to be robust so that we can give a confident mark without no-detriment policies.
- We want it to withstand external scrutiny (employers, press, professional bodies, others).
- We want it to be fair to students in different circumstances.
- Reputational risk to the University and our graduates if students were found to have cheated.

These considerations brings in such questions as

- **Proctoring** (?humans supplemented by technological methods) for some exams. If we want to scale this we will need to make a case. Will we need new need policy ore regulations?
- **Selective and/or random vivas** as a check on course work or exam. Wouldneed new policy.

Selective vivas?

We suggest a principle that selective vivas might be used where there is not enough confidence in the reliability of assessment so far. Examples might include: scores very variable, performance in one element or type of activity or assessment unusually different from another, missing significant items of assessment, or other constraints related to circumstances of remote/hybrid teaching or Coronavirus.

- Selective as it is labour intensive.
- I'd imagine these would almost never directly change a mark. Outcome could be either to endorse a mark, or lead to a judgement that additional assessment was required to achieve greater certainty about a mark. That could keep vivas short.
- Additional assessment might in some circumstances need to be delayed until possible to do it in person.
- You'd hope to rarely need to use this, but the existence of the mechanism may be helpful as part of a package to discourage misconduct, and as a fall-back mechanism in unpredictable circumstances.

Non-selective vivas may be a good thing

We note that, separately from this, some kind of vivas-for-all have are being considered as an alternative to selected items of coursework within Vet. This is an attractive way to increase direct staff-student interaction in a mostly-remote learning environment.

It is our understanding that non-selective vivas are a permitted form of assessment under current regulations, if administered similarly to all students.

Further info:

- QAA guidance on tackling the use of essay mills (pub June 18th): https://bit.ly/30X4OgH – key findings and recommendations overleaf
- Thoughtful 50 min talk about contract cheating, its prevalence and how to discourage and detect it (Phill Dawson, University of): https://bit.ly/3h0nwcP. Also: http://philldawson.com/ta-cheating

Contracting to Cheat in Higher Education (QAA)

The first edition of Contracting to Cheat in Higher Education was published in 2017. The first edtion 'gave parity' to prevention and detection. The second (2020) edition regards it as impossible to design out cheating, and focuses on awareness and detection.

From the QAA narrative on publication of the second edition
https://bit.ly/30X4OgH (18 June 2020)

Many UK higher education institutions have designed effective institutional strategies and academic integrity practices to educate staff, support students, reduce opportunities to cheat and detect academic misconduct. However, more needs to be done.

Key findings and recommendations are:

- Identifying a strategic lead with responsibility for staff training and institutional coordination can help improve detection of essay mill use.
- Assessment design can help reduce opportunities to cheat, but no assessment should ever be considered cheat proof.
- Technology can help detect the use of essay mills, but is most effective when used by experienced staff with knowledge of the student.
- Essay mill marketing seeks to exploit students who are feeling vulnerable or anxious, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Effective institutional and peer support can help.
- Staff and students should be aware of, or be able to easily access, information and procedures to follow to report a suspicion of academic misconduct.

From the Executive Summary:

- The COVID-19 pandemic has seen essay mills target students as they seek to take advantage of the uncertainty and anxiety that might arise as a consequence. An anxious student physically distanced from their academic community may be more vulnerable to essay mill marketing. This is reflected in additional content focused on student support.

Neil Turner
Dean of UG Learning and Teaching
CMVM

Senate Education Committee

24 June 2020

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS TO ALTER THE TEACHING DAY / WEEK FOR SEMESTER 1 2020/21

Introduction

This paper has been prepared to seek the views of as many parts of the University as possible on potential changes to the length of the standard teaching day and week, which may be required in order to deliver a successful hybrid experience from September 2020. This consultation document is being shared with and views sought from Colleges. Professional Services Groups, Campus Trades Unions, the Students' Association and the Sports Union, as well as with Senate Education Committee.

Action Requested

This paper is for consultation only: Senate Education Committee is not being asked to take any decisions at this stage. Instead, the Committee is asked to discuss and identify issues and concerns and to provide feedback. The Committee's views will be shared with University Executive in July, alongside other feedback received from Colleges, Professional Services Groups, Unions, the Students' Association and Sports Union.

A timetabling model for 20/21

In order to assist with planning for delivery of hybrid teaching in 20/21, the Timetabling and Exams Unit (TTU) have developed a model to:

- Establish the impact of 2m social distancing on general teaching space capacity
- Determine what level of teaching MUST be delivered digitally due to space constraints
- Determine what balance can be achieved between digital and face-to-face delivery for all other teaching.

Huge drop in capacity

Based on modelling done by Estates, it is clear that the impact of 2m social distancing on our teaching estate capacity is profound. In fact, overall, without any further mitigating steps, capacity across the general teaching estate drops by 90%.

Large lecture theatres most affected

The impact of 2m distancing is particularly profound on raked lecture theatre capacity. Our largest lecture theatre, the Gordon Aikman, has a normal maximum capacity of 481; at 2m social distancing, this drops to 44. Therefore, **any teaching activity with more than 44 students cannot be taught face to face**; it must be delivered digitally.
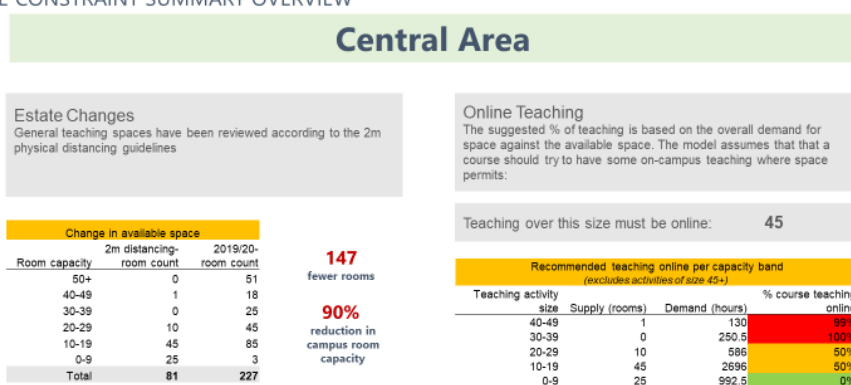
Smaller spaces also impacted

The capacity of smaller teaching facilities is also impacted (though not quite as drastically as raked lecture theatres) which means that – without any further mitigating steps – not all smaller classes can be delivered face to face either. For example the model suggests that in the Central Area, not

only would all teaching activities with more than 44 students need to be online; we would only be able to deliver 50% of the remaining smaller group activities face to face. (See over.) Smaller group teaching would serve to make more of the teaching estate accessible, but this would be, at least partially, neutralised by the increase in demand.

Overall, the model suggests that if we continue to try to deliver teaching as we always have, at the same times of day across the week, we will do well to deliver as much as 20% of our total teaching face to face. There are real and significant concerns that sort of balance does not represent a viable hybrid education experience.

TEACHING ESTATE CAPACITY MODEL
SPACE CONSTRAINT SUMMARY OVERVIEW

Central Area

Estate Changes
General teaching spaces have been reviewed according to the 2m physical distancing guidelines

Online Teaching
The suggested % of teaching is based on the overall demand for space against the available space. The model assumes that that a course should try to have some on-campus teaching where space permits:

Teaching over this size must be online: **45**

Change in available space		
Room capacity	2m distancing-room count	2019/20-room count
50+	0	51
40-49	1	18
30-39	0	25
20-29	10	45
10-19	45	85
0-9	25	3
Total	81	227

147 fewer rooms

90% reduction in campus room capacity

Recommended teaching online per capacity band (excludes activities of size 45+)			
Teaching activity size	Supply (rooms)	Demand (hours)	% course teaching online
40-49	1	130	99%
30-39	0	250.5	100%
20-29	10	586	50%
10-19	45	2696	50%
0-9	25	992.5	0%

Extract from Timetabling model showing Central Area capacity and constraints in normal teaching week

Options

There are four main ways in which we could seek to increase the amount of face to face teaching that can be safely delivered in 20/21.

1. Move away from the 2m social distancing rule: sadly this is not within our control. Colleagues will be aware of the increasing pressure on the UK government to move from 2m to 1.5 or even 1m distancing where 2m is not possible, and a review has been promised. If we are allowed to move to a smaller distance, this will be very impactful (increase to 40:60 ratio in 1.5m scenario)) However the timing and outcome of any review are uncertain, and we all need to press ahead with teaching plans for 20/21 as soon as possible. We have taken the view that for now we must plan on the basis of 2m distancing.
2. Increase the amount of teaching space that is available: we are already looking at ways to increase the amount of teaching space available. Existing spaces that are not generally available for teaching purposes will be brought into the teaching timetable wherever they can be and as long as they provide reasonable quality space, and are fitted (or can be fitted) with the necessary AV kit by September. Estates colleagues are also looking into the possibility of temporary structures that might provide further flexibility. However at this stage – and given the huge impact on capacity of the 2m rule – while this contingency

measure would have an improving effect on the overall 80:20 ratio, it would not be enough in itself to negate the need to identify additional contingency measures.

3. Extend the length of the teaching semester (eg by teaching into and through time normally set aside for revision and exams): extending the length of the teaching semester, although it's likely the slight additional spreading of existing teaching patterns would make a very marginal difference, at best, to week-by-week space demand.

4. Increase the length of the teaching day / teaching week so that teaching can take place outside the normal period of 9.00-18.00 Monday to Friday. Starting teaching earlier and finishing teaching later each day DOES have a material impact on the volume of face-to-face teaching that is possible, as does extending teaching onto Saturdays. In fact the model shows that extending the teaching day Mon-Fri 08.00-20.00 AND teaching on Saturdays 09.00-17.00 would get us to the point where almost 40% of teaching might be delivered on campus, face to face.

	Wednesday pm available	Mon-Sat 9.00-18.00	Mon-Fri 08.00-20.00	Mon-Fri 08.00-20.00, Sat 9.00-17.00
On-campus teaching	20%	27%	32%	39%
% online	*	*	*	All teaching below 30 can be on campus

*challenges remain in scheduling 10-20 capacity groups within these parameters, ranging from 50%-90% on-campus teaching as parameters are extended

To be clear, the suggested extended timetable does not mean that staff would be required to work / teach more hours; they might however be required to work at different times of day or week. Nor is there any suggestion that staff should be required or allowed to work an 08.00-20.00 day.

A more detailed (campus by campus) assessment is attached as Appendix A.

The Adaptation and Renewal co-ordinating group therefore agreed that we should carry out further work on the viability of a revised teaching week as set out above, with a final decision to be taken by University Executive at its meeting in July 2020.

Request for feedback

As part of that further work, we are asking for your College's feedback on the viability of the teaching week timetable set out above. We are also seeking input from students through the Student' Association and the Sports Union, and of course from the campus trades unions.

An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been carried out and is attached (Appendix B). This highlights a number of challenges from an EDI perspective (including the availability of staff with caring or childcare responsibilities; on students - and in particular students from widening participation backgrounds - who may have part-time jobs that clash with the new timetable; and on Jewish students and staff.)

As such, we are particularly interested to hear your College's views on the following:

a) General viability of a teaching day/week extended in this way for your College / Schools. Ability to staff earlier/ later and Saturday classes.
b) Any concerns / costs / issues that may arise from particular disciplinary perspectives.
c) Any issues within the EqIA that you believe have been overlooked.
d) Any other comments you wish to make.

In order to meet the deadline of July's Executive Meeting, at which a final decision will be taken on the proposal, please can you send your feedback to my colleague Rebecca Shade Rebecca.shade@ed.ac.uk *no later than 6th July 2020*.

Gavin Douglas

Deputy Secretary (Student Experience)

17 June 2020

APPENDIX A

Widening teaching week parameters by Campus

Table 1 confirms the parameters investigated:

		Hours in week
Parameter 1	Wednesday pm available	45
Parameter 2	Mon-Sat 9.00-18.00	54
Parameter 3	Mon-Fri 08.00-20.00	60
Parameter 4	Mon-Fri 08.00-20.00, Sat 9.00-17.00	68

Table 2 confirms the required parameter adjustment to maximise on-campus teaching. Note that the overall "on-campus" percentage includes all teaching (including that which must be online due to space capacity constraint)

	Teaching parameter requirement (maximum)	Estimate % on-campus
BioQuarter	Parameter 1	81%
Lauriston	Parameter 1	83%
New College	Parameter 3	81%
Holyrood	Parameter 4	61%
Easter Bush	Parameter 4	53%
King's Buildings	Parameter 4	49%
Central	As in main table	

Note that the need to increase parameters is only required around certain capacity constraints.

APPENDIX B

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Equality Impact Assessment Template

Before carrying out EqIA, you should familiarise yourself with the University's EqIA Policy Statement and Guidance and Checklist Notes, and undertake our online training on Equality and Diversity and EqIA. These, along with further information and resources, are available at www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/equality-diversity/impact-assessment

EqIA covers policies, provisions, criteria, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services, but will be referred to as 'policy/practice' hereinafter.

A. Policy/Practice (name or brief description): Timetabling Policy
B. Reason for Equality Impact Asessment (Mark **yes** against the applicable reason):   • Proposed change to an existing policy/practice
C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice: Name: Gavin Douglas   Job title: Deputy Secretary (Student Experience)   School/service/unit: USG
D. An Impact Assessment should be carried out if any if the following apply to the policy/practice, if it: • affects primary or high level functions of the University   • is relevant to the promotion of equality (in terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty 'needs' as set out in the Policy and Guidance)?   • It is one which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqIA?
E. Equality Groups   To which equality groups is the policy/practice relevant and why? (add notes against the following applicable equality group/s)   • Age   • Disability   • race (including ethnicity and nationality)   • religion or belief:

- sex:
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage or civil partnership[1]

It is being proposed that at least for semester 1 2020/21 the hours of the teaching day are extended so that teaching can start as early as 0800 and finish as late as 20.00; that teaching is timetabled routinely on Wednesday afternoons; and that teaching is timetabled on Saturdays 09.0-17.00

The proposed changes apply primarily to taught students and to academic teaching staff (including tutors and demonstrators), but have associated impacts on professional services staff such as those in teaching support roles, servitorial and facilities management roles and those in student services roles. The changes are deemed relevant to the following protected characteristic groups:

- Age
- Disability
- race (including ethnicity and nationality)
- religion or belief:
- sex:
- pregnancy and maternity;

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

- On any available information about the needs of relevant equality groups. There is a potential impact on:
  - **Student and staff who are carers may be disproportionately affected and women may be over-represented in this group. For example teaching staff in this position may feel compelled to take early or late slots to allow for caring "during the daytime", especially with children only able to go to school for at best 50% of the time in the new academic year, creating long days with insufficient time for rest.**
  - **Lone parents, who may find this difficult in addition to 'care during the daytime' as noted above**
  - **Early career staff who may have less secure contracts and who may come under pressure to do early or late slots that are less suitable for their personal circumstances and/or create long working days with insufficient time for rest**
  - **Pregnant women whose health and wellbeing may be compromised if they are required to work early or late slots and who may be ill-advised or unable to work those hours**
  - **Staff and students with underlying health conditions (including mental health conditions) and/or some disabilities who may find it harder to work early or late or weekend slots.**
  - **LGBT+ students and staff are more likely to experience mental ill health due to discrimination, isolation etc, and may find it harder to work early, late or weekend slots.**
  - **Jewish students/staff who may be unable to work or study on Friday evening or Saturday as it is the Sabbath**

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[1] Note: only the duty to eliminate discrimination applies to marriage and civil partnership. There is no need to have regard to advancing equality or opportunity or fostering good relations in this respect.

- o **Although not a protected characteristic, it is possible that the policy will impact disproportionately on students from lower socio-economic groups who need to work outside class (eg evenings and weekend) in order to support themselves. Widening participation, <u>BAME students</u> may be over-represented in this group.**

- Any gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this be will be addressed:
  - o **Further consultation with campus trades unions and the Students' Association will take place to identify if there are any equality implications not yet considered**

- If application of this policy/practice leads to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, less favourable treatment for particular equality groups:

- This is possible – those who are unable to work evenings or Saturdays may be discriminated against and experience stigma. Those who are able to work may feel they are being treated unequally.

If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity[2]

- o **Establishing a transparent, fair and just approach to the allocation of teaching duties across different groups of staff could contribute to advancing equality, raising awareness of and responding to the position and needs of different groups as a collective rather than individual responsibility.**

- If there is an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations:
  - o n/a
- If the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?
  - o See note above on students from lower socio-economic groups

- How the communication of the policy/practice is made accessible to all groups, if relevant?
  - o n/a

- How equality groups or communities are involved in the development, review and/or monitoring of the policy or practice?
  - o **Through consultation with campus trades unions and the Students' Association**

- Any potential or actual impact of applying the policy or practice, with regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and promote good relations:
  - o **The policy has the potential to impact negatively on a number of groups with protected characteristics. In order to prevent this from happening, further steps must be taken alongside the implementation of the policy namely:**
  - o **To the maximum extent possible, staff should be able to specify which timeslots work best for them, ie recognising that an early start or a late finish may work well for one person but not for another**
  - o **The University should explore:**
    - ▪ **providing costs of additional childcare for those that need it due to working different hours (eg established childcare provision may not be available evenings or weekends) and/or**

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[2] This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership

- providing on campus child care on Saturdays if there is demand
  - **Where is it not possible to allocate slots purely on the basis of preference (which is quite likely), the principle should be established from the outset that early and later slots will first be distributed upwards and not to junior staff**
  - **Once the timetable has been constructed, Schools should conduct an audit of how teaching is distributed to ensure that it is distributed fairly and equitably across the teaching week when analysed by protected characteristics and caring responsibilities. Teaching extended hours must not be additional to but instead of teaching at other times.**
  - **Jewish staff should be allowed to claim exemption from any requirement to deliver teaching on a Friday evening or Saturday. Jewish students should be allowed to request a timetable change if any of their teaching is scheduled on a Saturday.**
  - **Students should be allowed to request a timetable change if**
    - **They have a disability or underlying health conditions that means they cannot attend classes at the proposed time**
    - **they have part-time jobs that clash with their timetable and they cannot change their hours.**
    - **Where change of timetable is not possible due to other constraints, it should be possible to participate in the teaching activity online**

F. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome

Select one of the four options below to indicate how the development/review of the policy/practice will be progressed and state the rationale for the decision

Option 2: Adjust the policy or practice – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality and/or to foster good relations.

G. Action and Monitoring

1. Specify the actions required for implementing findings of this EqIA and how the policy or practice will be monitored in relation to its equality impact (or note where this is specified above).

   - As noted in E) above

2. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?
   a. May 2021 (in advance of the 21/22 academic year)

H. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? Yes

I. Sign-off

EqIA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary (Student Experience)

Accepted by (name):
[This will normally be the person responsible for the policy/practice named above. If not, specify job-title/role.]

Date:

Retain a copy of this form for your own records and send a copy to equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk

Senate Education Committee

24 June 2020

Covid-19 Undergraduate Survey Results

Description of paper

1. The attached paper details the findings of a survey conducted with undergraduate students. The survey focuses on students' experiences of digital learning in the last three to four months and on students' well-being and priorities outside their studies. The survey forms part of a range of student voice activities planned over the next few months, with the aim of ensuring that our response to covid19 is responsive to and adequately reflects student concerns.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Senate Education Committee are asked to discuss the findings and conclusions in the Executive Summary.

Background and context

3. Please see attached paper

Discussion

4. Please see attached paper

Resource implications

5. n/a

Risk management

6. n/a

Equality & diversity

7. n/a

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

8. This survey has been circulated to Education Committee and other stakeholders across the University to support the development of teaching and learning and student support in the next academic year.

Author	**Presenter**
Name Paula Webster	*Name Paula Webster*
Date 18/06/20	*(Head of Student Analytics, Insights & Modelling)*

Freedom of Information: Open

Covid-19 Survey of Undergraduates

Executive Summary

The survey focuses on students' experiences of digital learning in the last three to four months and on students' well-being and priorities outside their studies. The survey forms part of a range of student voice activities planned over the next few months, with the aim of ensuring that our response to covid19 is responsive to and adequately reflects student concerns.

The Covid-19 pandemic has increased the number and for some exacerbated the level of challenges our students face in effectively engaging with their studies. For example, students are reporting increasing levels of mental ill-health and are having to support friends and families with caring, education and work. "Working from home" may be extremely challenging for some of our students, much as it is for some of our staff. As we plan for next academic year, we have an opportunity to help students address these challenges. For example we may be able to offer new or other forms of support with mental health, or extend our financial hardship support. We are aware that many of these initiatives are already under active consideration.

There is a significant equality, diversity and inclusion issue identified in the survey responses; across almost all areas in the survey, students from groups with protected characteristics are finding things harder, or are less satisfied, than other students. The student body is likely to diversify further over the next year with students accessing teaching and support services in different ways. As student needs become more complex, the University's ability to support them all appropriately will come under increasing focus. In previous surveys students have fed back that they find it difficult to navigate the university and this difficulty is likely to increase unless clear strategies and communications are put in place to support our students and to meet their individual needs in their particular circumstances.

1. **Students don't understand what 'hybrid' is and what it will mean for them and their learning.**

There are a range of responses from students, from those who are desperate to return to face to face teaching on campus to those who are deeply nervous about the prospect and would prefer to stay at home. For some this isn't a preference, studying from home will be necessary. Students who are shielding themselves or who have family members who are at risk will need to access teaching and learning and university services remotely.

Students are largely dissatisfied with the experience of remote learning they experienced at the end of the 2019/20 academic year. The university needs to demonstrate how going forward, students will be supported to engage with their studies whether they are studying online or taking part in a mix of face to face and online activities.

2. **Supporting students to become confident digital learners.**

Levels of confidence with learning digitally are extremely low. Scaffolding and skills development will therefore be vital. Some students have had a poor experience of digital learning so far whilst others have had no exposure to this way of studying as their teaching was cancelled. There is a demand from students for the university to deliver high quality teaching and learning that can be seen as to be equivalent to face to face teaching.

Comments indicate that there is a perception that online teaching and learning represents poor value for money. Some students express anger about the cancellation or reduction in teaching and the perceived drop in quality of the teaching that was delivered with calls for fee remissions or rebates. International students are particularly sceptical about online teaching being 'worth' the fee they pay.

3. We can't assume that every student has the space or resources to study off-campus.

Even students who are able to be on campus for some of the time will need to access some digital teaching and learning content. When developing approaches to digital study the university will need to consider the fact that not all our students will have access to fast broadband, a desk or a quiet space in which to study. Students who return to Edinburgh to live in shared accommodation will need to share their wifi access. Students who live in their own or family homes may have to share space with partners, children, siblings or parents who are working from home.

For many students the library was the quiet space they had to work in. How will the university provide quiet study spaces under social distancing and how will the university ensure that students aren't disadvantaged if they do not have a room of their own?

There is likely to be an increase in levels of financial hardship (see below) that may act as a barrier to some students accessing the technology that will be required to access online / digital resources.

A barrier to effective study for students at the end of the 2019/20 academic year was a lack of digitised texts.

4. Education, understandably, sits behind other priorities for students at the moment.

It isn't clear whether this will change as the new academic year begins but the University should consider and clarify to students how it will support students who may have to care for others or who have health issues that will prevent them from accessing on-campus services.

5. Mental health and wider student support is critical.

There is a perception that mental health support is underfunded and not meeting students' needs. This research suggests that there is likely to be an increase in demand for this support in the coming academic year. Students state that they are feeling anxious about returning to study next year. Students are looking for more pro-active outreach from support services and from their Personal Tutors. Positive comments refer to incidences of Personal Tutors or other staff making the effort to get in touch with students rather than waiting for students to ask for help. Building and clearly articulating an effective support structure could go some way to reassuring students that they will be supported.

Findings in this survey indicate that service use and satisfaction with services is low. Comments indicate that students don't know some services are available or are unclear how to access them. As part of induction in 2020/21 can the University restate what services there are and take a more proactive approach to engaging students?

Experiences from the end of the 2019/20 academic year indicate that having a mental health condition or a learning disability is a barrier to accessing digital learning.

6. A safe environment to learn in.

Students have expressed concerns about their health and safety as campus re-opens. Some students based outside the UK are under pressure from family not to return as the UK is perceived to be an unsafe destination.

Students have experienced racism or perceive that the UK has become an increasingly racist country. The University needs to consider how it will encourage all students and staff to create an inclusive environment and how it can communicate effectively that racism is not tolerated.

7. Work and financial support.

Graduating and soon to be final year students are unclear on the support they can get from the Careers Service so clearly communicating this would be beneficial to these students. (Note: this additional communications work is already happening.) Students are very aware of the downturn in the economy and are concerned that opportunities for work placements and internships may not appear.

Financial hardship is already a real issue for some students and with lack of part time work and a weak economy this issue is likely to grow in importance. Some students supplement their income with part time work in industries that are likely to be hard hit in any post-Covid-19 economic downturn – are there opportunities to provide students with part time work within the university? Can these be better advertised?

8. Sense of belonging.

Students do not, on the whole, feel that they are part of the Edinburgh community. Comments provided indicate that for some the transition to remote learning has exacerbated existing feelings of isolation. Developing a sense of belonging to the University as a whole is further hindered by inconsistent approaches to applying university policies and poor communications. Examples given in this research include inconsistent applications of the no detriment policy that caused students on joint honours degrees more stress and confusion.

Students have asked for more engagement from the university over the summer. Providing reading lists or free language courses have been suggested as ways students could continue to engage.

9. Pockets of good practice.

Whilst the findings of this research have been negative and point to many areas for improvements to services and communications there are pockets of good practice. Students from the School of Chemistry have complimented the approach taken – could these approaches and good practice lessons be summarised and shared with other Schools?

10. Open exams have been positively received (with caveats).

Another encouraging response has been to open exams. Many students have found these to be a positive development with some caveats around fear of others cheating and some confusion around expectations (where communications have been inconsistent). There is a risk that some students will be put at a disadvantage if they do not have an appropriate space in which to study or if they cannot commit the same amount of time as others due to caring or other responsibilities.

Contents

Introduction

This survey was developed with the aim of understanding how undergraduate students at the University of Edinburgh have adapted to the changes introduced as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The survey focuses on students' experiences of digital learning in the last three to four months and on students' well-being and priorities outside their studies. The questionnaire was developed by the Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling team in consultation with academic colleagues across the university and it is intended that the insights generated from this research be used to help shape the delivery of hybrid teaching and learning and student support in the 2020/21 academic year.

This paper provides a summary of the findings from the survey including analysis of the free text comments. Key themes emerging from open comments at a School level have been included in the Appendix. An app containing the results drillable to School and Programme level has been released and is available [here][1]. Comments have been grouped by School and whether the respondent is studying at an honours or pre-honours level and have been published in a searchable format in the app.

Any questions or requests for further analysis should be sent to student.analytics@ed.ac.uk.

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[1] The standard publication threshold of 10 or more respondents or 10 or more comments has been applied to all published data to protect respondent anonymity. Comments have been redacted to remove names of staff or students.

Methodology

The survey was conducted online and all currently matriculated undergraduate students were surveyed (25,343 invitations). There were 3,670 respondents – a response rate of 14.5%. This is a good response rate for an online survey run over a limited period of time.

Female students and students from CAHSS are slightly overrepresented in the sample whilst students from MVM are underrepresented (see below). Data have not been weighted.

	Population (%)	Sample (%)	Diff
CAHSS	60.8	63.5	2.6
CSE	27.6	27.1	-0.5
MVM	11.6	9.5	-2.1

Where confidence intervals have been applied these are at the 95% level.

Detailed Findings

Respondents' accommodation and adjustment to lockdown

A quarter of respondents are still living in Edinburgh and 30% are living outside the UK. Of those respondents still living in Edinburgh, 57.5% are originally from countries of domicile other than Scotland. Just over 15% of respondents are living in either university or private halls of residence and 43.4% have stayed in their term time accommodation.

Comments indicate that some students have belongings in Edinburgh as they had to return home at short notice and they are not sure how to arrange removal or storage as travel restrictions remain in place. Having to relocate at short notice has increased levels of stress and anxiety for some of our students.

Respondents were asked how well they had adjusted to their local government restrictions on movement and advice on social distancing. Only 14 respondents stated that they did not have local restrictions. Just over half of respondents had found they had adjusted easily or very easily to restrictions.

Particular groups of students have found the adjustment less easy. Female students are significantly more likely to report that adjustment has not been easy (25.9% compared to 20% of male respondents). Female students are also more likely to report that they have caring responsibilities (12.4% compared to 9.8% of respondents). Students who have caring responsibilities are also more likely to report that adjustment has not been easy (32% compared to 23.2% of students with no caring responsibilities). It is not clear that having additional caring responsibilities is the reason why female students have found adjustment to lockdown less easy than their male peers but may be a contributory factor.

Students with learning difficulties and mental health conditions are significantly more likely to report that adjustment has not been easy than students with no declared disabilities (34.4%, 34.1% and 22.8% of respondents respectively).

Students in year four are more likely to report that adjustment has not been easy than students in other years (28.5% of fourth years found adjustment not easy).

In addition to adjusting to local lockdowns as a result of Covid-19, a small number of respondents related the impact of other political issues on their well-being. The political situation in Hong Kong and the Black Lives Matter movement were mentioned specifically.

Respondents' priorities, sense of well-being and access to support services

The university asks students whether they have caring responsibilities at registration.[2] Twenty-one respondents are flagged as being carers on the student records system. An additional 408 respondents stated that they currently had to care for others. Where data are segmented to compare responses from students who have and who don't have caring responsibilities in this report this second larger number has been used as it better captures students' current situations.

Respondents were asked what their priorities were from a list comprising: their health, friends and family, education, financial situation, housing and technology. Family and friends and health were the highest ranked priorities (with mean rankings of 3.7 and 3.5 out of 6 respectively). Widening Participation students rank concern with finances higher than non-widening participation students (mean rankings of 2.5 vs 2.1) although both groups ranked health, friends and family and education higher.

Overall, education ranks fairly low in students' priorities. It is unclear how this will shift as the 2020/21 academic year begins (especially as a number of students in the sample state that they have received no teaching since February which may have skewed the results). It should, however, be borne in mind there is likely to still be some level of disruption in everyday lives by September and that our students have commitments and pressures outside university.

When asked about other priorities, students related that they were specifically concerned about their mental health. Throughout comments students speak of heightened levels of anxiety and stress. Few of the students who stated that they had concerns about their mental health in free text comments have a mental health condition recorded in their student record. As students will be asked to complete their annual registration task before continuing with their studies this year the University may see an increase in the numbers of students declaring that they have a mental health condition. Increasing the availability of support for students who are suffering from mental ill-health will be important in the coming year.

Graduating students are concerned about entering the job market and a small number of respondents have listed finding an internship as a priority. Respondents appear to be unclear about what support they could get from the Careers Service once they have graduated.

Returning students also mention concerns about finding part time work or have increased working hours as they have become key workers.

When asked if respondents had been able to keep in touch with university friends, 60% agreed that they had. Students from Widening Participation[3] backgrounds and students with caring responsibilities were significantly less likely to report that they had been able to keep in touch with

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[2] Until 2020/21 this data was only collected systematically when students enrolled so is likely to underreport the number of students' with caring responsibilities.

[3] Students who are Widening Participation are: UK domiciled full-time undergraduates who are: from the two most-deprived SIMD quintiles, or entered via a recognised Access programme or the Scottish Higher Education Programme, or receive an Access Bursary, an Accommodation Bursary or an RUK bursary, or are a verified Care Leaver, or attended a Low Performing School.

friends (57% of WP respondents vs 64.7% of non-WP and 50.1% of respondents who are carers vs 61.6% of respondents with no caring responsibilities).

Only 34% of respondents indicated that they knew how to access support services. Communications have been sent to students to let them know about the services that are on offer and there has been no waiting list for counselling services. This indicates that these communications aren't landing.

Under a third (28%) of respondents agreed that they still feel part of the University of Edinburgh community. RUK students are significantly less likely to feel part of the community than overseas and EU students (22.6% of RUK vs 31.4% EU and 35.8% OS fee students).

Although numbers are extremely low (6 respondents from a population of 39) - it should be noted that no care experienced students agreed that they still felt part of the community.

Feeling part of the University of Edinburgh community decreases as students' progress through their programmes. There is a significant difference between first year respondents (33.2%) and fourth year respondents (22.6%), albeit both are low.

Reported use of support services is low and satisfaction with services when they have been used is also low.

		Of those who had used the service:	
	% used	% satisfied	N
Accommodation services	30.7	34.1	1,125
Residence Life	19.9	27.0	730
Counselling	17.2	17.5	630
Disability support	15.8	20.5	581
Online wellbeing support e.g. Big White Wall, Feel Good app, Silver Cloud	18.1	19.4	665
Chaplaincy	13.1	11.6	481
Students Association	20.4	27.8	749
IS helpline	17.2	25.6	633
Advice Place	18.4	28.7	677

A perceived lack of funding for and dissatisfaction with support services for students with mental ill-health is a key theme in comments. Comments indicate that students need increased levels of support and more proactive approach to out-reach on the part of the university:

> *Mental health outreach efforts will be very important through the next academic year. Having programs is simply not enough. There will be a huge percentage of students who have never used these programs before and won't feel they're for them, so contacting students to familiarize them with resources will be necessary*

Lack of certainty about what next year will look like appears to be increasing students' uncertainty around returning to study in Edinburgh:

> *I am hesitant to come back to Edinburgh in the fall. If societies and clubs cannot take place due to social distancing and many lectures are online, I would much rather stay here and live with my family than by myself in a flat in Edinburgh. I would get very lonely, and my mental health would definitely decline.*

Alongside concerns about living alone with the prospect of little social interaction students are having to plan their accommodation for next year. For some students flights appear to be scarce and expensive whilst others don't perceive a benefit in paying high rents in Edinburgh if they will not have access to face to face teaching.

Some students have had positive and proactive engagement from their Personal Tutor but this does not appear to be the experience of many respondents:

> *The best support I have received is from my personal tutor, who asked how I was coping with the pandemic and I think it is important all students feel like there is someone working at the university who they can reach out to as I know not all people have a tutor who is as approachable and interested as I do.*

Graduating students are very keen to have some form of graduation or celebration:

> *I am gutted that 2020 summer graduations are not taking place. I am hopeful that we will soon overcome Covid-19 and graduating students will be given their opportunity to have a graduation ceremony as we have all studied hard for 4 years and it is heartbreaking to know that graduations are not taking place this summer. I am hopeful the university will do us justice. Thank you.*

Another key theme relates to a perceived lack of transparency and consistency around decision making. Students have fed back about the inconsistent experiences they have between Schools in previous surveys however it would seem that the negative impact of this has been exacerbated under current circumstances. Students are asking to understand the rationale for decisions that are made and for these decisions to be applied consistently:

> *I understand it's an uncertain time and it's difficult to make decisions about the next academic year, however I would find more transparency in regards to decision making helpful - particularly in the decision to cancel year abroads (I completely understand the decision was necessary, but would like to know the reasons why)*

And:

> *I have not been able to participate in discussions as I usually would. I also feel like different tutors/lecturers are doing different things so not everyone is getting the same information or puts in the same amount of work to keep students informed. But, I believe this isn't just a covid related situation either, this is a problem at the university as a whole.*

Learning environment

Just over half the undergraduate students surveyed had space to study effectively. There are significant, although perhaps unsurprising, differences at School level. Only 40% of ECA students agreed that they had enough space:

> *I study a practical subject (Illustration). My current study environment cannot replicate the facilities at ECA. Crucially, I believe the facilities/workshop spaces there are as important to my learning experience as tuition.*

Figure 1 % agree - I have space to study effectively
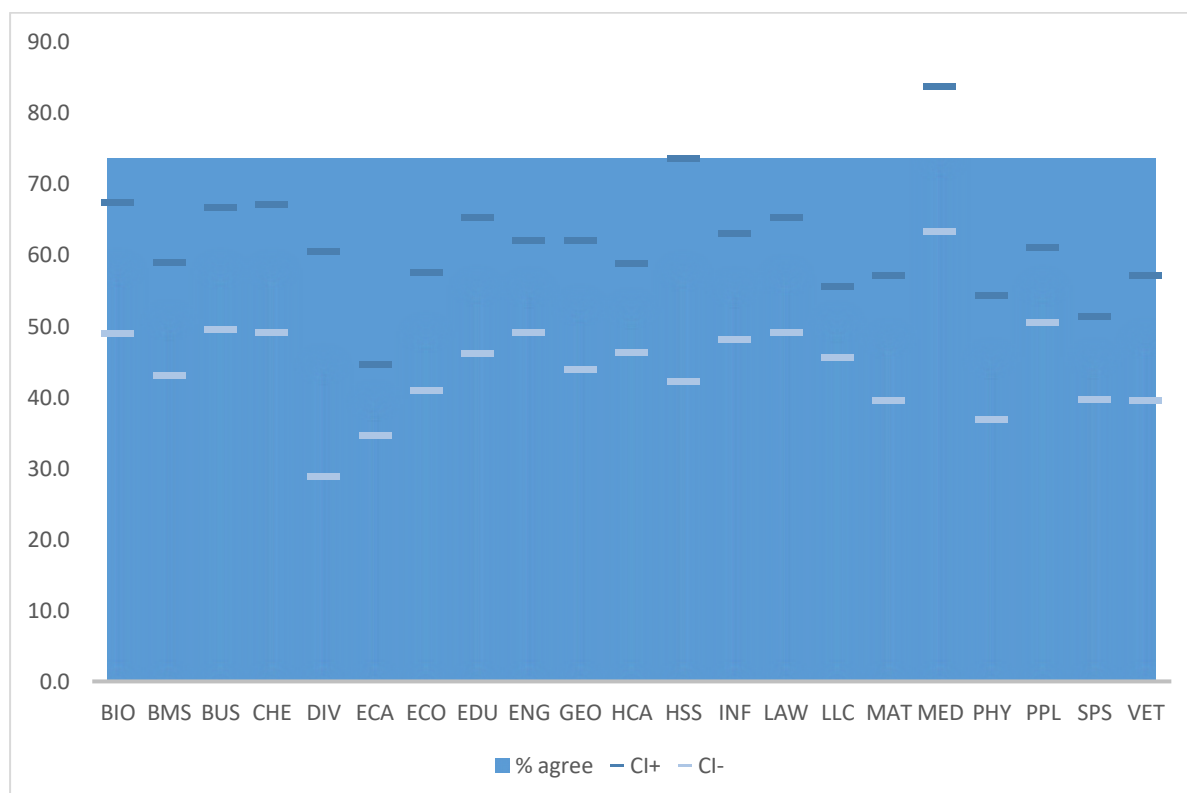
Widening Participation students are significantly less likely to have space to study effectively (43.8% compared to 52.8%).

Students with learning disabilities and mental health conditions are significantly less likely to have space in which to study effectively than students with no disabilities (33.3%, 37.1% and 53.8% respectively).

The value of the library in providing an effective study space is clear in comments:

> *I would just note that it has been a major upheaval going from studying in the library with no distractions, to studying at home with a full house and parents working from home. It has definitely not been the quiet area I would usually study in.*

Students with caring responsibilities are also significantly less likely to have an effective study space than those with none (40.9% compared to 53.2%). Comments show that some students have had to take on responsibility for home schooling their children or siblings whilst partners or parents work from home.

Whilst 64% of respondents have the equipment they need to study effectively, there are particular issues for ECA students with only 34% of respondents having the equipment they need.

Students with mental health conditions and learning disabilities are significantly less likely to have the equipment they need to study effectively than students who have no disabilities (48.2%, 50.3% and 65.7% respectively).

Just under a fifth of students do not have access to reliable internet. One comment indicated that a student was coming onto campus and sitting outside the Library in order to access the University wifi as they did not have reliable internet access at home.

Students from China struggle to access some online resources due to that country's firewall.

Only 58.8% of students with caring responsibilities have access to reliable internet compared with 69.6% who do not. Comments also indicated that even when students did have internet access they were sharing with housemates or family members who were also studying / working / home schooling.

> *I think this may apply to quite a few students, but those of us living in flatshares will likely find that our internet will become very unreliable if 3+ people are trying to attend online seminars at the same time. Something to consider.*

And:

> *With my mother having to work from home now and my brother having to switch to online learning as well, internet access is very slow and unreliable and would cost extra to boost the speed, which is an additional expense that we don't need.*

Just over half of respondents had access to specialist software. Comments from students in ECA suggested that they had difficulty accessing Adobe packages whilst students in Informatics and Mathematics do not have access to high performing computers at home.

Only 40% of respondents indicated that they had access to the library resources they needed. A lack of digitised texts has been an issue for those students who took assessments in semester two. Students with learning disabilities were significantly less likely to have access to the library resources they needed than peers with no disabilities.

Only 40% of respondents had been able to make their learning a priority over other commitments. Prioritising learning has been particularly difficult for students with caring responsibilities (27.1% are able to make their learning a priority). All students with disabilities were significantly less likely to be able to make their learning a priority than students with no disabilities (26% of students with mental health conditions, 32.5% of students with learning disabilities, 31.3% of students with other disabilities and 42.0% of students with no disabilities).

Just over 28% of respondents were studying in a different time zone. Just over a quarter of those who were studying in a different time zone found that this had no impact on their ability to study. Comparing impact by time differences shows that significantly higher proportions of students are severely impacted when the time difference exceeds ±five hours or more. Open comments indicate that students particularly struggled when shorter exams were scheduled very early in the morning in their local time. Consideration needs to be given to any synchronous activity if there are students living more than five hours before or after GMT/BST.
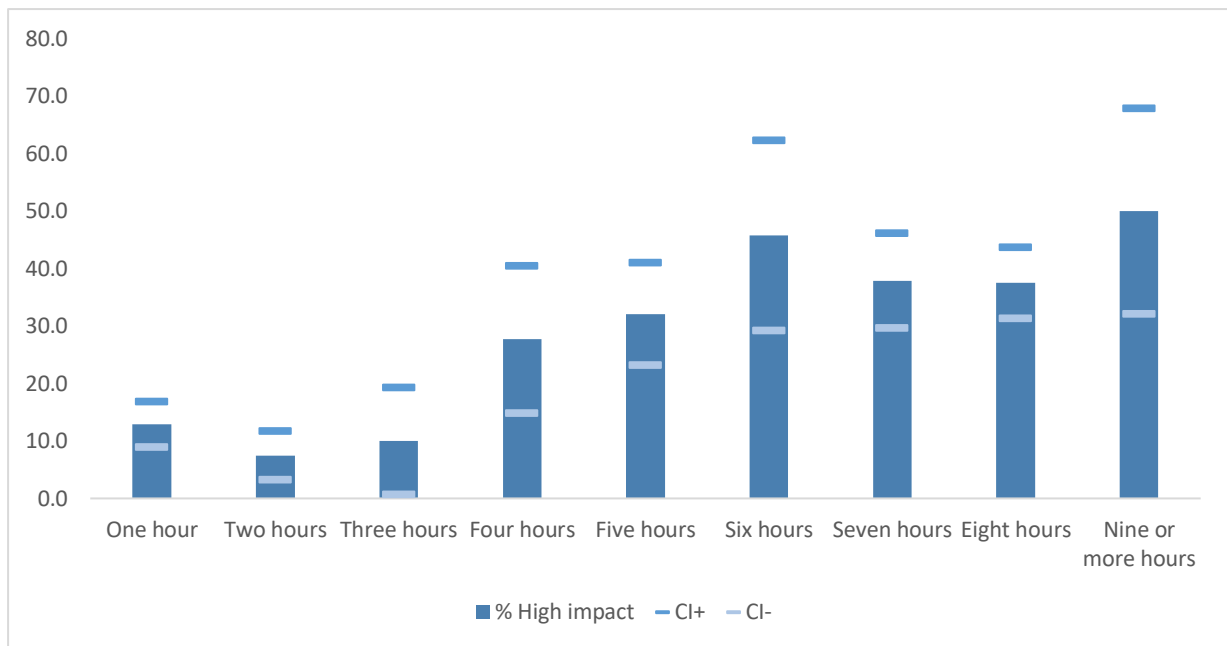
Student comments indicate that whilst some students have been able to adapt to learning from home, for others this has been a real struggle. There is a very real risk that there will be significantly unequal levels of access to any online resources and for some students engaging with their learning in a safe and constructive space will not be a possibility next year. In developing teaching and learning for next year, colleagues should not assume that all students have access to quiet, space, desks and equipment and should think through how they will reach and enable students who may have to care for others so that they can engage with their learning in a way that fits around their other commitments. Without consideration of the broad range of challenges many students will face with hybrid teaching and learning there is a risk that more students will agree with this comment:

> *The university's advice to try and separate living space and study space really shows how out of touch with their students they are.*

Experience of digital learning

Students are not clear what "hybrid" means or what it will look like for them. Comments indicate that some students have interpreted this as fully online. There is a real polarisation in opinion: some students call for a return to entirely face to face teaching as soon as possible whilst others would prefer an online offer as they may not be able or willing to return to campus as they are shielding, have caring responsibilities or concerns around their safety. For some international students there are real concerns around the safety of the UK and some practical issues like the availability of flights.

A small but concerning number of comments related to racism experienced or perceptions that there is an increased level of racism:

> *But I also do not know if it is wise to go back to the UK, when the covid situation there is so much worse than in my home country. If anything happens to me in the UK, I feel that my health will not be prioritised because I am a foreign student, compared to if I am in my*

home country. Then there is also the issue of racism where I would feel unsafe because of my skin colour and how the Chinese in UK have been discriminated because of Covid.

Respondents were asked to reflect on their experiences of remote and digital learning so far. 55% of respondents had been able to speak to their peers. Students with mental health conditions were significantly less likely to report that they could speak to their peers than students with no disability (43.4% of students with mental health conditions compared to 56.2% of students with no disabilities).

Under half of the respondents were able to speak with academic staff (48.1%). There are significant differences between Schools for this question with the Vets School and Chemistry gaining the highest scores (64% and 61% respectively).

Figure 3 % agree I have been able to speak to academic staff by School
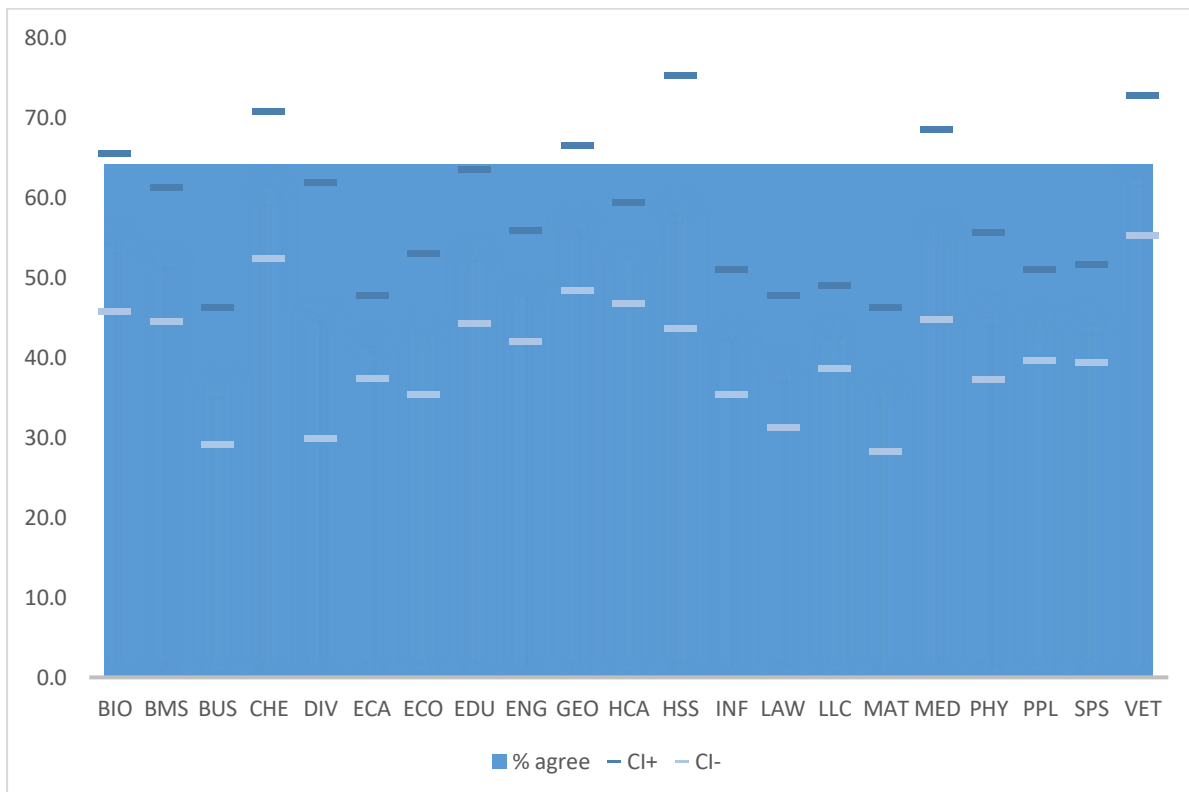
First and second year students are less likely to have been able to speak with academic staff than finalists (46.6% of first years and 42.9% of second years compared with 55.8% of fourth years agreed that they had been able to speak with academic staff).

Some students on pre-honours courses report that they have had no teaching since before the strikes:

Haven't had any communication from my course since lockdown began and have had no work to do since before the February strikes

Students are unclear how they will catch up when they haven't been taught courses that are pre-requisites for courses in the next year or if they feel they have skills gaps, for example:

As a student in HCA, I have been adversely impacted by both strikes and the cancelled lectures and tutorials after the lockdown began. As a result, I feel that I haven't received the foundation I need to progress into Honours, so I would like increased support (and leniency, if possible) with essay-writing next year.

A third of respondents agreed that they had been able to actively participate in their learning in the last few months. Again, significant differences appear between Schools. Students in Medicine, the Vets School and Chemistry report significantly higher levels of support to participate than most Schools in CAHSS.

Figure 4 % agree I have been supported to actively participate in my learning
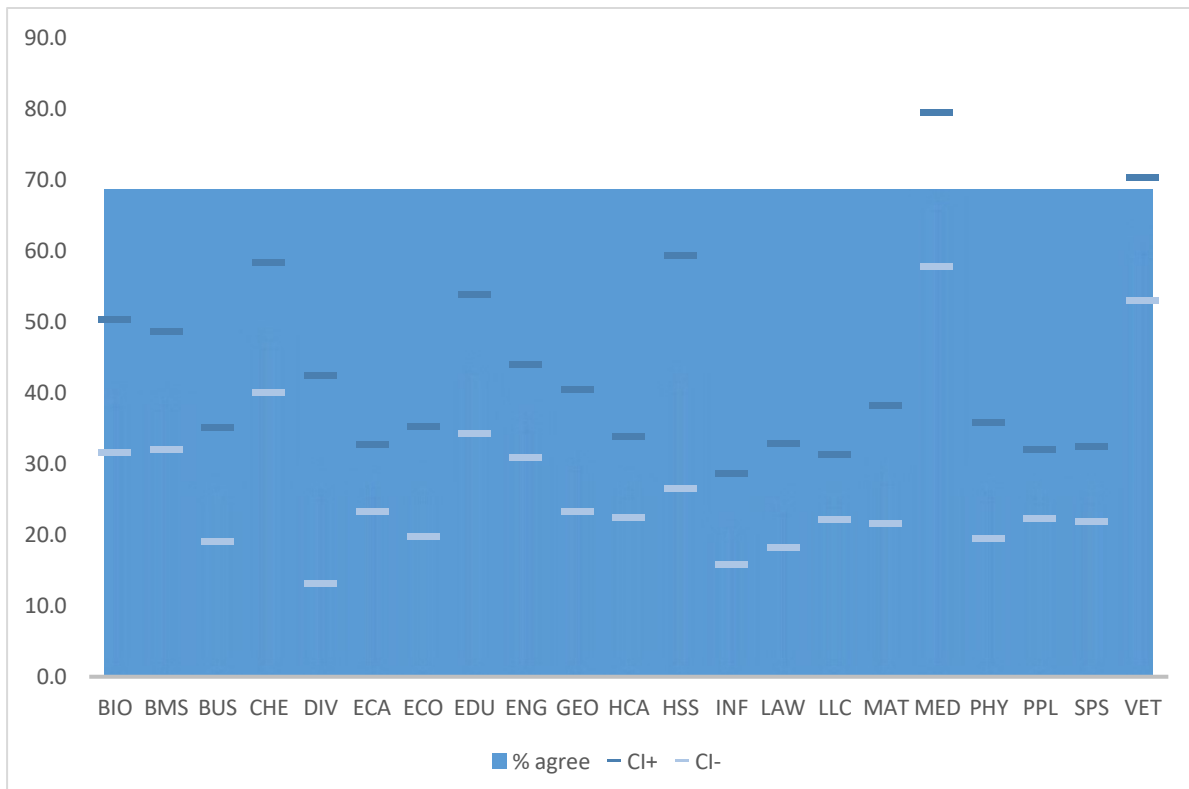
Students with learning disabilities and students with mental health conditions are significantly less likely to report that they felt supported to participate with their learning than students with no disabilities (23.6% of students with learning disabilities and 22.6% of students with mental health conditions compared to 34% of students with no disabilities).
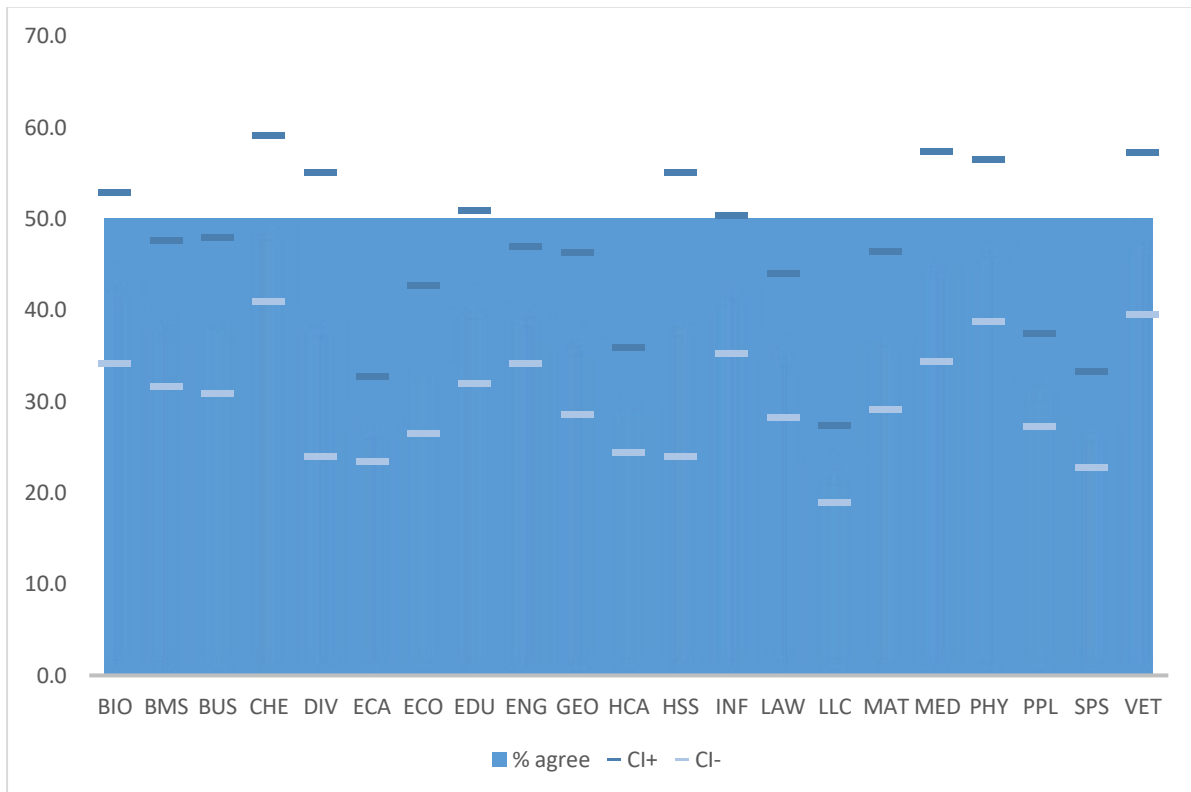
Only 29% of respondents feel confident learning digitally and remotely. Only 21.8% of students with mental health conditions feel confident (significantly below students with no disabilities).

Students aren't clear what they need to do to do well in their course (only 36% of respondents agreed). Again, there are some quite significant differences between Schools.

Comments from students in ECA and LLC express real concerns about how they will progress in the next year. For students in ECA access to studio space, tools and materials is considered critical alongside the ability to work collaboratively on creative projects. ECA students have asked what arrangements will be for their degree shows which are also seen as critical for their future career progression. Students in LLC who will be missing out on years abroad are extremely concerned

around their language level and their ability to become fluent without an "immersive" in country experience

Figure 5 % agree I am clear on what I need to do to do well in my course

Again, students with learning disabilities and mental health conditions score significantly lower than students with no disabilities (24.6% of students with learning disabilities and 26.8% of students with mental health conditions agree that are clear what they need to do to do well compared with 37.1% of students with no disabilities).

Respondents were asked whether or not they agreed that studying digitally and remotely wouldn't negatively affect their grades. Overwhelmingly respondents felt it would. Only 24% of respondents agreed with the statement, 20% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. Differences between Schools are significant but even the Schools with the highest scores have only just over a third of respondents agreeing that digital learning won't negatively affect their grades.

Figure 6 % agree that digital and remote learning won't negatively affect my grades by School
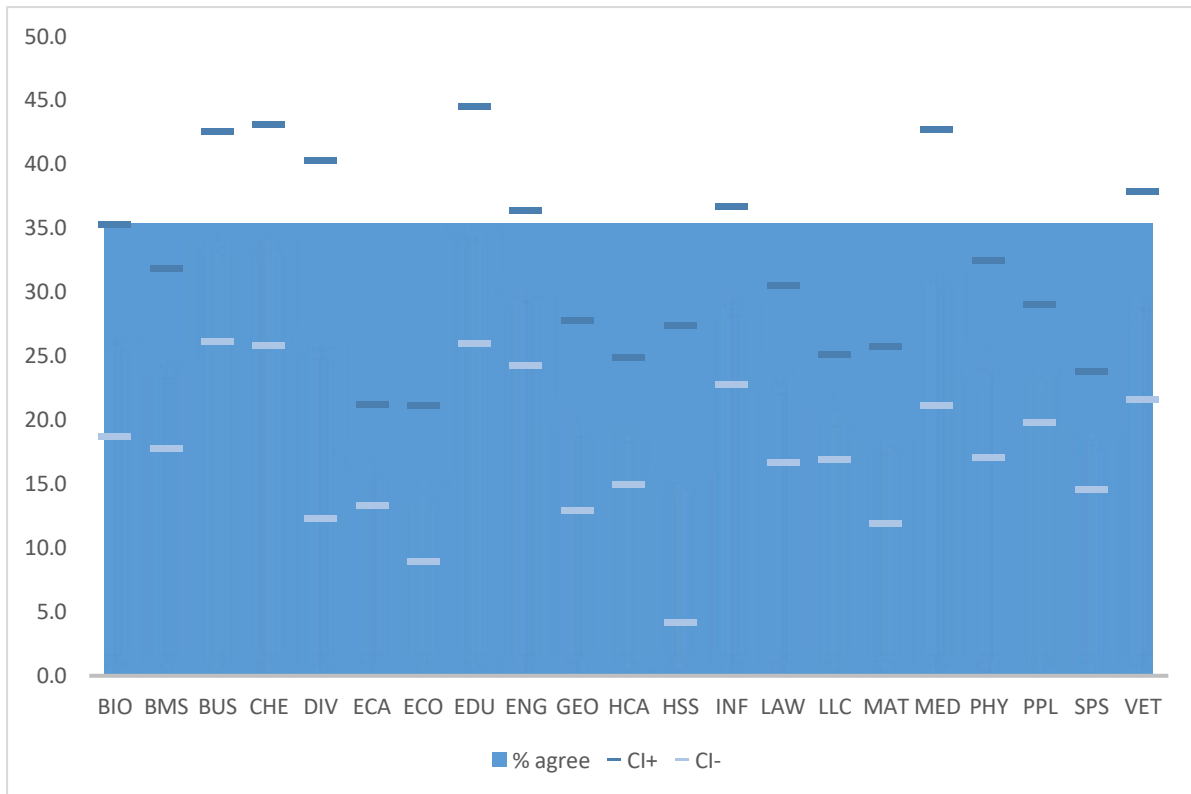
Comments indicate that some students are extremely angry about paying fees to receive very little in the way of teaching. For those who have had some experience of remote, digital teaching and learning the experience has been unsatisfactory:

> *I am hoping that the remote learning in September does not reflect the "remote learning" that we received at the beginning of the lockdown. The quality of that teaching did not meet my expectations of the teaching I should receive from a university such as Edinburgh, and it was not worth the tuition fees that I pay. I sincerely hope that by September the university and staff will have had sufficient time to prepare how to deliver high quality teaching remotely.*

Alongside concerns expressed about increasing mental ill-health, students are making requests for more structure to support their learning and developing positive habits whilst learning digitally:

> *If you can help me keep to a regular schedule that would be good. Having a set time to go to lectures means I go to them every day, but recorded lectures are often only available hours later, so I forget to watch them. I work well in repetitive structures enforced by habit.*

Whilst comments have been predominantly negative; there have been some students who feel that they have benefitted from the changes that have enabled them to study in a more flexible way which fits around their lifestyle and other commitments like caring responsibilities.

Experience of Online Exams

Just over 38% of respondents took exams remotely. Only those students who completed exams were asked to feed back on their experiences. Just over 71% of respondents agreed that they understood how the exam process would work.

Just under two thirds of respondents agreed that the open book format allowed them to demonstrate what they had learnt (64.5%). Although the difference isn't statistically significant, students with learning disabilities were most likely to agree with this question (67.1% compared to 64.7% with no disability).

On the whole, comments appear to show students have preferred open book exams:

> *I loved this exam format. Traditional examination formats often require students to demonstrate their memory rather than their understanding. Open book exams simulate a more realistic scenario in a work place - where resources are a click away if you need them.*

Some comments express concerns around other students cheating. Negative feedback related to confusing and contradictory advice around the amount of time students should spend on answers, expected word counts and perceptions that exams would be marked more harshly.

> *The questions as a whole were noticeably more difficult. This is understandable. However, I am worried they will be marked much more harshly than the sit in exams despite the school stating they won't be.*

Over three quarters of respondents agreed that they were able to complete their assessments in the time given (77.7%). Students in Economics scored significantly lower than other Schools for this question (48.1%). Comments suggest that some students feel that they have been treated less favourably than students in other Schools.

> *Despite numerous requests from my class, there didn't seem to be any rational explanation why Economics exams (empirical) were given the normal amount of time + 1 hour, whilst other heavily empirical exams such as engineering were given 48 hours. I worry that Economics students were not given the same leniency given the fact that we're all at least adversely affected by the ongoing covid-19 situation to some degree.*

Students with caring responsibilities were significantly less likely to agree that they could complete their assessments in the time given than those with no caring responsibilities (66.9% compared to 79.2% respectively).

The comments relating to some students' lack of quiet and suitable study environments are repeated in the feedback around the online exams. How can the university ensure that students aren't disadvantaged by their home lives in the future?

Whilst 41% of respondents agreed that they felt supported in completing their dissertations, experiences appear to vary greatly depending upon students' School.

Figure 7 % agree I felt supported in completing my dissertation by School
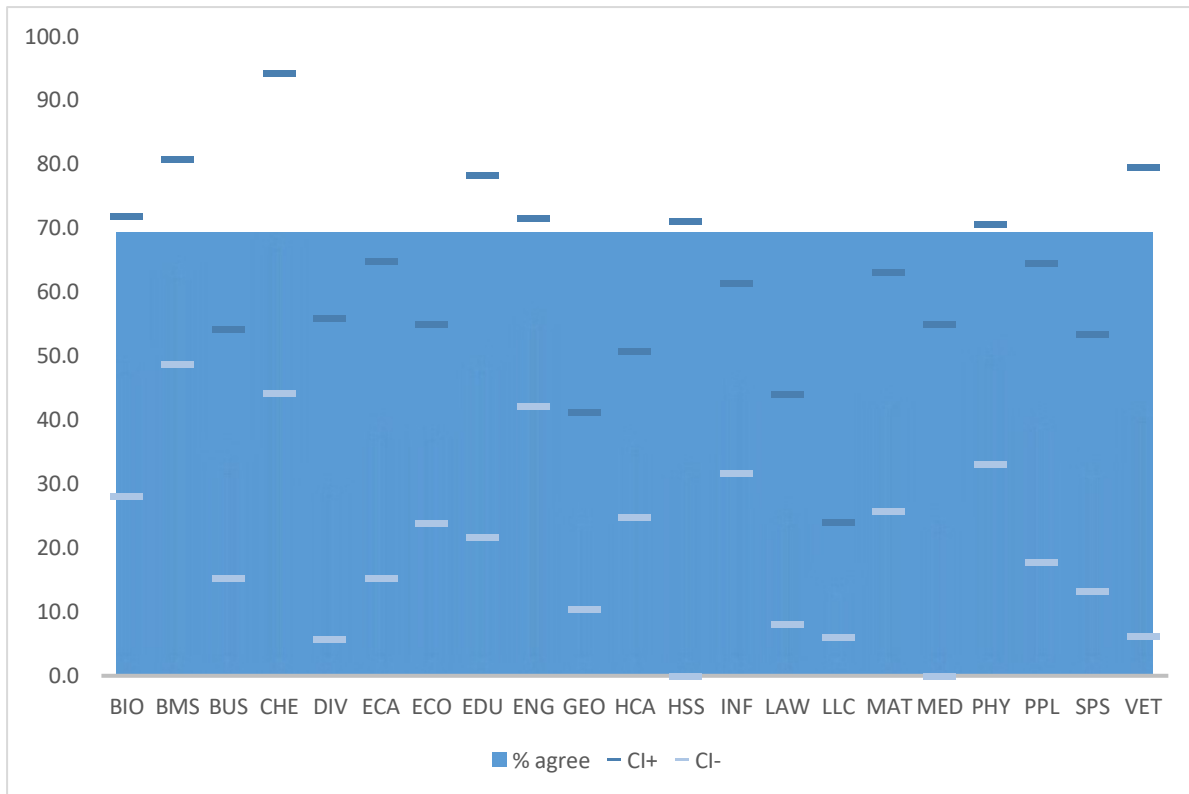
Students are unclear about what the arrangements will be for their dissertations next year:

> *I'm very worried. I will be a fourth year English literature student in September and would ideally use the intervening time for reading, but our lists of modules haven't been released and nothing has been confirmed, so I have no idea what studying I can do in the mean time. I know that we begin our dissertation preparation in September but we've had no warning or instruction re: planning or ideas yet. I feel very lost.*

Returning in September

Whilst many students are eager to return to face to face teaching next year the majority of respondents report feeling anxious, nervous and uncertain. Students often caveat comments with a note that they understand that approaches to delivering teaching, learning and support services are still in development it would appear that communications are not effective. Students are very unclear about what hybrid teaching will mean for them. Students relate that they would appreciate more and shorter communications even if it is just to reassure them that 'we are working on it.'

> *To be honest, uneasy. Although there was a lot of communication leading up to online exams (I got like 20 emails a day), there has been none to little provided about the coming semester. Given other universities both in Scotland and the rest of the UK have given some info about their position, its seems that we are in the dark. I am hoping that the uni will announce soon on their position.*

Students have very real concerns about returning to campus:

> *I am feeling anxious, I was unfortunate enough to experience death in my family due to the virus: and I have been struggling financially due to pandemic. I am very worried about the over-crowding of students on campus as well as a potential second wave of cases once*

the new semester begins - as I will be entering my final year of study, I want to be able to have space to fully focus and perform to my full potential, I am worried my course will be negatively impacted by all of this.

Appendix – UG Covid-19 Survey

Headlines from open comments by School

Biological Sciences

- Students would value more structured learning with more frequent tasks
- Students express ambivalence around returning to study in September
- Concerns are raised around how labs will operate and what plans are in place for online learners
- Comments indicate that there was confusion around the expectations for time spent on exams
- Catching up on practical / lab skills are viewed as a priority

Biomedical Sciences

- Students would appreciate more direct contact with staff
- Some students struggled with the change to essay based exams
- Comments indicate students found that there was a lack of clarity on the application of the no detriment policy

Business School

- Comments indicate that students would value more frequent communications from the School
- Students feel that they would benefit from more interactive activities to support their studies e.g. resources / quizzes, shorter assignments with shorter deadlines to maintain momentum
- Students experienced confusing messaging from
- Anxieties around returning to Edinburgh are reflective of the wider feedback from students across the University

Chemistry

- Students would like to see study groups reduced in size
- Labs are a key concern for next year and the area students feel they will have a knowledge gap
- Students appreciated the support the School provided during the exam period

Divinity

- Students have struggled with a lock of engagement from academic staff / personal tutors
- A lack of digitised texts is a difficulty for Divinity students

Edinburgh College of Art

- Digital learning has not worked very well for ECA students so far. Issues include a lack of space and equipment
- Students would value more proactive communications from staff
- Students are concerned about plans for their degree shows

Economics

- The approach to exams and perceived inconsistencies in the application of the no-detriment policy appear to have caused concern for some students
- Students have found group projects difficult to undertake whilst studying remotely

Moray House School of Education and Sport

- Some students feel they have been very well supported but this isn't consistent feedback
- Students are anxious about how school placements will be managed

Engineering

- Feedback indicates that some students are finding staff unresponsive
- Smaller teaching groups have been requested
- Feedback about exams is, on the whole, positive – students felt the approach worked for them

Geosciences

- The availability of field trips is a concern for a number of Geosciences students
- Students found open book exams positive but note that they had inconsistent experiences between courses
- Students are confused about expectations for their dissertations
- Accessing specialist software has been problematic for some students

History, Classics & Archaeology

- Students are struggling with a lack of resources (texts in the library and source material)
- Some comments indicate that Learn is used very differently by different Course Organisers and some standardisation in approach would be helpful
- Comments call for increased amounts of contact time

Health in Social Science

- Lack of digitised texts in the library appears to have caused problems for some HSS students
- Students are concerned about reaching the required number of placement hours

Informatics

- Students have commented on the number of courses that have been cancelled for next year – some feel this has limited their choice
- Mixed feedback on exams with some students finding the new formats relieved stress whilst others found scanning papers challenging

Law

- Lack of digitised texts in the library appears to have caused problems for some Law students
- Law students have commented on the lack of communication from the University
- Students mentioned the importance of discussions and some are worried about how this will be managed
- There has been mixed feedback on exams with some preferring the open book format whereas others struggled as they could not obtain reference books

Languages, Literature & Cultures

- Lack of library resources have been an issue for LLC students

- Language students are particularly concerned about the cancellation of years abroad. Although most understand the reason for this there are concerns about the negative impact on their levels of fluency
- Some students indicate that lectures haven't been recorded and posted online which has been problematic

Mathematics
- Comments from Maths students indicate a desire for more face to face interaction (online as well as physical) between staff and students and amongst students
- Students relate concerns around technical difficulties in submitting their exams

Medicine
- Medicine student comments relate to a need for more structure and access to recorded lectures
- Mixed response to open book exams with some finding the format a better way showing understanding whereas others found them to be a test in 'looking things up'

Physics & Astronomy
- Students are requesting more contact from academic staff – if they can check in with students more frequently
- Live lectures or more frequently uploaded lecture recordings have been requested
- Feedback on exams has been positive from most Physics students although some students struggled with the time difference

Philosophy, Psychology & Linguistics
- PPLS students are keen for more live streamed / interactive approaches to digital learning
- Students feel like they have lost a lot of course content in 2019/20 and are unclear how they might be able to make this up
- Cancelling exams has left some students feeling unprepared for next year

Social & Political Sciences
- SPS students request more one to one contact with academic staff and some have asked for more opportunities for interactive learning e.g. quizzes to support motivation
- Students feel like they have lost a lot of course content in 2019/20 and are unclear how they might be able to make this up

Vets School
- Students at the Vets School would like to see more interactive / live sessions rather than recorded lectures
- Students are anxious about the practical elements of their course – especially if they're not in the UK
-

Senate Education Committee

24 June 2020

LTW Learning Technology Update for Semester 1

Description of paper
1.   The paper provides an update on learning technology plans in Learning Teaching and Web (LTW) services for supporting teaching in semester 1.

Action requested/Recommendation
2.   The Committee is asked to review and comment.

Background and context
3.   As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the University of Edinburgh undertook a 'digital pivot' when it moved all on-campus course delivery to 'remote' teaching from outside the campus in response to the national lockdown. Planning is underway for teaching remotely in Semester 1 2020/21. This has been an incredibly busy time for the learning, teaching and web support teams in Information Services Group, and for learning technologists across the University. There has been significant recruitment of new staff, student interns and re-skilling of existing staff to contribute to this effort.

Effort has been made to co-ordinate central support with that going on at College level, primarily via the College Heads of IT in ISG.

Discussion
4. Given the ongoing preparations in Schools for Semester 1 and the reality of teaching delivery for the next academic year, is the support being offered by ISG covering broadly the right areas? Are there projects or services which should be added, expanded or reviewed?

Resource implications
6. Recommendations by this Committee for services which should be added or expanded will require additional resource allocation.

Risk Management
7. Work described in this paper has gone some way to mitigate the risk of there being inadequate learning technology support for a shift to hybrid learning. However, the extent of the risk is only estimated.

Equality & Diversity

8. Work described in this paper has gone some way to mitigate the risk of the shift to hybrid learning disadvantaging some groups of students and staff more than others, but this risk remains in local practice and continues in all parts of the university.

Next steps/implications

9.   If the Committee is content, the next steps are to carry on with the work described below.

Consultation

10. The work described in this paper is being reported on a regular basis to the various ART (Adaptation and Renewal Team) groups concerned with curriculum resilience, student administration and support, and digital infrastructure.

Further information

Information on the extensive range of support from ISG can be found on the
Teaching Continuity Hub

Author
Melissa Highton

Presenter
Melissa Highton, Director LTW, ISG

Freedom of Information
13. **Open**

This paper describes some of the work being done in ISG to support teaching continuity and the adoption of a hybrid teaching approach. Learn, Collaborate, Resources Lists and Media Hopper tools are supported by Information Services Group which means Schools can access training and online resources via ISG Helpdesk. Information on the extensive range of support from ISG can be found on the **Teaching Continuity Hub**

1. Recruitment and Re-skilling for Learning Technologies

ISG have recruited 6 new learning technologists to work in central services. There have also been a number of new posts advertised in Schools.

Student interns (UoE returning students) have been recruited to work over the summer on the Learn Foundations programme.

ISG staff who have not been able to work in their usual roles from home have been re-skilled and redeployed within ISG as VLE assistants and media subtitlers until we are able to access campus again.

The Digital Skills Team in ISG have developed a toolkit training programme for Schools to up-skill their learning technologists in-house. This toolkit provides learning design and digital skills development resources and training for those new to working with learning technology, whether they have just joined the University or have moved internally from another role. It can be used as part of an onboarding plan, or more generally for skills development. The toolkit aims to build a foundation level of knowledge across our pool of learning technologists, covering the **core** learning technologies used at the University alongside learning design practices. Details of school-specific tools and practices should be added locally. Additionally, the toolkit aims to develop and maintain the University's network of Learning Technologists through which you can meet others in similar roles, keep up to date with the fast-changing teaching landscape, share good practice and support each other.

2. Learn VLE

 Learn Foundations, the University's Learn VLE improvement project, is a core component of the hybrid approach that sets out robust institutional responses to maintaining teaching continuity and delivering a quality experience for our students. Learn Foundations establishes for the University an institutional quality standard for the use of Learn. In the past there was inconsistency across courses which contributes to a poor student experience. Students studying across subject areas, Schools, and Colleges, inevitably struggled to find their course-specific resources placed in different folders, and often called different things. Studies by our user experience experts in ISG demonstrated that many students were finding it difficult to use courses in Learn and were therefore having a poor learner experience.

Agreeing on an institution-wide standard course structure and consistent course terminology, alleviated needless confusion caused by basic inconsistencies.   A template for institution-wide standard course structure and consistent course terminology was agreed with representatives from all Colleges in 2019.

Learn VLE testing has been successfully completed on the Learn Foundations template in preparation for the 'New Academic Year Process within Learn' in early June (previously known as roll-over).

A clear mapping of the teaching will focus on the **Course Materials** section of the Learn Foundations template. Templates will support the structuring of online materials to support learning sequences of lectures, seminars, activities and hours of independent study. Additional attention should be paid to all sections, including **Lecture Recordings, Resource Lists**, and **Assessment**. Resources lists will target digital library materials. Assessment will provide model workflows for submitting and receiving assessments online. Academic colleagues will have access to tools to manage groups and to monitor and review student engagement.

The project team has continued work with all Schools who are on-board for this year (currently: **20 Schools/Deaneries**).

We are working on mechanisms for deleting old course sites and long-gone users to ensure we are compliant with data protection regulations.   We are moving Learn to Blackboard's Continuous Delivery Option (CDO). This will provide monthly updates to Learn meaning that bug fixes will be available more quickly and these updates will not require any downtime.

A working group has been established from the Learn Foundations project and tasked with developing resources to support the delivery of hybrid teaching. The group has representation from all three Colleges, with learning technologists providing discipline specific knowledge and insights on course design in hybrid teaching.

3. Support for Hybrid Teaching

Audits of **accessibility** of learning materials will continue as part of the Learn Foundations Project and each School will be provided with reports to support improvement in access and inclusion online.

Learning designs will be repurposed from **ELDER** sessions to inform modes of online teaching which have been tried and tested at University of Edinburgh, giving a firm grounding in appropriate pedagogy. Online **ABC** sprints, led by school-based learning technologists and under guidance for the ISG learning design service, will lead teaching staff quickly through the process of customising the learning designs for individual courses

The '**An Edinburgh Model for Online Teaching**' staff development programme has been offered to all teaching staff in conjunction with colleagues in Centre for Research into Digital Education as an introduction to online teaching, and to give staff the experience of being an online student with a focus on communication, community and care that is important for all online teachers. 600 colleagues have taken the course and materials are being made available as a self-study option for the rest of the summer.

The **learning technology training programme** as part of the Learn Foundations project will focus on supporting the delivery of teaching online and the programme of **remote training** will be **re-run and expanded** intensively over the summer. Cross-references and supplemental information from the 'Edinburgh Model' course will provide ongoing support for using the core technologies required.

Copyright advice and training for colleagues moving their materials online will be provided by the Library and our Open Educational Resources Service.

Collections of **shareable and re-usable media** will be made available. We will also continue to offer tools and support for teachers who want to innovate and stretch beyond a core set of tools into using video, blogs, computational notebooks, Wikimedia tools and virtual labs.

4. Courses for Hybrid Learning

Distance Learning at Scale (DLAS) was established to design, create and test the University's ability to produce and support sustainable at scale online courses. While much of the focus has been on delivering courses with the education partner, edX - the processes, capabilities and technologies were always designed to be repurposed across other University courses.

An urgent interest in online learning has led to a number of school teams proposing plans for new MOOCS. At the height of the pandemic crisis, teams from University of Edinburgh took course content from the online MSc in Critical Care and made it available as a free online resource for healthcare professionals. Hosted on FutureLearn, the '**COVID-19 Critical Care: Understanding and Application**' resource has been accessed by nearly 40,000 people seeking to enhance their learning and ensure patient safety. The team have now adapted these resources into a formal course with optional certificate to evidence learning. The revenue generated by the sale of certificates will be given to the University's PPE fund. All other MOOC production is being slowed at the moment to allow for reallocation of resources into support for Semester one, so these projects will be picked up again in the new year.

A new project will deliver a suite of scaled courses in Learn which will provide new and returning students with the support and skills required for successful hybrid learning. The aims of the courses are to;

- ensure new and returning students feel supported by the University
- provide every student with the confidence to learn in hybrid mode
- provide every student with the core skills to be digitally capable
- provide every student with a single point of access to key resources to help them succeed in a hybrid environment
- Highlight resources both within the course and linked that schools can reference, allowing schools to focus on subject specific support and skills development

The courses will introduce students to learning at the University and focus on digital study, literacy and safety skills that have been increasingly important for students but will be essential skills in 20/21. The courses will make as much use of existing resources by signposting things like the new student guides, IAD Study Hub, Digital Skills Awareness course, student wellbeing resources and careers online support toolkits. The intention is that the courses will be available for the start of the 6 week Welcome Week period/2 weeks before the start of Semester 1.

5. Expanding Media Production Capabilities

Approximately 60% of semester 1 courses from last year have recorded lectures. Colleagues will be supported by training to review and edit these recordings for re-use and to make new recordings from home.

In response to demand from Colleges, media production is being expanded through the operation of new pop up media studios, testing and purchasing of remote filming kits and promoting guidance for "how to film". Remote filming kits are being tested to identify suitable easy to use equipment to standardise the quality of media outputs. Each remote filming kit will include a mic, light and webcam that can added to a laptop or mic and recommended for filming with the MediaHopper create desktop recorder. Document cameras are also being tested and purchased. Approximately 50 kits are being purchased through DLAS funding. This is not intended to meet the full demand but will be an initial pool that will be made available through the ISG AV Loans service.

For those who cannot film at home 9 temp studios have been built and can be opened for use, depending on campus access, from **end of June**.

- 4 rooms at High School Yards for all / CHASS (next to ECCi)
- 2 rooms at Murchison House for CSE (King's Buildings)
- 1 room each at the Vet School (Easter Bush), Chancellors Building (BioQuarter) and MEC (Western General) for CMVM

The new pop up media studio spaces have been created in partnership between estates and ISG. To quickly operationalise these spaces is not an insubstantial piece of work. A new project has been set up to recruit temporary media technicians and agree and implement workflows for booking, filming, health & safety and media asset management. The project is coordinating with college leads and requires college commitments to identify demand, use cases and facilitating the prioritisation processes for the spaces.

6. Consistency and accessibility

One of the key features of the Learn Foundations project which will stand us in good stead for semester 1 is the strong focus on consistency and accessibility. Time spent ensuring that materials are accessible may become a reputational differentiator. This quality can be assured by use of:

- Consistent template that accommodates blended learning
- Robust tools for communication and engagement built into the template to enable online discussions with students, accommodate blended learning styles and remote learning
- Consistent use of terminology in the navigation menu.

- Effective course design using the Learn Foundations structure designed to be intuitive for staff and students to use.
- Training for academic colleagues on how to make their materials accessible.

7.Subtitling for video

With the move to hybrid teaching, more content is being produced as recordings (audio and video) and more subtitling will be needed to make content accessible to students with hearing impairments, noisy work-settings, mobile devices, lower bandwidth etc. Subtitles allow students to watch a video in a noisy place or without headphones in a quiet place and still get all of the content. This will be of help to students on campus as well as off. In face-to face settings members of the university may be wearing face coverings, subtitles on recordings to replay later may help to access content.

ISG can generate automatic 'machine transcribed' subtitles for pre-recorded videos and audio content stored on Media Hopper Create, the University's media asset management service. Automatic transcripts are generally 70-75% accurate, depending on the content, acoustics etc.

Training is available from ISG for staff who are adding subtitles, captions or transcripts to their video or audio. Video subtitling via a web interface in Media Hopper is the most commonly used tool and training is available to do this. The 'content owner' may be a lecturer, speaker, event organiser etc, depending on the content.

Melissa Highton
Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services
ISG

June 2020

Senate Education Committee

24 June 2020

Virtual Classroom Policy

Description of paper

1. The paper proposes the appended policy that seeks to maintain the virtual classroom as a safe space for teaching, learning and the fostering of academic community. The policy extends principles agreed for the Lecture Recording Policy on uses of recordings and participant rights to teaching delivered in virtual classes.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Education Committee is invited to review and comment on the proposed policy, prior to further consultation with Knowledge Strategy Committee and the Joint Trades Unions.

Background and context

3. The University performed a rapid online pivot in response to the limitations introduced by the COVID-19 pandemic, and is currently planning a hybrid teaching model for 2020/2021. As a consequence of this, a vast amount of University business is and will continue to be delivered online through the Virtual Classroom service (Blackboard Collaborate) or other communication and collaboration tools such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom.
4. Collaborate, Teams and Zoom have therefore gone or will go from being relatively niche services for opt-in enthusiasts to core services used widely for delivering the University's mission.
5. There is currently no comprehensive University statement on ownership or licensing of copyright or performers' rights for these services, nor for permitted uses of recordings made using them, as there is for the Lecture Recording service.
6. Collaborate is integrated with both Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs), and Microsoft Teams and Zoom are not officially intended for use in teaching at present. It is currently unclear whether colleagues will seek to use Teams or Zoom for teaching in the short term regardless of this advice, and whether in the longer term there will be integrations between these platforms and the VLEs.
7. The University is developing another separate policy in parallel that will address the recording of non-teaching meetings and activities.

Discussion

8. We propose translating the principles from the lecture recording policy framework to apply to the "virtual class". This would cover an important gap in policy and should reassure staff and student users.
9. The lecture recording policy at its core was intended to let students review the lectures they had attended, and largely assumed on-campus delivery. Nonetheless it clearly specifies a framework that should transfer easily:
   a. The teaching space should remain a **safe space** for the exposition and discussion of ideas.
   b. Permitted **uses** of recordings are specified and limited.

c. **Rights** in each recording are retained by the several parties that own them, always including at least the University and the lecturer (main presenter). Users agree to being recorded and everyone agrees to license the recording to be used for the specified purposes. A recording can be put to a novel use only if this is agreed to by all the rights holders.

d. Everyone has the option to **opt out** of being recorded prior to the recording being made. The lecturer retains control of the recording's availability, and students have the option to request their contribution be deleted.

e. Personal data within the recording is processed on the basis that the University has a **legitimate interest** in providing the service to its staff and students. Special category data cannot however be recorded without consent.

f. Specified **retention** period for the recording[1].

g. Teaching should be **accessible**; and students should retain the right to audio record a session on their own device.

10. The Lecture Recording Policy does not currently cover recording lectures on Collaborate or other communication and collaboration services.

11. There are some important differences between Collaborate and Media Hopper Replay (the lecture recording service).

a. Collaborate is used for a wider set of purposes. Collaborate primarily facilitates remote synchronous communication that can be recorded (both for review and for those who cannot attend synchronously). Collaborate is currently being used for online large and small group teaching of students (lectures, tutorials or seminars); meetings between students and their personal tutors; staff business and social meetings; conferences; staff training; staff management and appraisal; and recruitment and admissions meetings with prospective students. Replay is primarily for automatically recording an on-campus session and posting it for review by those who were entitled to attend the session. It can also be used to pre-record a lecture or for live-streaming an event from a lecture room.

b. Collaborate can potentially put anyone front-and-centre. The Replay camera is positioned as far as possible to capture the presenter and not the audience, although capture of audience comments or images are entirely possible. Replay can also be configured for screencasts, where only a slideshow and voiceover are recorded. Collaborate allows users within a meeting to join in using their preferred combination of video, audio, text chat and in some cases file or screen sharing. Moderators may limit what participants can share, and configure what is recorded (video, audio, slides, text chat, participant list).

c. There is not currently an option within Collaborate to schedule an automatic recording of a class, or post it automatically to the students in the class.

Resource implications

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[1] Deletion of recordings is however currently suspended (May 2020) as part of the COVID response, in order to ensure lecturers can re-use their recordings if required.

12. Communications and collaboration services do not currently include automatic scheduling or publishing of recordings. Lecturers are likely to have to plan and initiate recording manually and post any recording to students manually.

Risk management

13. The proposed policy addresses the existing risk that the University does not have a clear, agreed framework for recording teaching within the Virtual Classroom service or other online communication and collaboration services.

Equality & diversity

14. Equality Impact Assessments exist for the services and one will be undertaken for the proposed policy.

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

15. Communication of the final agreed policy is proposed through Heads of School and ISG Communication's existing engagement channels with Schools, staff and students, in time for the 2020/2021 session.

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19 June 2020

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Freedom of Information
Open paper

Virtual Classroom Policy

The University of Edinburgh

Purpose of Policy

This policy clarifies rights and responsibilities when delivering and recording teaching and learning using online communication and collaboration technologies.

Overview

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the University's proposed hybrid teaching model have brought the Virtual Classroom service into the forefront of teaching delivery. The policy extends existing principles agreed for lecture recording to this context, amending them or making separate provision where required.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

The intention of this policy is to help manage the potential risks posed by challenges and complexities in the arrangements for virtual classes. It applies University-wide to all staff, students and visiting lecturers involved in running or participating in virtual classroom sessions. It does not cover non-teaching online meetings or activities and it does not cover teaching recorded or streamed using the Lecture Recording service.

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Document control

Dates	Approved: DD.MM.YY	Starts: DD.MM.YY	Equality impact assessment: DD.MM.YY	Amendments: DD.MM.YY	Next Review: 2021/2022
Approving authority	Senate Education Committee				
Consultation undertaken	College Teaching Deans and Heads of IT, EUSA, Trades Unions, Legal Services, Knowledge Strategy Committee				
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Learning, Teaching and Web Services				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	Accessible and Inclusive Learning; Dignity and Respect Policy; Disciplinary; Student Conduct; Learning Analytics; Lecture Recording Policy; Open Educational Resources; Web Accessibility; Timetabling; IP Exploitation; Student IPR;				
UK Quality Code	QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality, Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching; and Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement				
Policies superseded by this policy	None				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.				
Keywords	Virtual Classroom, Collaborate, hybrid delivery, online delivery				

Virtual Classroom Policy

Background and scope

The University provides a [Virtual Classroom service](#) for use in online or in hybrid campus/online teaching delivery in situations where some staff or students are not expected or not able to attend on-campus teaching. The essential purpose of this policy is to allow students and learners to access classes and, where appropriate, recordings of classes remotely and to allow staff to deliver teaching remotely.

This policy uses the term "virtual class" to refer to a teaching <mark>or student pastoral support</mark> session delivered to some or all of its participants online using the Virtual Classroom service or using [any other supported communication and collaboration service](#).

The policy does not apply to teaching recorded or live-streamed using the Lecture Recording service, covered by the separate [Lecture Recording policy](#). It does not apply to non-teaching online meetings or activities, covered by the separate Meeting Recording policy.

Maintaining a safe space for teaching and learning

The University intends each virtual class to remain a safe place for the exposition and discussion of potentially controversial ideas between the lecturers and students on a Course. A safe space is a prerequisite for building academic community which is in turn critical to student engagement and learning.

1) Virtual class participants will abide by the [Dignity and Respect Policy](#).

2) Access to a virtual class by default will normally be limited to the staff, students or learners on the instance of the Course(s) that the teaching relates to. The lecturer may authorise access for other relevant participants. A student or employee accessing a virtual class without authorisation may be investigated under the [Code of Student Conduct](#) or [Disciplinary Policy](#) (as applicable).

3) Staff and students contributing to a virtual class will normally be identified within the service by name. This is in the interests of maintaining a safe learning space, supporting academic community and student engagement, and of the effective running of the session. Where a student believes their interests in not being identified within a virtual class may outweigh these interests, they should contact their personal tutor or the lecturer or course organiser for the Course concerned in advance to discuss whether their participation can be anonymous or pseudonymous.

4) While the building of online academic communities of learning is often likely to be more effective when interactions include video, each participant may nonetheless choose whether or not their video and/or still image is displayed to others within a virtual class.

Making a virtual class recording

Who can record

5) No recording of the virtual class may be made using the service without the lecturer's authorisation.

6) The person who initiates and stops the recording must make all participants aware that recording is about to commence, and that recording is stopped. Participants should be made

aware whether other virtual class elements such as text chat or the participant list will be recorded.

7) Students may, under the [Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy](#), make their own audio recording of any of their teaching on their own device for the sole purpose of their own personal study.

What can be recorded

8) A recording may include all or part of a virtual class.

9) Where the virtual class contains a lecture, and unless they have a good reason not to, the lecturer should record the lecture to allow students on the Course to review it. 'Good reason' is as defined in paragraph 2.2 of the [Lecture Recording Policy](#).

10) There is no expectation on the lecturer to record other, more interactive virtual classes such as seminars, tutorials or laboratories. Lecturers who intend to record such sessions should check for any objections from participants before commencing recording.

11) The University will provide guidance on what elements of the virtual class can be recorded. The lecturer may consider which elements of the virtual class (e.g. video, audio, slides, file uploads, text chat) will be most useful for student revision.

12) A student is required to be recorded if the recording is a mandatory part of their assessment. A student otherwise making a contribution within a virtual class may either request that recording is paused for their contribution or contact the lecturer following the class to arrange for deletion of their contribution from the recording.

Uses of virtual class recordings

Virtual class recordings may be used for the following purposes:

13) The University will provide access to recordings, where available, to students and relevant staff on the instance of the Course to which the virtual class relates.

14) A student may only use the recording for the purposes of their own personal study. The student must destroy any copy of the recording they hold once this purpose has been met. This will be on completion of the final assessment to which the Course relates or when the student leaves the University, whichever is sooner.

15) Students will access recordings by streaming them, and will not be permitted to download local copies except:
   a) where the School provides a download of a recording to a disabled student on the Course where this has been specified as a reasonable adjustment.
   b) that the lecturer at their discretion may provide download access to all students on the Course where, in the lecturer's opinion, this is appropriate.

16) The lecturer may publish the recording as an open educational resource, with appropriate modifications and safeguards, including an appropriate attribution, licence and having obtained any permissions required from other participants or third parties whose intellectual property resides within the recording. Guidance on this is contained within the [Open Educational Resources Policy](#) and [Website Accessibility Policy](#).

17) A lecturer may use recordings of their own virtual classes within their own performance review; to facilitate peer observation of their teaching; or if they are investigated under the Disciplinary Policy.

18) The University may use a virtual class recording within the scope of an investigation under the Code of Student Conduct.

19) A School may use a virtual class recording in exceptional situations to provide continuity, as specified within business continuity plans relevant to the School. Examples of exceptional situations might include significant disruption from a pandemic or other natural event or the unforeseen loss of part of the University estate. The School will, where reasonably possible, inform the lecturer beforehand that their recording is to be used and for what purpose, and the lecturer will retain the right not to permit this use. If the lecturer, acting reasonably, objects to use for this purpose, the School will not be permitted to use the recording.

20) The relevant Service Owner[1] may audit recordings in the context of service operation and management, and may where necessary delete an inappropriate recording sooner than the end of the normal retention period.

Any other use of a recording will require further, separate agreement between the University and other parties with rights in the recording. In particular:

21) The recordings and any associated metadata will not be used by the University for staff performance review or disciplinary processes without the lecturer's permission, except in the case of alleged gross misconduct.

22) Recordings may not be used as a replacement for intended staff presence in a lecture room or virtual class unless the lecturer permits this.

23) Recordings will not be used to cover University staff exercising their legal right to take industrial action without the lecturer's consent.

24) Staff and students may otherwise only use, modify, publish or share restricted-access virtual class recordings or excerpts with the permission of the School that provides the Course and of the lecturer and of any other participants in the recording. It shall be a disciplinary offence to use, modify or distribute recordings without permission, including but not limited to: copying the recording, issuing copies of it to the public, renting or lending copies of it to the public, playing it in public or broadcasting it. An employee or student using, modifying or distributing a recording without permission may be investigated under the Disciplinary Policy or Code of Student Conduct (as applicable).

Participant and University rights

In contributing to a virtual class that they have been notified is being recorded, participants agree to the University recording them and agree to give the University the licences necessary to use any recordings for the purposes in this policy.

25) The policies on exploitation of intellectual property and student intellectual property rights cover the status of intellectual property generated by the University's employees and students. Where the University and an employee have agreed that the employee retains some or all of

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[1] The senior owner of the service within Information Services, ultimately accountable for ensuring that the service meets current and future needs and expectations.

the intellectual property rights to material used within a recording, the employee agrees to grant the University a non-exclusive licence to use the material for the purposes in this policy.

26) Performer rights reside with the lecturer and other virtual class participants, who by using the services agree to the recording and agree that the University may use their performance for the purposes in this policy. Participants wishing to assert their right to be identified as author or performer should do so as part of the recording, for example on an introductory slide.

27) Where a student holds some or all of the intellectual property rights to material used within a recording, the student grants the University a non-exclusive licence to use the material for the purposes in this policy.

28) External visiting lecturers (or their employer as appropriate) retain copyright in work and any other intellectual property rights they generate and, by accepting the terms of the external visiting lecturer agreement, agree to grant the University a non-exclusive licence to use the recording for the purposes in this policy.

Data protection, security and retention

29) The [HYPERLINK TO FOLLOW: privacy statement] for the Virtual Classroom service will detail how the University will use and share data in relation to that service.

30) Recording of sensitive personal data shall not take place without the explicit written consent of the person(s) to whom the data relate.

31) The University or its software partners will securely host media captured within a virtual class. The Virtual Classroom service will retain a recording for 18 months from the date of recording before deleting it. Data are hosted within the United Kingdom or European Economic Area and the data protection and data security arrangements must satisfy the University's Data Protection Officer and Chief Information Security Officer respectively.

32) If a lecturer wishes to retain a recording for longer than the normal retention period then they should transfer the recording to the University's Media Asset Management Platform. The University cannot be held responsible for any recordings deleted after the retention period.

33) Learning Analytics relating to virtual classes may be used in accordance with the Learning Analytics Principles and Purposes, Policy and Governance arrangements.

Accessibility

34) Recordings must not breach equality legislation and must comply with the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy.

Copyright and licensing

35) Anyone presenting material within a virtual class must ensure that they do not infringe third-party intellectual property rights, including copyright.   Presenters must cite copyright material appropriately on slides and for recordings used within virtual classes and must ensure that materials do not contain any restricted information in actionable breach of confidence or in breach of data protection law, nor constitute a breach of publishing or collaboration or other agreement that governs their research or work at the University or elsewhere.

36) If a licence for material used within a recording constrains the University to retain that material for less than the recording retention period then the lecturer must arrange for deletion of the material at the end of the time specified by the licence.

DRAFT 18 June 2020

Senate Education Committee

24 June 2020

Annual Monitoring: Changes due to Covid-19 Outbreak

Description of paper
1. Advises the Committee of changes made to the annual monitoring processes for academic provision and student support services due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Action requested / recommendation
2. For information. The outcomes of the processes will be reported to Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) in December 2020 and actions will be remitted accordingly. The Committee is asked to note that the outcomes of these processes will produce a strong evidence base to inform strategic discussions.

Background and context
3. In line with the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework, processes are in place for annual monitoring of academic provision and student support services to support systematic reflection and enhancement. In May 2020 SQAC approved the suspension of normal annual monitoring processes due to the Covid-19 outbreak and the implementation of interim processes to review and reflect on 2019/20. Reporting templates and timescales have been updated accordingly.

4. At the conclusion of the interim processes, SQAC will take a decision on when and how to return to normal annual monitoring processes, including on any changes to the normal processes.

Discussion

5. <u>Academic Provision</u>

-   The interim process will be light-touch and will complement academic contingency work.
-   The interim process will focus on the impact of and learning from the Covid-19 pandemic but will also allow optional updates on actions identified from last year's reporting cycle and a reflection on other aspects of academic standards, student performance and the student learning experience (including industrial action).
-   There is no requirement to include Massive Open Online Courses in the interim process.
-   The School annual quality report deadline has been extended from 21 August to 20 November 2020. Programme reports inform School annual quality reports and are due by 30 October 2020. College reports reflect on School annual quality reports are due on 27 November 2020.
-   A SQAC Sub Group will meet in early December to consider the reports.
-   The outcomes report will be approved by SQAC in mid-December.
-   Templates are available at: https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview/annual-monitoring-review-and-reporting
-   Good practice identified will be shared.

6. Student Support Services

- The interim process will be light-touch, with none of the usual SQAC sub-committee meetings to review the reports held. However, the report review process will still include external and student input.
- A refocused, shorter report template, which focusses on the impact on student experience due to industrial action and Covid-19, has been provided to services.
- Services will be able to submit their reports during a flexible timescale – but all reports will need to be in by 13 November 2020.
- The outcomes report will be approved by SQAC in mid-December.
- The template is available at: https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview/sssar19-20
- Good practice identified will be shared.

Resource implications
4. The changes are intended to introduce an interim light touch process which complements existing academic contingency work.

Risk management
5. There are risks associated with ineffective monitoring, review and reporting.

Equality & diversity
6. SQAC considered the equality and diversity implications. The interim processes will likely lead to less consideration of demographic data.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed
7. Academic Services and Colleges regularly communicate with stakeholders to support them through annual monitoring processes. Information on the interim processes is available on the Academic Services webpages at https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview and has been shared with other Scottish higher education institutions.

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15 June 2020

Freedom of Information
Open