

Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
Hybrid meeting held online via Teams and in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House
Thursday 25 May 2023 at 2.00pm

AGENDA

1.	Minutes of the previous meeting For approval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March e-business (enclosed) • 2 May 2023 (enclosed) 	APRC 22/23 9A
2.	Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on industrial action • Update on Externally-Facilitated Review of Senate and its Standing Committees • Schedule of review for policies, regulations and guidance – Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Policy • Curriculum Transformation • Update to APRC on review of ESC (note attached) Report of Convener's Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of approved concessions • Handling of concessions in relation to Industrial Action 	Verbal Update & note attached
For approval		
3.	Taught Assessment Regulations For approval	APRC 22/23 9B
4.	Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees For approval	APRC 22/23 9C
5.	Online exam arrangement for 2023/24 – submission deadlines For approval This item is closed: its disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.	APRC 22/23 9D CLOSED
6.	Late Special Circumstances deadline – PGT Dissertation 2022/23 For approval	APRC 22/23 9E
7.	Late Special Circumstances deadlines – 2023/24 For approval	APRC 22/23 9F
8.	Proposal to terminate supervision of a PhD project For approval This paper is closed: This paper contains information relating to a process which is still to be conducted. Disclosure of the contents would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.	APRC 22/23 9G
9.	Revised curriculum approval arrangements for Edinburgh Futures Institute For approval	APRC 22/23 9H

10.	Major change to an existing programme: MSc in Clinical Trials For approval	APRC 22/23 9I
11.	Major change to an existing programme: MSc Data Science for Health and Social Care For approval	APRC 22/23 9J
12.	Major change to a new programme: MSc Leading Digital Transformation for Health and Care in Scotland For approval	APRC 22/23 9K
13.	Academic Misconduct Procedure For approval	APRC 22/23 9L
14.	Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy Update For approval	APRC 22/23 9M
15.	Programme and Course Handbooks Policy Update For approval	APRC 22/23 9N
16.	Proposed Regulation, Policy and Procedure Changes related to Implementation of Student Support Model For approval	APRC 22/23 9O
17.	Academic Year Dates – 2026/27 For approval	APRC 22/23 9P
18.	Student Discipline Committee - 2022/23 For approval	APRC 22/23 9Q
19.	Election of APRC Convener and Vice-Convener for 2022/23 For approval	Verbal discussion
To note and comment		
20.	Academic Policy and Regulations Membership and Terms of Reference 2023/24 To note	APRC 22/23 9R
21.	Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees To note and comment	APRC 22/23 9S
22.	Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees To note and comment	APRC 22/23 9T
23.	Any Other Business Provisional meeting dates 2023-24 All meetings will take place from 2-5pm, venue to be confirmed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 21 September 2023 • Thursday 23 November 2023 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thursday 25 January 2023• Thursday 21 March 2023• Thursday 23 May 2023	
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Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

25 May 2023

APRC Minutes

Description of paper

1. The paper provides the minutes of the March e-business meeting and the minutes of the 2 May meeting.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval.

Resource implications

4. None.

Risk management

5. Not applicable.

Equality & diversity

6. Not applicable.

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

7. APRC minutes are published on the APRC website: [Agendas, papers and minutes](#)

Author

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Academic Policy Officer
May 2023

Freedom of Information

Open paper

**e-Business Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations
Committee (APRC)
Thursday 30 March – Thursday 6 April**

UNCONFIRMED MINUTE

To note		
1.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Activation of Taught Assessment Regulation 70 The Committee were informed that the relevant guidance on responding to the impact of industrial action has been updated and communicated to Schools,</p> <p>It was noted by a committee member that a paper on responses to industrial action was scheduled for discussion at the Senate meeting on 29 March 2023, but that a vote on the proposals was not possible because that meeting was not quorate at that point, but Senate members may intend to raise this issue again at the next opportunity. The committee member asked that it be noted that some Senate members consider the activation of TAR Regulation 70 profoundly inappropriate. The Senate member queried whether the temporary relaxation of specific regulations was being done under a proper process as this appears to undermine strike action.</p> <p>Matters Arising: Clarification of Support for Study Policy Following 23rd March 2023 Meeting of APRC</p> <p>The Committee noted the clarification on the Support for Study Policy.</p>	APRC 22/23 7A
2.	<p>Reminder of follow up items</p> <p>Members were made aware the relevant deadlines for follow up items.</p>	
For discussion and recommendation to Court		
3.	<p>PG DRPS – Regulation 33 and 34 For discussion and recommendation to Court</p> <p>The Committee supported the Regulations be recommended to Court. Court will take forward approval of the Regulations in line with the process for the approval of a Resolutions.</p> <p>A member raised concern that the wording of Regulation 33 may discriminate against part-time continuous students and noted that a revision to the Study Period Table would provide more appropriate timescales for part-time continuous students and reduce administrative burden. These comments were noted and will be considered during a more detailed review of Regulation 33 over the next academic year.</p> <p>Members supported the proposed amendments to Regulations 33 and 34 as an interim measure for 2023/24 and ahead of a more detailed review of these specific regulations ahead of the 2024/25 academic year.</p>	APRC 22/23 7B

For approval		
4.	<p>Late Special Circumstances Deadline for August resit diet For approval</p> <p>The Committee approved a revised late special circumstances deadline for the August 2023 resit diet.</p> <p>Amendments to the late special circumstances deadline for PGT dissertations in 2022/23 will be proposed to APRC at their meeting in May 2023.</p> <p>Some members raised concern that the revised deadline would reduce the time available to submit special circumstances and noted that the change should be clearly communicated to students.</p>	APRC 22/23 7C
5.	<p>Approval for non-standard programme start dates for the Online MBA For approval</p> <p>The Committee approved the non-standard programme start dates for the Online MBA. It has been confirmed that students will be able to access central University induction resources when commencing a programme on non-standard start date.</p> <p>A member raised concerns regarding the availability of APRC's 23 March minutes and documentation available to support the Committee's decision making on this item. EBusiness papers should report how issue at the previous meeting were addressed and state on what basis committee members are being asked to make a decision.</p>	APRC 22/23 7D

Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
Hybrid meeting held online via Teams and in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House
Thursday 2 May 2023 at 3.00-4:30pm

Unconfirmed Minute

<p>Present: Dr Aidan Brown Dr Adam Bunni Philippa Burrell Professor Jeremy Crang Professor Jamie Davies Dr Murray Earle Professor Patrick Hadoke (Vice-Convenor) Clair Halliday Karen Howie</p> <p>Professor Antony Maciocia Sarah McAllister</p> <p>Sam Maccallum Dr Paul Norris (Convenor) Callum Paterson Rachael Quirk Dr Deborah Shaw Professor Tim Stratford Dr Uzma Tufail-Hanif Stephen Warrington</p> <p>Substitute members present: Brian Connolly Dr Lisa Kendall Dr Neil Lent</p> <p>In attendance: Lucy Evans Tina Harrison Olivia Hayes (Minutes)</p> <p>Apologies: Dr Donna Murray</p> <p>Dr Kathryn Nicol Kirsty Woomble</p>	<p>Elected member of Senate Head of Academic Affairs (CSE) Head of Academic Administration (CMVM) Dean of Students (CAHSS) Dean of Taught Education (CMVM) Elected member of Senate Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM) The Advice Place, Deputy Manager Head of Digital Learning Applications and Media, Information Services Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE) Head of Student Support Operations, Student Systems and Administration Vice President Education, Students' Association Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS) Academic Engagement Coordinator (Co-opted member) Head of Taught Student Administration & Support (CAHSS) Dean of Students (CMVM) Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE) Elected member of Senate Dean of Student Experience (CSE)</p> <p>Academic Policy Manager (Academic Services) Director of Academic and Student Administration (CAHSS) University Learning and Teaching (IAD)</p> <p>Deputy Secretary, Students Deputy Vice-Principal Students (Enhancement) Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services</p> <p>Head of Taught Student Development, Institute for Academic Development Head of Academic Policy and Regulation Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)</p>
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The Convener formally welcomed members and substitute members to the additional meeting of APRC.

1.	Minutes of the previous meeting - APRC 22/23 8A For approval
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- 23 March 2023 (enclosed)
- March e-business (enclosed)

The Committee approved the minutes of the 23 March and March e-business meeting.

For discussion

2. Industrial action: variations to academic policies and regulations - APRC 22/23 8B

For discussion

Ahead of introduction of this item, the Convener outlined Committee's responsibility as stated in the Taught Assessment Regulations. The Committee are responsible for approving temporary variations to regulations to mitigate against the impact of significant disruption to students, without compromising academic standards. The Committee are not asked to take a view on the reasons for industrial action, rather to establish if significant disruption has occurred and to consider and approve mitigations against this.

The Convener noted that should the Committee approve temporary variations to regulations, the relevant Board of Examiners will continue to retain decision making powers to apply these. The Committee noted that there may be cases where there is insufficient evidence for a Board of Examiners to reach a decision and this may impact on continuing and graduating students.

Lucy Evans, Deputy Secretary, Students and Convener of the Academic Contingency Group (ACG), introduced the item. Ms Evans noted that ACG are responsible for monitoring periods of disruption. The Group agree that the upcoming period of industrial action is significant and recommend that APRC approve a range of temporary variations to mitigate against these. Ms Evans reinforced that the temporary variations would be exceptional measures and applied only to courses impacted by industrial action and where Boards have exhausted all other options available to them.

The Committee noted that guidance for staff would be updated by Academic Services, shared with the ACG and circulated to Schools and Colleges by the end of the week. Members were invited to communicate with colleagues locally on the decisions made by APRC ahead of guidance being circulated.

APRC considered the proposed variations outlined in the paper in turn.

The Committee agree that significant disruption has occurred and the Committee approved the continued activation of **Taught Assessment Regulation 70**.

APRC considered the proposed variation to **Taught Assessment Regulation 35: Common Marking Scheme**. The following points were made:

- The award of pass/fail would be applied at course level, rather than to individual students.
- The variation would allow the award of pass/fail in all courses, including those at Honours level.
- Student Systems have confirmed that awarding pass/fail and numeric grades within the same cohort is not easily achieved in APT.
- Students may prefer a pass/fail grade over receiving an unreliable numeric mark, or a need to take further assessment.
- School Boards of Studies may be able to provide Boards of Examiners with guidance on the award of pass/fail grades in courses which normally return a numeric mark. A concern was raised regarding appropriate information being available to Boards of Studies to take a decisions and the rapid decision making required from Boards of Studies ahead of a Board of Examiners meeting.

The Committee considered the scenario where a numeric grade becomes available after a Board of Examiners has reached a decision on a degree classification. The Committee noted that there is no minimum credit requirement on which to base a classification decision.

The Committee agreed that should a Board of Examiners be satisfied that it has sufficient information to reach a classification decision then any further information that becomes available will not detrimentally impact on the outcome awarded..

APRC approved the temporary variation to Taught Assessment Regulation 35, with the stipulation that Schools can use their Board of Studies prior to Board of Examiners meeting to seek guidance on the use of Pass/ Fail courses.

The Committee strongly indicated a wish that the guidance encourage the involvement in Boards of Studies in this decision.

APRC considered the proposed variation to **Taught Assessment Regulation 39: Boards of Examiners**. The following points were made:

- A concern was raised regarding the confidential nature of decisions taken by Boards where there is a smaller proportion of members. It was confirmed that extracts of Board minutes provide decisions relating to individual students and the minutes of and attendance at a Board are not publically available.
- A Board of Examiners must be competent to be allowed to take place, the existing regulations provide detail for ensuring a Board is competent, however both the Convener of the Board and the Head of School can be consulted on a Board's competency.
- There is no defined number of members of a Board of Examiners. A concern was raised by a member with regard to quorum being reduced to two members. It was suggested that the quorum should be based on a percentage of the usual membership of the Board. However, due to the different approach taken to Board membership across the University, it was agreed that this alternative was not an appropriate mitigation.
- Students are less concerned by numbers proportions of Board members for quorum and would prefer that decisions be taken in a timely manner to allow their course, progression or award decisions to be issued.
- The participation of External Examiners in Boards of Examiner processes was discussed and it was noted that External Examiner input is useful where possible. The Committee noted that under existing regulations External Examiner participation does not require attendance at a live Board meeting.
- A concern was raised regarding the complexity of decisions and the potential pressure on Boards of Examiners to reach a decision in challenging circumstances. It was noted in response that Boards take a mechanical approach to reaching many decisions. If a Board member has concerns regarding the competency of a Board, or believes that undue pressure is being placed on a Board to reach decisions, then these should be raised via the appropriate channels, which will be outlined in the guidance.

APRC approved a temporary variation to Taught Assessment Regulation 39 to allow a Board to take place with a minimum of two internal examiners and removed the requirement for participation by an External Examiner.

The Committee agreed that the guidance must address the following concerns raised:

- Escalation of concerns by internal examiners regarding the competency of the Board of Examiners.
- Where there is no external examiner is participating in the Board, the College office should be notified and they will provide support to arrange a member of senior academic staff to provide oversight of, and participation in, the Board processes. Where a course had not been reviewed by an External Examiner the previous time it was run, additional consideration by APRC may be required.

APRC considered the proposal to activate **Taught Assessment Regulation 71: Significant disruption: where only partial results are available to Boards**. The following points were made:

- Clarity should be provided to Boards on how to apply TAR 71.9 to ensure that no double counting or mitigation on a course takes place. Course Boards should flag to Progression or Award Boards where a course is impacted by industrial action, but where no action was available to the Course Board.

The Committee agreed to activate Taught Assessment Regulation 71: Significant disruption: where only partial results are available to Boards.

APRC confirmed that where a Board is able to reach a decision for progression or award under existing regulations, then the normal regulations will be applied. Specifically where a students' profile is unaffected by industrial action, or any impact has been addressed at the course level, their progression or award decision should be made against normal regulations.

APRC considered the proposed variation to **Taught Assessment Regulation 51: Pre-Honours progression**. The following points were made:

- There may be some programmes which do not have professional accreditation requirements, but which have additional requirements to for recognition by professional bodies.

APRC approved the following variation to Taught Assessment Regulation 51: Pre-Honours progression:

- **Taught Assessment Regulation 51** to include provision for Boards of Examiners to award up to 40 credits on aggregate for courses affected by industrial action for pre-Honours students providing the students has an average of 40% over the courses with an available numeric grade.

*If the student has achieved PASS marks in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more in the available credits with a numeric grade, then they **can** be awarded credits on aggregate **for the courses affected by industrial action**. Students must also satisfy specific requirements for externally accredited degree programmes (including PRSB), as typically published in the programme handbook.*

The Committee stipulated the following criteria must be reflected in guidance:

- The expectation is that credit on aggregate will be awarded for courses where both the following criteria are met:
 - The course has been affected by industrial action.
 - The Board of Examiners has established that a pass grade cannot be awarded.
- Where a course does not meet the criteria specified above, then a Board should continue to follow its usual processes for confirming course marks. This may include awarding a resit in circumstances where it would normally award a resit assessment.
- The award of credits on aggregate is not likely to be applied to core courses or where external accreditation requirements require specific outcomes to be achieved (i.e. courses which must be taken and passed). However, Boards of Examiners responsible for making progression decisions may also award credit on aggregate for such courses at their discretion.
- Where the Board has insufficient information to apply the above variation, then the progression decision should be deferred.

APRC considered the proposed variation to **Taught Assessment Regulation 52: Honours progression**. The following points were made:

- External accreditation requirements will dictate whether a temporary variation to regulations can be applied. Schools should consult with accrediting bodies ahead of applying a temporary variation to regulations.
- A concern was raised regarding the increase in the credits on aggregate available and the potential impact on preparing students for later years of their programme, particularly where core courses are awarded on aggregate. It was confirmed that Boards of Examiners retain discretion to apply the temporary variations and a Board may determine that a variation cannot be applied. The additional 20 credits on aggregate available under the temporary variation can only be applied to courses impacted by industrial action.
- It was noted that student expectations should be managed where a Board is unlikely to be able to apply the temporary variations. For example, where a course has an elevated hurdle attached.
- Boards of Examiners are required to provide a rationale where they decide not to award the full credits on aggregate as provided for under the temporary variation.
- Advice to Boards on handling the profile of students undertaking a Junior Year Abroad would be provided in the guidance.
- A concern was raised regarding the potential for the missing information to not become available at a future point. It was noted that the Committee can only consider the circumstances as they currently stand.

APRC approved the following temporary variation to TAR 52:

- **Taught Assessment Regulation 52** to reduce the credits which students must pass, relax the requirement for an overall average of 40% or more across 120 credits, and the requirement to satisfy degree specific criteria, with the exception of professional qualifying or PRSB programmes. The revised Regulation is as follows:

- (a) pass at least ~~60~~ **80** credits at SCQF level 9 or above in junior honours and level 10 or above in senior honours for undergraduate Masters degrees; and
- (b) have an overall average of 40% or more ~~for the 120 credits in the available credits which return a numeric grade of study~~ taken in the relevant honours year; and
- (c) ~~must satisfy any other specific requirements for the degree programme, as published in the programme handbook.~~
- (c) *must satisfy any other specific requirements for externally accredited degree programmes only (including PRSB), typically as published in the programme handbook.*

If the student has achieved PASS marks in at least ~~60~~ **80** credits and has an overall average of 40% or more ~~over the full 120 credits in the available credits which return a numeric grade~~ then they may be awarded *up to 60* credits on aggregate. *Only a maximum of 40 of those credits can be awarded for failed courses NOT flagged as adversely affected by industrial action.*

The Committee stipulated the following criteria must be reflected in guidance:

- Where a student meets the criteria outlined above and the Board of Examiners decides **NOT** to award the full 60 credits on aggregate, then the Board must provide a clear rationale for its decision in the minutes of the relevant Board of Examiners meeting.
- In all cases, where a Progression Board has a full profile of marks available to reach a decision in line with the Taught Assessment Regulations, then the Board will consider a student's progression under normal regulations. The temporary variation is an exceptional measure which Boards should only consider when they have exhausted all other options.
- Where the Board has insufficient information to apply the above variation, then the progression decision should be deferred.

APRC considered the proposed variation to **Taught Assessment Regulation 56: Postgraduate Taught progression**. The following points were made:

- The Committee agreed that when determining a student's eligibility for the final award, the decision to allow a student to progress to the dissertation component represents a decision that their performance in the taught component is satisfactory for the award of the degree.
- The Committee agreed that no change to the provision of credit on aggregate is required for Postgraduate Taught students.
- The Committee noted that where it is not possible for a student to be awarded a progression decision, for example, due to missing information or a Board of Examiners being unable to meet, then the progression decision should be deferred and the student provisionally permitted to commence their dissertation. The Board will revisit the progression decision as soon as it has sufficient information to reach a decision in line with Taught Assessment Regulation 64.
- Schools should take care in communicating permission to provisionally commence the dissertation to students and highlight the possibility that a Board may determine that a student is not eligible to progress to the dissertation once the Board has sufficient information to reach a progression decision.

APRC approved the following temporary variation to Taught Assessment Regulation 56: Postgraduate Taught progression:

- **Taught Assessment Regulation 56: Postgraduate assessment progression:** temporarily vary the requirement to attain an average of at least 50% for the 120 credits of study examined at the point of decision to account for the volume of disruption which has the potential to lead to a high level of course results being unavailable for Boards to reach decisions under the existing regulations.

For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project or dissertation component, students must pass the assessment requirements of the taught stage at an appropriate level at the first attempt before progression to the dissertation. In order to progress to the masters dissertation students must:

(a) pass at least 80 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits; and

~~(b) attain an average of at least 50% for the 120 credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression; and~~

~~(c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the masters degree programme, that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.~~

(c) must satisfy any other specific requirements for externally accredited degree programmes only (including PRSB), typically as published in the programme handbook.

When all the marks for the taught components of the programme (120 credits) are available, if the student has achieved PASS marks in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits *or in the available credits which return a numeric grade where courses are affected by industrial action*, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses.

For programmes where the taught and project or dissertation components are taken in parallel, or where there are not identifiable taught and research project or dissertation components, the requirements for progression are determined at programme level, stated in the Programme Handbook.

The Committee stipulated the following criteria must be reflected in guidance:

- Where a Board determines that even after applying the above variation, it still has insufficient information to reach a progression decision, then the progression decision should be deferred and the student permitted to commence their dissertation. The Board will revisit the progression decision as soon as it has sufficient information to reach a decision in line with Taught Assessment Regulation 64.
- The decision to allow a student to progress to the dissertation component represents a decision that their performance in the taught component is satisfactory for the award of the degree.
- When undertaking the calculation of a student's final classification, the calculation will be undertaken using a minimum of 80 taught credits.

APRC considered the proposed variation to **Taught Assessment Regulation 53: Award of undergraduate Ordinary and General degrees.**

APRC approved the following variation to Taught Assessment Regulation 53:

- **Taught Assessment Regulation 53: Award of undergraduate Ordinary and General degrees:**
Where a student has missing or unreliable marks due to industrial action, if the student has achieved PASS marks in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the available credits, then they can be awarded credits on aggregate for the courses.

The Committee stipulated the following criteria must be reflected in guidance:

- The expectation is that credit on aggregate can be awarded for courses where the Board of Examiners has established that a pass grade cannot be awarded.
- Where the Board has insufficient information to apply the above variation, then the award decision should be deferred.

APRC considered the proposed variation to **Taught Assessment Regulation 54: Undergraduate honours degree award**

- External accreditation requirements will dictate whether a temporary variation to regulations can be applied. Schools should consult with accrediting bodies ahead of applying a temporary variation to regulations.
- The award of additional credit on aggregate to graduating students was discussed and the potential impact on preparing students for further study. It was confirmed that Boards of Examiners retain discretion to apply the temporary variations and a Board may determine that a variation cannot be applied. The additional 20 credits on aggregate available under the temporary variation can only be applied to courses impacted by industrial action.
- Students are eager to see their hard work reflected in the award of their final degree. Schools should give consideration to the sequencing of communications with students who may be eligible for the award of credit on aggregate. Some students may prefer to wait for information to become available for all grades to be included in their final degree award.
- The Board of Examiners are expected to reconvene once missing information becomes available. Where a Board has previously determined that it had sufficient information to reach an award decision, then any further information that becomes available will not detrimentally impact on the classification awarded. A degree classification should be revised if the new information results in a higher classification than that previously awarded.
- There may be circumstances where a Board determines that there is insufficient information for a Board to reach an award decision. Careful, sensitive and timely communication with the student is required. The Academic Contingency Group will be undertaking further discussions regarding this.

APRC approved the following variation to Taught Assessment Regulation 54:

- **Taught Assessment Regulation 54: Undergraduate honours degree award:** a temporary variation to the requirement to attain an average of at least 40% for the 120 credits of study.

The Board of Examiners has the responsibility to decide which students can be awarded a classified honours degree. To graduate students must:

- (a) pass at least ~~60 80~~ credits at SCQF level 10 or above in their final honours year; and
- (b) have an overall average of 40% or more for *courses which return a numerical mark the 120 credits* of final honours; and
- (c) ~~must satisfy any other specific requirements for the degree programme.~~
(c) must satisfy any other specific requirements for externally accredited degree programmes only (including PRSB), typically as published in the programme handbook.

If the student has achieved PASS marks in at least ~~60 80~~ credits and has an overall average of 40% or more ~~over the full 120 credits in the available credits which return a numeric grade~~ then they may be awarded *up to 60 credits on aggregate. Only a maximum of 40 of those credits can be awarded for failed courses NOT flagged as adversely affected by industrial action.*

The Committee stipulated the following criteria must be reflected in guidance:

- Where a student meets the criteria outlined above and the Board of Examiners decides **NOT** to award the full 60 credits on aggregate, then the Board must provide a clear rationale for its decision in the minutes of the relevant Board of Examiners meeting.
- In all cases, where a Board has a full profile of marks available to reach a decision in line with the Taught Assessment Regulations, then the Board will consider a student's award under normal regulations. The temporary variation is an exceptional measure which Boards should only consider when they have exhausted all other options.
- Where the Board has insufficient information to apply the above variation, then the progression decision should be deferred.

The Convener noted that this concluded the consideration of temporary variations and invited comments from the Committee.

There is discomfort among some Senate members with the temporary variations originally proposed. It was requested that a revised draft be circulated to Senate for comment ahead of a decision being taken by full Senate on 24 May.

It was noted in response that APRC are responsible for the activation of Taught Assessment Regulations 70 and 71. The Committee needs to act on the basis of its existing powers as outlined in the Regulations.

The Convener noted that no further concessions relating to industrial action had been received since the 23 March meeting, however they would continue to handle any concessions received in the coming period in line with the approach agreed in January and March 2023.

The next meeting of APRC would be held on 25 May.

Action: The Convener of APRC would update the Convener of Senate on the actions taken by APRC to be outlined at Senate on 24 May.

Action: Academic Services to prepare guidance on the approved temporary variations and issue this to Schools as soon as practicable and by the end of the week.

Matters Arising update to APRC on review of ESC

The Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee meeting on 23 March 2023, received a paper: **Update from the Coursework Extension and Special Circumstances Task Group & ESC Review.**

The paper outlined for the Committee the findings and positions reached by the Coursework Extension and Special Circumstances Task Group on the policy, a summary of the findings of the ESC Reviews: discussions with Schools 2022/23 and of the service in 2022.

As noted by colleagues at the meeting and reflected in the position outlined in the paper, the challenge of making changes to improve the policy, guidance and application of ESC, is considerable. In particular, the difficulty in reaching a clear consensus on a number of matters relating to the policy and therefore they remain unresolved.

For us to have the best chance of achieving improvements, the Deputy Secretary, Students, agreed to work with the VP Students, plus engagement with Colleges and School to bring together all the work so far and provide a final report for review and approval, with a projected completion in May 2023.

We have been progressing this work with the intention of achieving a clear purpose, simplification and a better experience for our students. This has meant seeking a position that will work for the majority of our students, not every eventuality. This will result in a way forward that will not have universal agreement but we get us to a position that is an improvement in clarify of purpose and closer to sector benchmarks.

Initial discussions have taken place and we have undertaken sector benchmarking to inform a revised approach. An initial draft has been completed. This will now be discussed with Heads of Schools and EUSA representatives in the coming weeks.

We have not been able to meet the May deadline due to prioritisation of other urgent matters. This is a significant piece of work and requires senior engagement before we can provide a final recommendation to APRC. We aim to provide this in the coming weeks through a dedicated meeting.

As presented at the last APRC, this does not delay the already communicated improvements underway to systems and communications.

Lucy Evans, Deputy Secretary, Students

May 2023

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**25 May 2023****Taught Assessment Regulations 2023/24****Description of paper**

1. Draft Taught Assessment Regulations 2023/24 (proposed changes in Appendix 1). The key changes are included under “Discussion” below.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For discussion and approval.

Background and context

3. Academic Services conduct an annual review of the assessment regulations to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Colleges are asked to provide comments regarding any regulations which require necessary amendment or clarification and Academic Services then draft amendments.

Discussion

4. APRC is invited to discuss the draft Taught Assessment Regulations for academic year 2023/24. Following this meeting, Academic Services will amend the draft regulations to take account of any Committee comments. The current regulations are available at:

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

5. Changes to the regulations are attached as Appendix 1.
6. Key changes to the regulations for 2023/24 are as follows:

Regulation**What has changed**

Throughout	Hyperlinks updated as necessary.
Throughout	Removed references to Personal Tutor in line with new student support model.
Throughout	Replaced Tier 4 with “Student visa” in line with revised language.
Throughout	References to the Student Disability Service (SDS) have been updated to refer to the Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS).

27 Resit assessment	NEW Addition of a resit entitlement for Non-Graduating students
30.4 Academic Misconduct 30.5 onward: renumbered to reflect the addition of a regulation.	NEW Addition of a regulation reminding students to exercise caution when using Generative AI tools, and stating that programme and/or course handbooks will provide additional guidance in cases where AI tools might form part of an assessment task.
37.2 Final Marks 37.3 onward: renumbered to reflect the addition of a regulation.	NEW Addition of a regulation confirming that the Board of Examiners are required to apply any penalty determined by the College Academic Misconduct Officer. If a student has valid Special Circumstances, the Board will follow Regulation 43 of the Taught Assessment Regulations.
46.6 Release of marks	Amended to state that awards with Distinction in Veterinary Medicine will not be awarded to students admitted from 2023/24 onwards.
55.2 (c) Undergraduate degree classification	NEW Addition of LLB in Global Law to state that the classification for these students is based solely on the final honours year
55.3 Undergraduate degree classification	Removed reference to MChem and MChemPhy degrees from the regulation.
56.1(c) Postgraduate assessment progression	Replaced 'examination' with 'assessment'
56.6 Postgraduate assessment progression	NEW Amended to state that pass/fail courses are excluded from the calculation given under 56(b).
67 Unsatisfactory academic progress	Added clarification that students who do not meet the criteria for award on their programme may be excluded.

	Note: this amendment was stated in the key changes for 2022/23, however not reflected in the published regulation.
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7. The Committee are asked to specifically consider the proposed amendment to Taught Assessment Regulation 27 and the addition of a resit entitlement for non-graduating students. In considering this, the Committee are asked to take account of the possibility a resit assessment may need to be prepared in courses where resit assessments are not routinely prepared, for example at Honours level.
8. If the amendment to Taught Assessment Regulation 27 is supported, the Glossary of Terms will be updated to include the definitions for visiting and non-graduating students as provided in the [Visiting and Non-Graduating Student Policy and Procedure](#).
9. The Committee are asked to specifically consider the proposed amendment to Taught Assessment Regulation 30.4 and confirm whether this also requires an amendment to the Programme and Course Handbooks Policy to provide specific instruction to Schools to provide guidance in handbooks where AI tools form part of an assessment task.
10. The amendment to Taught Assessment Regulation 37.2 is proposed because APRC highlighted that clarification of this issue may be required. The amendment to the regulation takes the position already established in the Academic Misconduct Procedures.
11. The amendment to Taught Assessment Regulation 56.6 has been suggested on the basis that the current wording may mean that a Fail in a Pass/Fail course has a disproportionately significant impact on the calculation of the average mark for progression.
12. The Glossary of Terms provided on page 2 of the Regulations will be updated with the correct link once available.

Resource implications

13. The proposed amendment to Taught Assessment Regulation 27 may have resource implications as outlined in paragraph 7.

Risk management

14. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

Equality & diversity

15. Academic Services has not identified any equality and diversity implications associated with the proposed amendments.

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

16. Academic Services will communicate approved regulations in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies. Academic Services will also cover any changes to regulations in Boards of Examiners briefings and other relevant briefing events for staff in Schools and Colleges.

Author

Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer
Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Governance
and Regulatory Framework Team,
Academic Services

Presenters

Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Governance
and Regulatory Framework Team,
Academic Services

Freedom of Information

The paper is open.

Taught Assessment Regulations

Academic Year ~~2023~~/24



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Purpose of Policy

The assessment regulations set minimum requirements and standards for students and staff, expressing in practical form the academic goals and policies of the University.

Overview

These regulations:

- (i) replace the previous undergraduate and taught postgraduate assessment regulations;
- (ii) set out the rules which must be followed in taught student assessment; and
- (iii) provide links to other sources or guidance and related regulations.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

These regulations are University-wide. They apply to assessment of **all** taught full-time and part-time students, studying degrees, diplomas and certificates at Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) levels 7 – 12 which are awarded for credit at the University of Edinburgh. They apply to undergraduates, taught postgraduates and research postgraduates studying taught components. The regulations apply to undergraduate and taught postgraduate assessment for courses assessed in the current academic year.

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Document control

Dates	Approved: 25 6.05.202 32	Starts: 01 19.0 8 9.2 32	Equality impact assessment:	Amendments:	Next Review: 2023/ 24 2/ 23
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Approving authority

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

Consultation undertaken

Assessment Regulations Working Group, Colleges, Edinburgh University Students' Association, APRC, [Student Disability Service](#) [Disability and Learning Support Service \(DLSS\)](#), HR, College Academic Misconduct Officers, Records Management, Distance Learning and Student Systems.

Section responsible for policy maintenance & review

Academic Services

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

Student Appeal Regulations, [Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities](#), Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study, Policies for Boards of Examiners and Progression Boards, Examination Hall Regulations, External Examiner for Taught Programmes Policy, Special Circumstances Policy, [DRPS Glossary of Terms](#), [DRPS Glossary of Terms](#)
Student Systems guidance for staff:
www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/staff/

UK Quality Code

Consistent with guiding principles outlined in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education November 2018 (assessment).

Policies superseded by this policy

Previous versions of the taught assessment regulations

Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.

Assessment regulations, examination, examiners, Board of Examiners,



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Additional guidance

This document should be read in conjunction with University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study. These are available via: www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

The regulations apply to all forms of summative assessment, including examination, take home examination, coursework, electronic and online assessment, oral assessment and peer and self-assessment.

The regulations must be applied, unless a concession has been awarded by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) on the basis of a case proposed by a College. The boxed "Application of the regulation" below must also be applied, unless the College has approved an exemption on the basis of a case proposed by a School. These concessions and exemptions are recorded by APRC and Colleges as appropriate.

The regulations operate in accordance with legislation and University policies on Equality and Diversity: www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/about/legislation

Members of staff who need additional guidance may consult their Head of College or their nominee, their College Office, Academic Services, or Student Administration. Student Administration oversees the procedure relating to the provision of question papers, registration for degree examinations, the receipt and notification of results, examination timetabling and the provision of examination accommodation.

Where reference is made to 'the relevant Dean' this should be taken as being the Dean with responsibility for undergraduate or postgraduate matters, depending on the circumstances. Where reference is made to 'the Head of College' or 'Head of School' this may also in some cases be a designated representative of that individual.

Definitions of key terms can be found in the glossary of terms:
<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/22-23/GlossaryofTerms2022-23.pdf>

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Section A. Roles and Responsibilities

Regulation 1 Board of Examiners: responsibility for courses and programmes

Every course and degree programme is the responsibility of a Board of Examiners.

Application of the regulation

- 1.1 Schools assign each course and degree programme to a Board of Examiners. This is done via a Board of Studies or equivalent committee.
- 1.2 Guidance on Boards of Examiners is available:
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners
- 1.3 In the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, and the College of Science and Engineering, Schools are responsible for the award of their General/Ordinary Degrees.

Regulation 2 Examiners: appointment

Examiners are appointed to the Board of Examiners by the relevant College. There are internal examiners, who are staff of the University nominated by the relevant Head of School, and External Examiners.

Application of the regulation

- 2.1 Policy, principle and operational guidance is available for Boards of Examiners:
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners
- 2.2 The list of examiners making up each Board is certified by the Head of the College, or their nominee, and is definitive unless an appeal to the relevant College committee is made by an interested party challenging the composition of the Board.
- 2.3 Heads of Schools inform the College Office of the names of those internal and External Examiners who it is proposed will constitute the Board. For the December diet of examinations this is by 1 November and for later diets it is by 15 January. Names are made available by the College Office on request. Where there is more than one diet of examination in an academic year the Board need not comprise the same examiners for each diet. Any objection to the proposed examiners must be made to the Head of College or their nominee in good time before the relevant exam diet. Complete final lists of examiners are maintained by the relevant College Office and are available for inspection by members of staff.



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- 2.4 Internal examiners are teaching and/or honorary staff of the University who teach SCQF level 7 to 12 courses which are awarded for credit and are listed in the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study:
www.drps.ed.ac.uk/index.php
- 2.5 Honorary staff in this context include:
Teachers and senior staff from partner schools to the Moray House School of Education and Sport;
Academic staff from research pooling partners who are appointed as an internal examiner by APRC on the basis of a recommendation from the relevant College; and NHS staff.
- 2.6 External examiners are appointed by Colleges. Their roles, powers and responsibilities are set out in the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf

Regulation 3 Markers: appointment

The Head of School has responsibility for appointing markers who contribute to the marking process. Markers are not members of the Board of Examiners.

Application of the regulation

- 3.1 Markers can be people who are not covered in taught assessment regulation 2. They can also be members of staff who have a very limited input to the teaching of a course or programme who are not members of the Board of Examiners. Examples of markers are graduate tutors marking tutorial, laboratory or examination work, or members of professions or guest speakers who may contribute to student assessment.
- 3.2 Information regarding the role of Conveners of Boards of Examiners is available in the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf

Regulation 4 Convener of the Board of Examiners: appointment

The Head of School that owns the programme or course has responsibility for appointing the Convener of the Board of Examiners, the Convener of the Progression Board and the Convener of the Special Circumstances Committee.



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Application of the regulation

- 4.1 The Head of School informs the College Office about the appointment of the Convener by the beginning of the relevant Semester for the Board of Examiners responsible for courses assessed in each Semester, and by the beginning of Semester 2 for the Board responsible for programme decisions for each programme.
- 4.2 For combined (formerly joint) degrees the “owning” Head of School liaises with other relevant Heads of School. In the case of any disagreement on the appointment of a Convener of a combined Board of Examiners, the Convener is nominated by the relevant Heads of College or their nominee.
- 4.3 Programme Directors, Cohort Leads and Course Organisers are not the Convener of the Board of Examiners for their programmes or courses. This is to ensure appropriate separation of roles. If the Convener is also a Course Organiser, formal chairing of the Board of Examiners is delegated to another member of the Board for discussion of that course.
- 4.4 Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy and Special Circumstances Policy:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ug_progression_boards.pdf
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf

Regulation 5 Number of External Examiners

At least one External Examiner is appointed for all undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses and programmes.

Application of the regulation

- 5.1 The number of External Examiners is determined by the volume and diversity of the academic work contributing to the course or programme or the award of the degree. More than one External Examiner may be needed where there are a large number of students, the course or programme covers a wide range of studies and/or a large volume of academic work contributing to the course or programme.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf
- 5.2 It is the responsibility of the Head of the College or relevant College Committee to ensure that all elements which contribute to the award of a degree from the University are represented by the appropriate number of External Examiners.



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Regulation 6 External Examiners: responsibilities

External Examiners must be competent and have the requisite experience to examine the course or programme at the level at which it is taught. They must meet the requirements, roles and responsibilities that are set out in the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy:

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

Application of the regulation

- 6.1 The University's External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy outlines the purposes and functions of External Examiners; their selection, qualification, appointment and period of service; their participation in assessment and examination procedures; and their discussion of course structure, assessment process and degree schemes.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf
- 6.2 External Examiners need to be given sufficient information and samples of different forms of assessments as evidence on which to base their advice.
- 6.3 The Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes sets out the responsibilities of Conveners of Boards of Examiners in ensuring External Examiners' contributions to the assessment process. For example, as part of the formal proceedings of the Board, External Examiners are invited to comment on the structure, content, teaching and examinations of the courses they examine.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf

Regulation 7 Examiners and markers: responsibilities

Examiners and markers need to meet the responsibilities set out in the assessment and degree regulations and comply with quality and standards requirements.

www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

Application of the regulation

- 7.1 The Convener of the Board of Examiners will specify responsibilities and requirements to examiners and markers (see taught assessment regulation 6). In particular, examiners and markers need to meet deadlines, attend relevant meetings and participate in standard-setting discussions when required.



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Regulation 8 Convener of the Board of Examiners: responsibilities

The Convener of the Board of Examiners has responsibility for the assessment process for courses and programmes covered by the Board and for ensuring that the Board operates within university regulations.

Application of the regulation

- 8.1 The responsibilities of the Convener of the Board of Examiners are outlined in the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf
- These include:
- (a) approving the content of examination papers, taking account of the comments of External Examiners;
 - (b) the security of and arrangements for setting papers and assessments, including the robustness of and resources for electronic assessment; examining and marking assessed work; and processing and storing marks and grades;
 - (c) the quality and standards of marking;
 - (d) ensuring all examiners and markers are aware of their responsibilities;
 - (e) effective operation of the meeting of the Board and the Special Circumstances Committee;
 - (f) participation of the External Examiners;
 - (g) accurate recording, minuting and reporting of decisions of the Board; and
 - (h) meeting relevant deadlines.
- 8.2 Conveners must act in accordance with these Taught Assessment Regulations; the Degree Regulations and Programme of Study; and the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy.
www.drps.ed.ac.uk/
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf
- 8.3 In practice, Conveners may delegate operation of some responsibilities to Course Organisers, Programme Directors and School Teaching Organisations. They are supported by the Regulations Expert. See taught assessment regulation 9.
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners
- 8.4 Definitions of some of the main terms used in assessment are given in the Glossary of Terms:
www.drps.ed.ac.uk/21-22/GlossaryofTerms.pdf



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Regulation 9 Regulations Experts on Board of Examiners: responsibilities

Schools appoint one or more Regulations Expert whose remit is to be an immediate source of knowledge and advice about the relevant university regulations and guidance and their academic application.

Application of the regulation

- 9.1 The responsibilities of the Regulations Expert are outlined in the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf
- 9.2 A Regulations Expert either attends or is available to all meetings of the Board of Examiners and ensures that the relevant regulations and guidance are available for reference at all meetings.
- 9.3 The Regulations Expert does not need to be a member of the Board of Examiners. Schools may appoint a Regulations Expert to operate across the School or across a number of Boards of Examiners.

Regulation 10 Avoiding potential conflicts of interest

No member of University of Edinburgh staff, internal examiner, External Examiner, or marker shall be involved in any assessment or examination in which they have a personal interest, for example a current or previous personal, family or legal relationship with a student being assessed.

Application of the regulation

- 10.1 If in doubt as to whether there is a potential conflict of interest, the Convener of the Board of Examiners and the Head of School will be consulted. The Head of School may seek advice from the Head of College.
- 10.2 The External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy is relevant:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf
- 10.3 The University's Policy on Conflict of Interest is also relevant:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/conflict_of_interest_golden_copy_oct_2022.pdf



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Section B. Conduct of Assessment

Regulation 11 Principles of Assessment

The University has [Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities](#) which guide the principles of assessment at the University.

Regulation 12 Assessment requirements

Course information in the degree programme tables states the learning outcomes, assessment practices and assessment requirements.

Application of the regulation

12.1 The degree programme tables are available online: www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

Regulation 13 Passing assessment

Passing a course or degree programme requires attainment of the learning outcomes and may require a specified level of performance or attendance in some or all components.

Application of the regulation

- 13.1 The course information that is linked to degree programme tables describe the learning outcomes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated in assessment. www.drps.ed.ac.uk/
- 13.2 Some degrees have professional or statutory body requirements which are reflected in the learning outcomes and their assessment. Students are informed about these in the statement of assessment (see taught assessment regulation 14).
- 13.3 Boards of Studies and the relevant College Committee approve the assessment and satisfactory performance requirements for courses and degree programmes before their delivery. Individual course elements and options available to students can change and there are annual changes to degree programme tables and course availability. However, the approval of the relevant College Committee must be obtained if it is exceptionally necessary to change the weighting of assessment of a course after students have entered it; or to change progression, classification or award requirements for a programme after students have entered their honours years or a postgraduate programme.
- (a) Before approval can be given, written evidence of the results of consultation with the students must be submitted. Every student affected needs to be informed of the changes and given the opportunity to



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comment. The expectation is that the College will not approve changes in the face of significant student objections, unless changes are compelled by external factors.

- (b) The relevant external examiners must also be informed and consulted.
- (c) Students may be given alternative course options, where this is possible. The expectation is that course assessment requirements will not change after students are registered on it.

Regulation 14 Statement of assessment

Students must be given a clear statement of how and when each of their courses and programmes is to be assessed. The required information needs to be issued to students at the relevant point, which may be: at the start of each course; on entry into the honours component of a degree programme; or, at the start of a postgraduate programme.

Application of the regulation

14.1 The statement must include:

- (a) how each piece of assessed work contributes to the final assessment, progression decision or classification, outlining relevant weightings;
- (b) the arrangements for the moderation of the assessed work;
- (c) any methods that the Board of Examiners uses for standard setting;
- (d) assessment deadlines and any penalties for late submission;
- (e) the duration and format of examinations and in which diet they will be held;
- (f) how work will be taken into account by a resit Board of Examiners and the number of permitted resits;
- (g) the standards and criteria for entry into honours or for progression to Masters dissertation, where relevant.

14.2 The required information need not be provided in a single assessment statement, but is included in course or programme handbooks, or provided by the School in another format, along with other relevant information about assessment, feedback, good academic practice and the avoidance of plagiarism.

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct

www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/conduct/academic-misconduct/plagiarism

Regulation 15 Provision of formative feedback

The University has [Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities](#), which guide practice in feedback. The provision of formative feedback is guided by these principles.



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Regulation 16 Feedback deadlines

The University has [Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities](#), which guide practice in feedback. Feedback deadlines are guided by these principles.

Regulation 17 Assessment deadlines: student responsibilities

It is a student's responsibility to ascertain and meet their assessment deadlines, including examination times and locations.

Application of the regulation

- 17.1 The examination timetable is based on students' course choices. To avoid examination timetabling clashes, it is students' responsibility to ensure that their record of courses is accurate by the end of week 3 of each semester.
- 17.2 Students who have a clash in their examination timetable need to contact the Examination Office, Student Administration, through their ~~Personal Tutor or~~ Student Adviser or Student Support Team, as soon as possible to allow alternative arrangements to be put in place.
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration/exams/overview
- 17.3 As examinations may be scheduled at any time during the semester, it is students' responsibility to be available throughout the semester, including the whole of the revision period, examination diet and the resit diet, if the student has scheduled examinations. Examinations will not be scheduled during winter or spring vacations. Occasionally assessments may need to be rescheduled with very little notice. If special circumstances mean that a student is unavailable for the rescheduled assessment, Boards of Examiners may consider using an alternative method to assess the relevant learning outcomes.

Regulation 18 Selective assessment

The selective use of specific assessment methods to help a Board of Examiners reach a decision about an individual student, e.g. on a borderline, is not permitted, unless required to meet a learning adjustment.

Regulation 19 Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments will be made to assessments for disabled students.

Application of the regulation



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- 19.1 Reasonable adjustments must be determined in advance by the ~~Student Disability Service (SDS)~~ Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS). They are recorded in the student's Schedule of Adjustments by the ~~DLSSSDS~~, which communicates the Schedule of Adjustments to the student, the student's ~~Personal Tutor or~~ Student Adviser, the School's Co-ordinator of Adjustments, Student Administration (if examination adjustments are recommended) and other relevant areas.
- 19.2 The School's Co-ordinator of Adjustments (CoA) has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Schedule of Adjustments. The Co-ordinator of Adjustments will liaise with academic colleagues who are responsible for putting the adjustments in place in the School.
- 19.3 The Co-ordinator of Adjustments will liaise with the ~~DLSSSDS~~ should any adjustments require further discussion, clarification or alteration. If there are any amendments to the Schedule of Adjustments the ~~DLSSSDS~~ will communicate these and ensure that the student is informed.
- 19.4 The ~~DLSSSDS~~ provides examples of reasonable adjustments, deadlines and support:
www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service/students/support-we-provide
- 19.5 Reasonable adjustments can be made for a variety of assessment methods, depending on the needs identified and recorded in the student's Schedule of Adjustments, e.g. assessed coursework, take-home examinations, online examinations, invigilated examinations. The ~~DLSSSDS~~ supports students in the preparation and review of their Schedule of Adjustments. It is a student's responsibility to ensure that their Schedule of Adjustments covers all types of assessment methods relevant to their courses. For example, if a student discovers that an aspect of their course is likely to have an impact on their support needs, they should contact the ~~DLSSSDS~~ as soon as possible in case any amendment is required to be made to their Schedule of Adjustments.
- 19.6 Arrangements can be made via the ~~DLSSSDS~~ for students with temporary injuries or impairments, e.g. broken arm or leg, on the submission of relevant medical information. Students should contact the ~~DLSSSDS~~ as soon as possible to allow the ~~DLSSSDS~~ to determine any relevant adjustments and support.

Regulation 20 Language of assessment: languages other than English or Gaelic

The English language is the usual medium of teaching and assessment at the University of Edinburgh. All work submitted for assessment must be written in the English language, with the following exceptions: dissertations may be submitted in Gaelic (see regulation 21); dissertations and other assessed work may be submitted in the language which is being studied where the relevant course or programme handbook specifies that this is allowable.



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Application of the regulation

- 20.1 Quotations may be given in the language in which they were written.
- 20.2 In very exceptional circumstances, a candidate may be granted permission to submit a dissertation written in a language other than English, where this is not specified by the relevant course or programme handbook. Approval will only be given in cases where the nature of the research is such that presentation of the research results in the language(s) of the materials under analysis confers significant intellectual advantage to the community of scholars who are expected to comprise the primary audience of the research. Approval to do so must be sought either at the time of admission to the University or no later than by the end of the first year of study, and will not normally be granted retrospectively. Approval must be given by the appropriate College Committee, which must be satisfied that there are sound academic reasons for the request, and that appropriate arrangements can be made for supervision and examination, including the availability of both internal and external examiners suitably qualified to read and examine the thesis or dissertation in the proposed language of submission.
- 20.3 Where such approval is given, in addition to the standard requirements, the dissertation should also include a substantial summary written in English, summarising the main arguments, and an abstract in English must also be produced. Where Examiners' reports are completed in a language other than English, these must be translated into English before submission to the Board of Examiners. Any costs associated with this should be borne by the relevant School.

Regulation 21 Language of assessment: Gaelic

Dissertations submitted for assessment and examination may be submitted in Gaelic.

Application of the regulation

- 21.1 The University of Edinburgh wishes to accord Gaelic equal respect with English under the terms of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.
- 21.2 Candidates who wish to submit a dissertation in Gaelic should seek approval to do so as early as possible. Approval must be given by the appropriate College Committee, which must be satisfied that appropriate arrangements can be made for supervision and examination, including the availability of both internal and external examiners suitably qualified to read and examine the dissertation.
- 21.3 Where such approval is given, in addition to the standard requirements, the dissertation should also include a summary (of approximately 1500 words) written in English, summarising the main arguments, and an abstract in English must also be produced. Where Examiners' reports are completed in Gaelic, these must be



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translated into English before submission to the Board of Examiners. Any costs associated with this should be borne by the relevant School.

Regulation 22 Availability of assessment examples

A representative sample of students' work for each summative assessment needs to be made available for the scrutiny and use of examiners, including External Examiners, where they are making final decisions regarding students' course results.

Application of the regulation

- 22.1 If use is made of assessment types which cannot be made available, this should be made explicit to the External Examiner in advance and included in the assessment statement to students.
- 22.2 The Convener of the Board of Examiners will consider with the External Examiner whether and how to present information on these assessments to the External and the Board of Examiners. It may be appropriate to record some forms of assessment for consultation by the Board, e.g. major pieces of performed work.

Regulation 23 Oral assessment

Oral assessments may only be used to assess all students on a course as part of the assessment of a specific component, such as a dissertation or practical skill.

A minimum of two examiners must be present if 50% or more of a course is assessed orally.

Application of the regulation

- 23.1 If oral performance is to be assessed the assessment statement (taught assessment regulation 13) must include information on how it is to be assessed.
- 23.2 Conveners of Boards of Examiners need to make available sufficient information about oral assessments to External Examiners and Boards of Examiners.
- 23.3 A Bachelor of Nursing with Honours student who fails an honours course, for which a pass is required for professional registration, will be required to resit the examination and/or to resubmit the coursework (see taught assessment regulation 27). If the student does not achieve a pass at resubmission, an oral examination will be scheduled. If the student fails to satisfy the examiners in the oral assessment, professional registration will not be possible and the student will not be awarded the degree of Bachelor of Nursing with Honours but may be eligible for another award.



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Regulation 24 Peer and self-assessment

Boards of Examiners may use summative student peer and self-assessment.

Application of the regulation

- 24.1 The Convener of the Board of Examiners has responsibility for ensuring the robustness of student peer and self-assessment. Where peer and self-assessment is used summatively, students need to receive appropriate support and guidance, which should pay specific attention to the avoidance of inappropriate discrimination.
- 24.2 External Examiners need to receive sufficient information about and samples of the assessments as evidence on which to base their decisions.
- 24.3 Resources and publications are available from the Institute for Academic Development: www.ed.ac.uk/iad

Regulation 25 Examination timetable

Students are only permitted to sit examinations at the times and in the venues that are detailed on the relevant examination timetable.

Application of the regulation

- 25.1 Examinations may be scheduled outside normal University teaching hours.
- 25.2 Students who believe that religious reasons or participation in elite-level sport prevent them from sitting an examination at the scheduled time or venue should contact their ~~Personal Tutor or~~ Student Adviser and Student Support Team. Their case is considered by the relevant Dean and Student Administration in consultation with the Convener of the Board of Examiners. Further information regarding flexibility which may be offered to students taking part in elite-level sport is provided in the Performance Sport Policy:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/performance_sport_policy.pdf
- 25.3 A student who is permitted to appear for examination at a time other than that prescribed may have to sit a specially prepared examination paper or alternative method of assessment.
- 25.4 If examinations are disrupted, for example due to adverse weather conditions, then Boards of Examiners may decide to use an alternative assessment method, rather than rescheduled examinations, to assess the learning outcomes.
- 25.5 Other than online assessment and assessment opportunities offered via Student Administration, students are not allowed to sit examinations away from Edinburgh.

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Regulation 26 Conduct of examinations

Examinations scheduled by Student Administration are conducted in an invigilated environment in accordance with Examination Hall Regulations, which are publicised to students annually.

Application of the regulation

- 26.1 Student Administration has responsibility for the effective operation of examinations in accordance with the Examination Hall Regulations.
www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/registry/exams/ExamHallRegs.pdf
- 26.2 All examinations which are in Student Administration's scheduled examination diet will be invigilated by authorised staff appointed by Student Administration. The Invigilator ensures compliance with the Taught Assessment Regulations in accordance with Invigilation Guidance.
www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/registry/exams/Invigil_guide.pdf
- 26.3 Examinations that contain practical, oral or performance elements are invigilated by members of academic staff and may be conducted jointly with an External Examiner.
- 26.4 Take-home examinations and online examinations are subject to the provisions of the Taught Assessment Regulations which are related to examinations but are not subject to the Examination Hall Regulations. Take-home and online examinations are not assessed coursework, and are therefore not subject to extensions, although additional time may be offered to individual students in line with a Schedule of Adjustments.

Regulation 27 Resit assessment

The number of assessment attempts students are entitled to for each course depends upon the type of programme the student is taking and the SCQF level of the course.

Honours undergraduate students are entitled to:

- a maximum of four assessment attempts for courses at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 7 and 8;
- one assessment attempt for courses at SCQF level 9 to 11 unless Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements apply, in which case a maximum of four assessment attempts are permitted.

Non-Honours undergraduate students (excluding Visiting Undergraduate Students) are entitled to:



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- a maximum of four assessment attempts for courses at SCQF level 7 to 11.

Visiting undergraduate students are entitled to:

- a maximum of two assessment attempts for courses at SCQF level 7 to 11.

Taught postgraduate students are entitled to:

- one assessment attempt for courses at SCQF level 9 to 12 unless specific Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements apply, in which case a maximum of four assessment attempts are permitted.

Non-Graduating Students are entitled to:

- a maximum of two assessment attempts for courses at SCQF level 7 to 11.

Application of the regulation

- 27.1 Boards of Examiners must publish the requirements for resits for those courses that they are responsible for. Boards must take the same approach to resits for all students on a particular course, except where a student's previous attempt is a null sit.
- 27.2 Boards of Examiners must set requirements at resit that are as demanding as those made of students at the first attempt.
- 27.3 Boards of Examiners will inform students who are required to undertake resit assessment of the format of their resit assessment. Resit methods need not be the same as those used to assess the learning outcomes at the first attempt, but all relevant learning outcomes must be assessed. Resit arrangements must give students a genuine opportunity to pass the course. Boards of Examiners choose between two options to achieve this:
- (a) Carry forward any component of assessment (coursework or examination) that has been passed already and require the student to retake the failed element;
 - (b) Set an assessment covering all learning outcomes for the course, and weight this as 100% of the course result.
- 27.4 Students are not allowed to resit a course or components of a course that they have passed, unless the relevant Board of Examiners has permitted this under Special Circumstances by granting a null sit for the attempt that the student has passed (see 27.9).



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- 27.5 The four assessment attempts are the initial assessment and a maximum of three further assessment opportunities, of full assessment, examination or coursework only basis, at the next available opportunities. There may be PSRB requirements which mean that fewer than four assessment attempts are permitted.
- 27.6 The first sitting and subsequent attempts must take place over no more than two academic sessions, unless the relevant College grants an exemption.
- 27.7 Non-attendance or non-submission is considered an assessment attempt.
- 27.8 Some Honours programmes require students to pass specified courses at the first attempt in the first or second year in order to progress to Junior Honours. Any such requirements will be specified in the Degree Programme Table or Programme Handbook for the relevant programme.
- 27.9 Where an assessment attempt has been affected by special circumstances, a Board of Examiners may declare this attempt a null sit. Null sits do not count towards the maximum number of permitted attempts. Where a student receives a lower mark in a subsequent assessment attempt than that achieved in the attempt declared as a null sit, they may be awarded the higher mark for the relevant assessment.
- 27.10 Re-assessment attempts are not generally permitted for courses at SQCF level 9 and above for Honours and taught postgraduate students since Honours and taught postgraduate programmes permit the award of credit on aggregate (see Taught Assessment Regulations 52, 54, 56, 57). Where resits are permitted for Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements, any classification decision must use the result obtained on the first attempt.
- 27.11 The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee decides whether a programme may offer resits which are required for Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements for courses at SCQF level 9 and above for Honours and taught postgraduate students. This decision is based on a case proposed by the relevant College.
- 27.12 Students who are subject to immigration control have restrictions on their entitlement to resit as a result of being in the UK on a Student visa. Students on a Student visa can only take a fourth assessment attempt where they have valid special circumstances (in line with the Special Circumstances Policy), and specific additional conditions are met (as outlined below).

If a student on a Student visa does seek a fourth assessment attempt, they should apply for this via the Special Circumstances process. Where the student has valid special circumstances, the relevant Board of Examiners will determine what action to take. Where the Board of Examiners decides to award the student a null sit for the affected assessment attempt, this will not count as one of the four assessment attempts; null sits for any previous attempts are also not counted towards the total



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permitted attempts. Where the Board does not award a null sit, but wishes to offer the student a fourth assessment attempt, they may only do so where:

- i) the student has provided satisfactory 'greater weight' evidence of their circumstances (in line with para 6.2 of the Special Circumstances Policy);
- ii) the circumstances that had disrupted the student's previous attempt(s) have been mitigated or no longer apply.

The Student Immigration Service provides advice and guidance to students and staff in relation to the immigration regulations. It is able to support students on Student visas should permission to undertake a fourth assessment attempt affect their visa status (for example, by requiring an extension), and can also support students to understand their immigration status in the event that they are not granted a fourth assessment attempt.

- 27.13 If repetition of the in-course assessed work is not possible outwith semester time, the student, with the permission of the relevant Head of School, may be allowed to repeat any coursework on its own in the following year. Students who do not receive such permission may be permitted by the relevant Head of School to repeat the course, including examination, in the following year.
- 27.14 The full range of marks offered by the relevant Common Marking Scheme is available at resit assessment. Resit marks are not capped.
- 27.15 Where a degree programme's Honours classification is based on the final year only, students are permitted a maximum of four assessment attempts for courses in non-final years.
- 27.16 In the case of collaborative degrees, where not otherwise stipulated in the collaborative agreement, any permitted resit attempt must be within two years of the first attempt.

Regulation 28 Late submission of coursework

Students need to submit assessed coursework (including research projects and dissertations) by the published deadline. Where the student meets the criteria for late submission, the Extensions and Special Circumstances Team will consider accepting late submission of up to seven calendar days without applying a penalty.

Application of the regulation

- 28.1 If assessed coursework is submitted late without an agreed extension to the deadline for an accepted good reason, it will be recorded as late and a penalty will be applied by the School. The penalty applied is a reduction of the mark by 5% of the maximum obtainable mark per calendar day (e.g. a mark of 65% on the



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Common Marking Scheme scale would be reduced to 60% up to 24 hours later). This applies for up to seven calendar days (or to the time when feedback is given, if this is sooner), after which a mark of zero will be given. The original unreduced mark will be recorded by the School and the student informed of it.

- 28.2 Schools may choose not to permit the submission of late work for particular components of assessment where the specific assessment and feedback arrangements make it impractical or unfair to other students to do so. If Schools do not permit the submission of late work for particular components of assessment, they must publicise this to students on the relevant course.
- 28.3 Where Schools accept late submissions of coursework, the Extensions and Special Circumstances Team will consider cases for accepting late submissions up to a maximum of seven calendar days without applying a penalty. Schools will indicate where components of assessment have a maximum permitted extension of less than seven days. This will be in addition to any extensions offered in line with a student's Schedule of Adjustments. Students are responsible for submitting their requests in advance of the published deadline for the coursework, using the relevant online system.
- 28.4 The Extensions and Special Circumstances Team decides whether the student has provided an accepted reason to justify an extension.
- 28.5 Self-certification will provide sufficient evidence in all circumstances. The Extensions and Special Circumstances Team are responsible for ensuring a record is kept of the decision and the information provided by the student with their request.
- 28.6 Accepted reasons for coursework extensions are unexpected short-term circumstances which are exceptional for the individual student, beyond that student's control, and which could reasonably be expected to have had an adverse impact on the student's ability to complete the assessment on time. Accepted reasons may include:
- Recent short-term physical illness or injury;
 - Recent short-term mental ill-health;
 - A long-term or chronic physical health condition, which has recently worsened temporarily or permanently;
 - A long-term or chronic mental health condition, which has recently worsened temporarily or permanently;
 - The recent bereavement or serious illness of a person with whom the student has a close relationship;
 - The recent breakdown in a long-term relationship, such as a marriage;
 - Emergencies involving dependents;
 - Job or internship interview at short notice that requires significant time, e.g. due to travel;
 - Victim of a crime which is likely to have significant emotional impact;



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- Military conflict, natural disaster, or extreme weather conditions;
- Experience of sexual harassment or assault;
- Experience of other forms of harassment;
- Exceptional and significant change in employment commitments, where this is beyond the student's control;
- Exceptional (i.e. non-routine) caring responsibilities;
- Severe financial difficulties;
- Exposure to a difficult/challenging home environment;
- Significant problems with access to teaching and learning materials, e.g. due to connectivity, power, or equipment issues;
- Catastrophic technical failure preventing submission of an online assessment by the relevant deadline;
- Lack of access to library resources, where there are no viable alternatives.

28.7 In addition to these unexpected circumstances, the Extensions and Special Circumstances Team will also consider requests for coursework extensions in relation to:

- A student's disability where the student's Schedule of Adjustments includes relevant provisions;
- Representation in performance sport at an international or national championship level, in line with the University's Performance Sport Policy: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/performance_sport_policy.pdf

28.8 The following are examples of circumstances which are unlikely to be accepted reasons for coursework extensions:

- A long-term or chronic health condition (including mental ill-health or similar ill-health) which has not worsened recently or for which the University has already made a reasonable adjustment;
- A minor short-term illness or injury (e.g. a common cold), which would not reasonably have had a significant adverse impact on the student's ability to complete the assessment on time;
- Occasional low mood, stress or anxiety;
- Circumstances which were foreseeable or preventable;
- Holidays;
- Pressure of academic work (unless this contributes to ill-health);
- Poor time-management;
- Proximity to other assessments;
- Lack of awareness of dates or times of assessment submission.

28.9 Where a student has a good reason for requiring a coursework extension of more than seven calendar days, the student should apply via the Special Circumstances process to request an alternate deadline. Accepted applications relating solely to extensions of more than seven days can be handled under the "expedited decisions" function of the Special Circumstances Policy (7.6).



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Regulation 29 Academic best practice

All work submitted for assessment by students is accepted on the understanding that it is the student's own effort without falsification of any kind.

Application of the regulation

- 29.1 Students are expected to offer their own analysis and presentation of information gleaned from research, even when group exercises are carried out.
- 29.2 Where students rely on reference sources, they should indicate what these are according to the appropriate convention in their discipline. Students are given advice on appropriate referencing in their course.
- 29.3 Students may be asked to sign a declaration that the work submitted is their own work.
- 29.4 Students can get advice on studying effectively from the Institute for Academic Development: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/institute-academic-development/undergraduate/good-practice

Regulation 30 Academic misconduct

It is an offence for any student to make use of unfair means in any University assessment, to assist a student to make use of such unfair means, to do anything prejudicial to the good conduct of the assessment, or to impersonate another student or allow another person to impersonate them in an assessment. Any student found to have cheated or attempted to cheat in an assessment may be deemed to have failed that assessment and disciplinary action may be taken.

Application of the regulation

- 30.1 Marks or grades can only be given for original work by students at the University. Plagiarism is the act of copying or including in one's own work, without adequate acknowledgement, intentionally or unintentionally, the work of another or one's own previously assessed original work. It is academically fraudulent and an offence against University discipline. Plagiarism, at whatever stage of a student's course, whether discovered before or after graduation, may be investigated and dealt with appropriately by the University. The innocent misuse or quotation of material without formal and proper acknowledgement can constitute plagiarism, even when there is no deliberate intent to deceive. Work may be deemed to be plagiarised if it consists of close paraphrasing or unacknowledged summary of a source, as well as word-for-word transcription, or if it involves the use of essays or answers produced



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by another individual or service. Any failure adequately to acknowledge or properly reference other sources in submitted work could lead to lower marks and to disciplinary action being taken.

- 30.2 It is academically fraudulent and an offence against the University's Code of Student Conduct for a student to invent or falsify data, evidence, references, experimental results or other material contributing to any student's assessed work or for a student knowingly to make use of such material. It is also an offence against University's Code of Student Conduct for students to collude in the submission of work that is intended for the assessment of individual academic performance or for a student to allow their work to be used by another student for fraudulent purposes.
- 30.3 Students need to be careful when asking peers to proof-read their work. Proof-readers should only comment on the vocabulary, grammar and general clarity of written English. They should not advise on subject matter or argumentation. Proof-reading and use of translation services may constitute academic misconduct where it includes rewriting or rewording of the student's original work.
- 30.4 Students need to be careful when using Generative AI tools. The use of Generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT or others) to generate an assignment (or part of an assignment) and submit this as if were one's own work will be regarded as academic misconduct and treated as such. Programme and/or course handbooks will provide additional guidance in cases where AI tools might form part of an assessment task. Further guidance on the use of Generative AI tools can be found at:
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/universityguidanceforstudentsonworkingwithgenerativeai.pdf>
- 30.54 Students need to be careful to avoid academic misconduct when submitting group projects and to be clear about their individual contribution to the submission.
- 30.65 Information on academic misconduct and plagiarism, and how such cases will be handled, is given on the Academic Services website.
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct
- 30.76 Exam hall regulations can be found at:
www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/registry/exams/ExamHallRegs.pdf

Section C. Marking of Assessment

Regulation 31 Moderation and standard-setting

The marking of all components of assessment must be subject to moderation in a way that is appropriate to the discipline, the nature of the assessment, and the credit weighting of the component of assessment. Boards of Examiners can apply standard-setting processes to the marks of assessments, provided that the choice of standard-setting methodology is defensible.

Application of the regulation

- 31.1 Moderation occurs before External Examiners review the operation of the marking and internal moderation process. Forms of moderation include sampled second marking, double-marking, and checking the operation of computer-based assessment. Any single item of assessment which is equivalent to 40 credits or more must be double marked.
- 31.2 Moderation may result in recommended mark or grade adjustments (including scaling of marks) and associated changes to feedback for a specific component of assessment. The purpose of any mark or grade adjustments is to ensure final marks for all students more accurately reflect performance against the learning outcomes on the relevant Common Marking Scheme. No changes can be made to marking without the original marker's knowledge. Where possible, any changes should take place in discussion with the original marker. Mark or grade adjustments may be made before or after the release of provisional marks to students. Where there are concerns about the appropriateness of marks for a whole cohort, any method of adjusting or scaling marks should be applied fairly to all students in the cohort. It is unlikely to be appropriate to adjust the mark for an individual student in isolation. Marks or grades may be adjusted by simple addition or subtraction, multiplication by a factor, or the use of another method of scaling deemed appropriate by the Board of Examiners. Boards of Examiners must keep clear records and publish explanatory information to students about any scaling that has been applied on a cohort basis.
- 31.3 Records of the operation of the occurrence and the outcome of the moderation processes must be kept. Records must show the rationale for decisions taken, including any decision that marks or grades should not be altered.
- 31.4 Boards of Examiners are responsible for determining the form of moderation for each component of assessment, and for ensuring the appropriate operation of moderation processes. Course Organisers are responsible for the organisation and supervising of the marking and moderation processes for their courses' assessments.



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- 31.5 Boards of Examiners are responsible for reviewing marking and moderation arrangements, and the outcomes of students' assessments, across related courses (for example, Honours level courses in a subject area) in order to ensure that assessment criteria have been applied consistently.
- 31.6 Standard-setting is the process whereby decisions are made about boundaries or 'cut-points' between the marks or grades of candidates. It is separate from any process of retrospectively scaling or adjusting marks, following moderation. Any standard-setting process must aim to ensure that students' results reflect the learning outcomes they have achieved and that the assessment is fair. Standards can be relative or norm-referenced (taking account the performance of candidates), absolute (defining minimum levels of competence) or a compromise between these two approaches.
- 31.7 Schools need to state what practice each course uses for internal moderation, and (where relevant) the methods of standard-setting, in the Statement of Assessment (see Regulation 14).
- 31.8 Resources and publications are available from the Institute for Academic Development: www.ed.ac.uk/iad

Regulation 32 Anonymous marking

Assessed work must be marked anonymously when possible. Marks and grades must also be anonymised during processing.

Application of the regulation

- 32.1 Marking work anonymously is an important aspect of fair marking.
- 32.2 There will be occasions when it is not possible to mark a piece of work anonymously, e.g. a performed piece, an oral presentation, a dissertation or other piece of work where the specialised nature of the topic identifies the student. However, students' identities should be concealed when marks are presented at the Board of Examiners' meeting.
- 32.3 Use of examination numbers in assessment can help maintain anonymity.

Regulation 33 Security of marks

Assessed work, marks and grades must be handled, transported, recorded and stored securely.



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Application of the regulation

- 33.1 The Convener of the Board of Examiners has responsibility for the security of arrangements. In practice, the operation of this may be delegated to the Teaching Organisation or equivalent.
- 33.2 Security arrangements must also include sending assessed work and marks and grades to examiners, including External Examiners; marking arrangements for online assessment; and correspondence about marks, which may be by email.
- 33.3 Marks or grade information about more than 50 individuals is classified as medium risk information under the University's policy on taking sensitive information and personal data outside the secure computing environment. Under this policy, if exam scripts, marks or grade information leave University premises or University computing systems then additional security measures, such as encryption or locked cabinets, must be used.

Regulation 34 Legibility and accessibility of assessed work

It is a student's responsibility to ensure that their submitted assessed work is legible and accessible.

Application of the regulation

- 34.1 If markers consider a significant proportion of a student's assessed work to be so illegible that they cannot reach a robust mark they must consult the Convener of the Board of Examiners.
- (a) Where the Convener suspects that disability has impaired the student's ability to write legibly, the Convener, in consultation with the [Disability and Learning Support Service \(DLSS\)](#) ~~Student Disability Service~~, can decide whether the work should be marked normally or whether the disability justifies transcription. If transcription is not justified and the work is completely illegible, a zero will be awarded. If it is partially legible then the legible part will be marked.
- (b) Where there are no issues of disability, the Convener should ensure that the legible part of the work is marked normally. If the work is completely illegible, a zero will be awarded.
- All such cases need to be drawn to the attention of the relevant Dean and the External Examiner and feedback needs to be given to the student.
- 34.2 Schools are responsible for informing students of the format in which assessed work must be submitted, e.g. they may require work to be submitted electronically.



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Regulation 35 Common Marking Schemes

The final mark, grade, result and award and classification decision must be expressed using the relevant Common Marking Scheme:

www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme

Application of the regulation

- 35.1 The University operates the following Common Marking Schemes:
- CMS1 Undergraduate degree assessment (except BVM&S and MBChB)
 - CMS2 Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery (BVM&S)
 - CMS3 Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB)
 - CMS4 Postgraduate Assessment
- 35.2 In each Common Marking Scheme, Colleges and Schools may amplify, but not alter, the overall description of grades.
- 35.3 Where the relevant Board of Studies has approved the operation of assessment for a course on a Pass/Fail basis, Boards of Examiners may award credit for the course without awarding a mark or grade under the Common Marking Scheme. Courses whose assessment operates on a Pass/Fail basis are permitted during the pre-Honours stage of undergraduate Honours programmes, or on non-Honours undergraduate programmes and postgraduate taught programmes. Courses with Pass/Fail assessment may not be offered during the Honours years of a programme unless Academic Policy and Regulations Committee has approved an exemption.
- 35.4 Boards of Examiners make a statement on how marks are held, and to how many decimal places, during the internal processing of the component marks for a course. Practice within a Board of Examiners needs to be consistent.

Regulation 36 Provisional marks

Students need to be made aware that marks for assessed coursework are provisional and may be modified when considered at the Board of Examiners meeting.

Application of the regulation

- 36.1 Course handbooks and other sources of advice for students are used to inform students that marks are provisional until agreed by a Board of Examiners.



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Regulation 37 Final marks

Boards of Examiners confirm marks as final in the minutes of the Board of Examiners meeting. A Board of Examiners must not revise marks agreed as final by a previous Board of Examiners (except in line with Taught Assessment Regulation 64).

Application of the regulation

37.1 For undergraduates and postgraduate students, the Board of Examiners agrees marks as final in the year in which they are obtained.

~~37.2 The Board of Examiners is required to apply any penalty determined by the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO). The Board cannot adjust the penalty or it cannot apply any additional penalty for the offence. Following the application of the penalty, if the student has submitted valid Special Circumstances relating to the affected assessment the Board will follow Regulation 43 of the Taught Assessment Regulations. take into account the decision of the Special Circumstances Committee when reaching its decision deciding what action to take, in accordance with the Special Circumstances Policy /~~
Further information can be found in the Academic Misconduct Procedure:
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/academicmisconductprocedures.pdf>

37.32 The Board of Examiners for final year students is responsible for determining the award of degree. The Board of Examiners, in determining final classifications and awards, may exercise discretion by taking into account special circumstances. See taught assessment regulation 43.

37.43 The Board of Examiners approves a single mark for each component of assessment for which final marks are to be released; marks for components of assessment are not rounded. The final component marks are used by the Board of Examiners when determining the overall result for the course. Rounding is only applied to final course marks (see regulation 63).

37.54 Students are informed of the status of the marks released and are reminded that the Board of Examiners, in determining the final marks or award, may have exercised discretion by taking into account additional relevant information.



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Section D. Operation of Boards of Examiners

Regulation 38 Board of Examiners meetings

Meetings of Boards of Examiners are held to reach assessment, progression and award decisions.

Application of the regulation

- 38.1 See taught assessment regulation 8.1 for additional information on responsibilities of the Convener of the Board of Examiners. Further information can also be found in the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf
- 38.2 The minutes of the Board of Examiners meeting needs to be an accurate record of the meeting and the approved results and decisions. Guidance on minuting Board of Examiners meetings is available: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf
- 38.3 Students are informed in advance about progression and award criteria.

Regulation 39 Board of Examiners: quorum

A Board of Examiners meeting is quorate if at least half the internal examiners participate and at least one External Examiner participates in and approves the decisions of the Board. No Board may have fewer than two internal examiners participating. See taught assessment regulation 2.4 for the definition of an internal examiner.

Application of the regulation

- 39.1 Meetings of Boards of Examiners may be held in-person or virtually, at the discretion of the relevant Convener. Where meetings are held virtually, these should operate synchronously wherever possible, with all present members participating in real-time. However, virtual meetings may operate asynchronously where necessary, provided that a quorum of members take part. Any External Examiner must have sufficient information and access to the Board's deliberations to allow them to approve the decisions taken by the Board. The minute needs to reflect the nature of their participation.
- 39.2 In exceptional circumstances and by prior written agreement with the Head of the College and the Convener of the Board, representatives nominated and authorised by them may substitute for internal examiners.



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- 39.3 Each subject discipline must be represented and, whenever practicable, an External Examiner from each subject should participate. Where more than one School is involved, the composition of the Board reflects the contribution of the Schools to the assessment of the courses or programmes.
- 39.4 The University's External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy outlines External Examiners' participation in Boards of Examiners meetings.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf
- 39.5 It is not necessary for the same members of a Board of Examiners to attend all meetings of the Board in an academic year, provided each Board is quorate.

Regulation 40 Undergraduate Progression Board meetings

Meetings of Undergraduate Progression Boards are held to reach progression decisions. Each undergraduate student's progression status needs to be decided and recorded at least once each year by a Progression Board which is the responsibility of the School that has responsibility for the student's degree programme.

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

Application of the regulation

- 40.1 The status, governance, and decision making and reporting responsibilities, of Undergraduate Progression Boards are provided in the Policy on Undergraduate Progression Boards.
- 40.2 The Policy on Undergraduate Progression Boards sets out the role of the External Examiner; the quorum; the role of the Special Circumstances Committee; student anonymity in discussions and the role of the Convener of the Board, for example for ensuring the accurate recording, minuting and reporting of decisions of the Board.
- 40.3 College Progression Boards make decisions on the credit obtained by students who have optional periods of study abroad.

Regulation 41 Attendance by non-members at a Board of Examiners meeting

The Convener of the Board may invite any person who is not an internal or external examiner but has been involved in the teaching or assessment of the work under consideration by the Board to be present "in attendance". People "in attendance" at the meeting of the Board are not involved in the decision making process.



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Regulation 42 Board of Examiners: anonymity

Anonymity should be retained until, in the opinion of the Convener of the Board of Examiners, the best interests of the students are no longer being served.

Application of the regulation

- 42.1 When students' marks and grades are presented, considered and agreed by the Board, the Board should not be informed of the identity of the students.
- 42.2 Where students have to attend oral examinations, perform or otherwise present some of their work, or are on courses or programmes taken by small numbers of students, anonymity may be unachievable during the assessment process. Anonymity should be breached only for those examiners directly involved in the relevant assessment, and students' identities should be concealed when marks are presented at the Board of Examiners' meeting.
- 42.3 Once decisions have been agreed by the Board of Examiners there should be a final check of the marks and decisions by the Convener of the Board, based on the knowledge of the students' identities.
- 42.4 The nature of some assessment means that the Board of Examiners establishes that the interests of the students are served best by ceasing anonymity at the start of the assessment process. This requires the prior approval of the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) on the basis of a case presented by College.

Regulation 43 Special circumstances

Where a student's performance in assessment has been affected by illness, accident or circumstances beyond their control, it is the student's responsibility to submit an application containing an account of these special circumstances, along with supporting evidence, for consideration by the Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) service. Where the ESC service accepts an application, it is referred to the relevant Board of Examiners, who decide what action to take.

Application of the regulation

- 43.1 The Special Circumstances Policy sets out the arrangements for students to request consideration of special circumstances, types of circumstances which are and are not likely to be accepted by ESC, requirements for evidence to support special circumstances, the composition and operation of Special Circumstances Committees, and the actions available to Boards of Examiners (including Progression Boards) in relation to an accepted Special Circumstances application. The policy is available at:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf



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Regulation 44 Borderlines

Boards of Examiners must consider students whose marks are borderline for progression, award or classification purposes. Boards of Examiners can also consider students whose marks are borderline for passing a course, where special circumstances apply. Borderline marks are defined as marks from two percentage points below the class or grade boundary up to the boundary itself, e.g. 58.00% to 59.99% for an undergraduate 2.1 classification or 38% to 39% for a pass in a course. Boards of Examiners and Progression Boards must use the University borderline definition and must not set and use a different definition.

Application of the regulation

- 44.1 Boards of Examiners must publish in advance the factors that will be taken into account for borderline progression, award, or classification decisions, which can include:
- (a) cases in which a student has performed better in courses at a higher level;
 - (b) cases where the amount of credited assessed work to be used for classification or award decisions is less than the norm (e.g., where credits have been awarded for progression purposes only in recognition of special circumstances); and
 - (c) individual student profiles of performance.
- 44.2 Boards of Examiners cannot selectively use any additional assessment to reach assessment decisions for specific students. See taught assessment regulation 19.
- 44.3 Examples of borderlines for progression decisions include:
- (a) where a student has a final mark of 38% or 39% for a course in first year that they need to pass to progress to second year;
 - (b) where a student is within two percentage points of a requirement for progression into honours or postgraduate dissertation, for example where the Degree Programme Table specifies the attainment of 50% as an average across a number of courses, the progression borderline is 48.00% to 49.99%;
 - (c) where a student being considered for progression on a postgraduate taught programme has achieved an average of 50% or more across 120 credits of taught courses, and a mark of 50% or more in 60 or 70 credits, with a further course or courses carrying a mark of 48 or 49%; and
 - (d) for the award of credit on aggregate, where a student has an average of 38.00% to 39.99% over their 120 credits.
- 44.4 Boards of Examiners may award a pass for a course where a student has a borderline fail mark (i.e. 38% to 39%) and has had a request for consideration of special circumstances approved (see the Special Circumstances Policy: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf).



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Regulation 45 Confidentiality

All discussion at a Board of Examiners' meeting is confidential.

Application of the regulation

- 45.1 Boards of Examiners reach a collective decision. The decision does not need to be unanimous.
- 45.2 No comments or remarks should be reported to any students, whether or not they are unattributed.
- 45.3 The views of a particular examiner should not be made known to a student. If a student makes a request to see the minutes of a Board of Examiners meeting, the information recorded in the minutes on that particular student will need to be disclosed. In doing so examiners' comments should be anonymised, e.g. assigned to "Examiner1, Examiner2". Further information is available at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf
- 45.4 Students have a right to see information about themselves recorded in minutes of Board of Examiner meetings.
- 45.5 Other than with the written permission of the student concerned, members of staff should not make available information about marks to persons or bodies outside the University except when necessary in the context of a reference.
- 45.6 Guidance on disclosing information on students can be found at: www.ed.ac.uk/data-protection/data-protection-guidance/sharing-personal-data

Regulation 46 Release of marks

Students are informed of marks or grades for each discretely identified unit of assessment used by the Board in reaching its final mark for the course or its progression or award decision.

Application of the regulation

- 46.1 Marks and grades are made available to the student, together with guidance on their meaning.
- 46.2 Boards of Examiners are not obliged to provide this information if the request is made more than one year after the date of the assessment.



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- 46.3 Assessed coursework marks which contribute to the overall result for a course are provided to students at the time that the assessment is marked, as a guide to each student's performance, together with guidance on the meaning of the marks.
- 46.4 Throughout the year, before consideration by a Board of Examiners, marks for examinations and assessed coursework are provisional and have no status until they are approved or modified by the Board. If such marks are released before confirmation by the Board of Examiners, students must be advised that the marks are provisional and may be modified when considered at the Board of Examiners meeting.
- 46.5 **Undergraduate non-honours degree examination marks; and professional degree examination marks or grades in Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (other than final professional degree examination marks): Overall marks:** The final overall mark agreed by Boards of Examiners for diets of examinations for graduating courses of study will be made available to the student via EUCLID Student View.
- 46.6 **Undergraduate Honours degree examination marks; and final professional degree examination marks in Medicine and Veterinary Medicine: Overall classification:** The final overall classification of honours degrees will be communicated to students via EUCLID Student View. The professional degrees may be awarded with honours in Medicine, or with distinction in Veterinary Medicine, for students who matriculated in or prior to the 2022/23 academic year, but are not otherwise classified.

Regulation 47 Publication of results

Students will be notified of their assessment results and their progression status. Students have the right to exclude their name and/or final award results from being publicly announced.

Application of the regulation

- 47.1 Concessions from the following application of the regulation on Publication of results require the approval of the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) based on a case presented by the relevant College.
- 47.2 Students are officially notified of their results (including course marks, progression and programme outcomes or awards) via EUCLID Student View. This may be supplemented by the communication of assessment component results via virtual learning environments. Results are entered on to students' records by the relevant School.
- 47.3 The host School of the degree programme is responsible for overseeing the communication of all undergraduate award and final programme results and all



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taught progression decisions. The host School of the course is responsible for overseeing the communication of all final course results to the students on the course. Students will be notified in advance of the date on which they can expect to hear their results.

- 47.4 Notification of final postgraduate results and the award of qualification to students, following the final meeting of the Board, is the responsibility of the College Postgraduate Office, except where this has been devolved to the School.
- 47.5 Students' results (including assessment component and course marks, programme and progression outcomes) may not be released over the telephone or informally via email. Students only receive their results via formal communication channels.
- 47.6 There should be no public display in any media of any formative or summative assessment results from any course or programme.
- 47.7 The host School will communicate a clear plan of action to each student when the student has failed an assessment that is required. This applies to final course results and some "in course" assessments where a pass is required. The communication is to take account of the student's progression and/or award status.
- 47.8 Each School will provide a general statement on their website describing their local process, indicating to their students how they should proceed in the event of failure.
- 47.9 Where a student has failed a summative assessment (either "in course" or "final") and a resubmission or retake is required and permitted, the host School ensures that the student is provided with timely academic feedback, guidance and support prior to their re-assessment.
- 47.10 The Head of the host School, or their designated representative, has responsibility for ensuring that, where a student has failed their programme of study at the final stage, the student is supported in a timely and personal manner. If appropriate, an offer of a private consultation may be made.
- 47.11 Once a final award, final degree programme or final course result and progression decision has been agreed by the Board of Examiners and other relevant bodies, then Schools may contact students who have failed before the decision is published in EUCLID Student View. Schools should not give informal indications about the final award, final degree programme or final course result or progression decision in advance of the decision of the Board of Examiners and/or other relevant bodies. See regulation 46.4 for the release of provisional marks.
- 47.12 Where there is a requirement to confirm pass lists to a Professional, Statutory and/or Regulatory Body (PSRB), the assessment results should not be collated and sent until the results of individual assessments have been made available to the student.



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47.13 If students attend the graduation ceremony their names and degrees are included in the graduation programme. The Student Administration team is responsible for the final award listing in the graduation ceremony programme (if the student registers their intention to graduate in person) and the listing in the press (students may opt out of this listing).

Regulation 48 Degree examination scripts

Degree examination scripts are received by the University in confidence. Physical degree examination scripts, or copies of such scripts, may be returned to students on SCQF Level 7 and 8 (usually Year 1 and 2 pre-honours) courses after the Board of Examiners has published ratified course results. Physical scripts will not be returned to students on courses at SCQF levels 9-12 (usually Honours and postgraduate taught level). However, students may be provided with copies of examination scripts for examinations completed electronically at all levels.

Application of the regulation

- 48.1 Students are entitled to see their examination scripts to assist with the provision of feedback and their self-reflective learning.
- 48.2 Course organisers, or their delegates, may show and discuss students' examination scripts with them for feedback purposes. Local arrangements are made for ways to implement the opportunity for students to see their exam scripts.
- 48.3 Other forms of assessed summative work may be returned to students after the Board of Examiners has published ratified course results.
- 48.4 The potential return of scripts to students on Year 1 and 2 pre-Honours courses does not apply to multiple choice questions which are not defined as degree examination scripts.
- 48.5 Schools will need to make arrangements to make exam scripts available to students taking Year 1 and 2 pre-Honours courses to take away (on individual request) after the retention period is over. Schools may wish to decide to keep the scripts for longer than the minimum required retention period, for example in order to make them available for release to the relevant students returning in the following semester (this is at the discretion of individual Schools).

Regulation 49 Retention and destruction of material

Assessed material must be retained and destroyed in accordance with the University's student records retention guidance.

Application of the regulation

- 49.1 Information about the student records retention schedule is online:
www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/guidance/records/retention/student-records
- 49.2 Schools need to maintain an adequate documentary record of assessed work, which is necessary to inform decisions of original, resit and reconvened Boards of Examiners.
- 49.3 Material which contributes to the assessment of the degree, including any written examinations, dissertations, essays, laboratory or studio work and projects, should be retained in the School for a suitable period after the Board of Examiners meeting which decides the overall classification or award of the degree, diploma or certificate. This enables the Board to respond to any student appeal.
- 49.4 Assessment material should be destroyed at the end of the retention period, or at the end of the period in which the School has agreed it will retain the information for (see regulation 48.5). For students who submit appeals, the retention period will need to be extended until the end of the appeal process. Other material which contributes to the final assessment of the degree or overall assessment of the course may be returned to the student after the expiry of the retention period. The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 requires the University to make available to any enquirer any information held by the University, including copies of assessments, unless one of the legislation's narrowly defined exemptions applies. While there is an exemption for personal data, it must be considered on a case-by-case basis. Assessment samples may be retained for specified periods as supporting documentation for accreditation and quality assurance purposes, e.g. Internal Periodic Reviews.
- 49.5 Where students have consented, assessment material can be retained for longer and be used as exemplars for future students. The material can be kept for as long as the course exists or until the student withdraws consent, whichever happens earlier. All student names must be removed before use.



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Section E. Assessment decisions

Regulation 50 Award of degrees, diplomas and certificates

Degrees, diplomas and certificates are awarded by the Senatus on the basis of Board of Examiners' recommendations. Each honours programme of study, the MBChB and the BVM&S, has a Board of Examiners responsible for recommending the award of the degree and determining the classification of the degree. Each postgraduate degree, diploma or certificate examination has a Board of Examiners responsible both for determining progression to diploma/masters dissertation (on programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a dissertation/research project) and for determining the final award of the qualification.

Application of the regulation

50.1 Information on the criteria for award of degrees, diplomas and certificates is published in advance.

Regulation 51 Undergraduate progression: pre-honours and into honours

To progress to the next year of study and into honours, students must meet the requirements for progression which are specified in the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study and degree programme tables. www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

Application of the regulation

51.1 The Undergraduate Progression Board has responsibility for ensuring that students have met the requirements for progression, on the basis of information provided by Boards of Examiners.

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

51.2 The requirements for degrees are set out in the University's Curriculum Framework:

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

Regulation 52 Undergraduate honours assessment progression

The Undergraduate Progression Board has the responsibility to decide which students can progress to the next year of honours study. Progressing students must:

- (a) pass at least 80 credits at SCQF level 9 or above in junior honours and level 10 or above in senior honours for undergraduate Masters degrees; and
- (b) have an overall average of 40% or more for the 120 credits of study taken in the relevant honours year; and



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- (c) must satisfy any other specific requirements for the degree programme, as published in the programme handbook.

When all the marks for the taught components of the relevant year of the programme (120 credits) are available, if the student has achieved PASS marks in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses.

Application of the regulation

- 52.1 The Undergraduate Progression Board has responsibility for ensuring that students have met the requirements for progression, on the basis of information provided by Boards of Examiners.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ug_progression_boards.pdf
- 52.2 The requirements for degrees are set out in the University's Curriculum Framework:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/models_for_curricula.pdf
- 52.3 In general failed courses are not included in the student's transcript, but any failed course for which the student has been awarded credits on aggregate must be shown in the transcript as a fail but with credit on aggregate. In reporting course marks, Schools are required to upload a fail but with credit on aggregate outcome on to the student record system, in addition to other final course marks.
- 52.4 PASS marks are defined in the "PASS" section (A1 to PS) of "Recording of Course Assessment Results within EUCLID", as are EUCLID grades for Credit on aggregate (AA, CA and UA).
www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/Staff/FAQ/Assessment_Results.html
- 52.5 Where a student studies abroad for a single semester in the junior Honours year, decisions regarding eligibility for credit on aggregate are made separately for the semester spent studying abroad and the semester spent in Edinburgh. Students are eligible for up to 20 credits to be awarded on aggregate in each semester, in line with the criteria above.

Regulation 53 Award of undergraduate Ordinary and General degrees

Students registered for an Ordinary or General (non-Honours) degree may be awarded the degree if they satisfy the requirements in the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study.

Application of the regulation

- 53.1 The Board of Examiners or Undergraduate Progression Board may propose the award of an Ordinary or General degree to those students who have met the



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requirements of one of these degrees but who do not satisfy the honours degree requirements.

- 53.2 The Board of Examiners or Undergraduate Progression Board should take account of the recommendations of the Special Circumstances Committee and the student's general academic record when determining the award of a degree. However, it is not within the power of a Board of Examiners or Undergraduate Progression Board to recommend the award of a degree without substantial evidence of attainment to at least the lowest level required for the award of that qualification. Boards of Examiners or Undergraduate Progression Board may not be generous in cases of failure other than within the limits already set out in these regulations.

Regulation 54 Undergraduate honours degree award

The Board of Examiners has the responsibility to decide which students can be awarded a classified honours degree. To graduate students must:

- (a) pass at least 80 credits at SCQF level 10 or above in their final honours year; and
- (b) have an overall average of 40% or more for the 120 credits of final honours; and
- (c) must satisfy any other specific requirements for the degree programme.

When all the marks for the taught components of the final year of the programme (120 credits) are available, if the student has achieved PASS marks in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses.

Application of the regulation

- 54.1 The requirements for degrees are set out in the University's Curriculum Framework: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/models_for_curricula.pdf
- 54.2 In general failed courses are not included in the student's transcript, but any failed course for which the student has been awarded credits on aggregate must be shown in the transcript as a fail but with credit on aggregate. In reporting course marks, Schools are required to upload a fail but with credit on aggregate outcome on to the student record system, along with other final course marks.
- 54.3 The Board of Examiners may propose the award of an Ordinary or General degree be made to students who do not achieve the honours classification requirements, on the basis of their honours achievements.
- 54.4 The Board of Examiners may propose the award of an honours degree to students who do not achieve the requirements for an undergraduate masters, on the basis of their senior honours achievements.



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- 54.5 The Board of Examiners should take account of the recommendations of the Special Circumstances Committee and of the student's general academic record, when determining the classification and award of a degree. However, it is not within the power of a Board of Examiners to recommend the award of a degree without substantial evidence of attainment to at least the lowest level required for the award of that qualification or classification. Boards of Examiners may not be generous in cases of failure other than within the limits already set out in these regulations.
- 54.6 PASS marks are defined in the "PASS" section (A1 to PS) of "Recording of Course Assessment Results within EUCLID".

Regulation 55 Undergraduate degree classification

The Board of Examiners for assessment of students in their final year is responsible for deriving the classification for award of an honours degree. Degree classification is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Exceptions are outlined in the guidance on the regulation.

Application of the regulation

- 55.1 The assessment weighting of a course within the classification calculation is proportional to its credit value.
- 55.2 For degrees with two honours years, including degree programmes with an obligatory period of residence/study abroad, the classification is based on a credit-weighted average of performance across both honours years, except for:
- modern language degree programmes with a prescribed period of residence abroad where credit points for language acquisition through residence are aggregated with those associated with the language learning in the final year and where the classification is based on two honours years in line with this aggregation;
 - degree programmes where students can opt to spend a period of residence/study abroad, where credits will be allocated for the study abroad but these are weighted zero in the final classification;
 - the MA in International Business [and the LLB in Global Law](#), where the classification for these students is based solely on the final honours year; and
 - the BSc Honours degrees in the School of Biological Sciences and Deanery of Biomedical Sciences which are weighted 2:1 Senior: Junior Honours; and the BSc degrees in Chemistry which are weighted 2:1 Senior: Junior Honours.



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- 55.3 Integrated Masters degrees have three honours years and their classification is based on all these years, in which the three honours years are weighted respectively 20, 40, 40 (in percentage terms), with the exception of: ~~the MChem and MChemPhys degrees “with Industrial Experience” and “with a Year Abroad”, and the MPhys degrees “with a Year Abroad”~~ which are weighted 20, 20, 60; and the Geophysics degrees (with a placement year) which are weighted 30,30,40.
- 55.4 The relevant Board of Examiners will specify which courses will be used for classification purposes for students who exit with a BSc who were previously on an Integrated Masters degree.
- 55.5 Intercalated honours degrees have a one-year honours component and their classification is based solely on the honours year. Degree classification is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course.
- 55.6 Honours degree programmes in the Art and Design subject areas (except the MA Fine Art) within Edinburgh College of Art calculate classification based solely on performance the final honours year.
- 55.7 Classification models for credit for study abroad are contained in the College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad: Terms of Reference.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studyabroadcollegeboards-termsofreference.pdf

Regulation 56 Postgraduate assessment progression

For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project or dissertation component, students must pass the assessment requirements of the taught stage at an appropriate level at the first attempt before progression to the dissertation. In order to progress to the masters dissertation students must:

- pass at least 80 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits; and
- attain an average of at least 50% for the 120 credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression; and
- satisfy any other specific requirements for the masters degree programme, that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.

When all the marks for the taught components of the programme (120 credits) are available, if the student has achieved PASS marks in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses.

For programmes where the taught and project or dissertation components are taken in parallel, or where there are not identifiable taught and research project or dissertation



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components, the requirements for progression are determined at programme level, stated in the Programme Handbook.

Application of the regulation

56.1 For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project / dissertation component (e.g. 120 credits of taught courses in semesters 1 and 2, followed by a 60 credit project / dissertation component):

- (a) Postgraduate Boards of Examiners are normally convened at least twice during the year for full-time students. The initial meeting to decide matters relating to progression (to masters), or failure, is held at the end of the coursework component. A second meeting to consider the dissertation results and the final award of degrees (or diplomas) is held soon after completion of the programme. Both meetings are equally important.
- (b) The Postgraduate Board of Examiners has the responsibility to decide which students can progress to the dissertation required for candidature for the award of a masters degree; or, in the case of other awards, exit either directly or following satisfaction of any outstanding requirement.
- (c) Exceptionally, with the permission of the relevant College Committee, a student who has been unable to sit an **examination-assessment** because of illness or other extenuating circumstance may, if that circumstance is certified, be allowed to progress to the dissertation stage prior to completion of the coursework assessment on condition that the dissertation will subsequently be set aside if the student is eventually unsuccessful in the coursework element of the programme.

56.2 For MFA programmes (240 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to masters dissertation/project the student must pass at least 120 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the 180 credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression to dissertation/project, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above.

56.3 For postgraduate taught programmes involving 360 credits, information regarding progression requirements is included in the relevant programme handbook.

56.4 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.



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- 56.5 In general failed courses are not included in the student's transcript, but any failed course for which the student has been awarded credits on aggregate must be shown in the transcript as a fail but with credit on aggregate. In reporting course marks, Schools are required to upload a fail but with credit on aggregate outcome on to the student record system, along with other final course marks.
- 56.6 In Regulation 56(a) above, where some of the 80 credits are pass/fail courses, then where these courses are passed, they can be included in the 80 credit total. However, ~~pass/fail courses are excluded from the calculation under Regulation 56(b). a mark of 50% is the mark that is to be applied in calculations under Regulation 56 (b).~~
www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme
- 56.7 PASS marks are defined in the "PASS" section (A1 to PS) of "Recording of Course Assessment Results within EUCLID"
www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/Staff/FAQ/Assessment_Results.html
- 56.8 For MBA programmes (180 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to the Capstone Project the student must pass at least 110 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above. If the student does not meet the progression criteria above, but is in a position to be able to meet the criteria based on the outcome of the outstanding credits, the progression decision will be deferred until the result of the outstanding credits are known.
- 56.9 For the EMBA programme and Online MBA programmes (180 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to the 40 credit Capstone project the student must pass at least 100 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above. In order to progress to the 30 credit Capstone project, the student must pass at least 110 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above. If the student does not meet the progression criteria above, but is in a position to be able to meet the criteria based on the outcome of outstanding credits, the progression decision will be deferred until the result of the outstanding credits are known.



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Regulation 57 Postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate award

In order to be awarded the certificate students must:

- (a) pass at least 40 credits with a mark of at least 40%; and
- (b) attain an average of at least 40% for the 60 credits of study examined for the certificate; and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the named certificate that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.

In order to be awarded the diploma students must:

- (a) pass at least 80 credits with a mark of at least 40%; and
- (b) attain an average of at least 40% for the 120 credits of study examined for the diploma; and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the named diploma that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.

In order to be awarded a masters degree students must:

- (a) have satisfied any requirements for progression, as laid out in taught assessment regulation 56 above, and
- (b) attain an additional 60 credits, by achieving a mark of at least 50% for the dissertation or project component (if the programme has a dissertation or project element) and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the masters degree programme, that are clearly stated in respective Programme Handbooks.

When all the marks for the taught components of the programme or diploma are available, if the student has achieved a mark of at least 40% in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses, up to a maximum of 40 credits. For a certificate, a maximum of 20 credits may be awarded on aggregate.

Application of the regulation

- 57.1 Boards of Examiners, including those involving subjects from two or more of the Schools, are required to establish guidelines in advance on how the results of individual papers or units of assessment are to be aggregated, averaged or profiled to produce the overall final result. These guidelines are an integral part of the disclosure process and must be published to students within one month of the start of the programme.
- 57.2 In line with the Postgraduate Degree Regulations, postgraduate taught programmes may include some courses at SCQF levels below 11. Where courses at SCQF level 9 or below are included in a programme, marks for these courses are disregarded for the purposes of calculating averages for the award of credit on aggregate, progression, award, and the award of Merit and Distinction.



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- 57.3 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.
- 57.4 In general failed courses are not included in the student's transcript, but any failed course for which the student has been awarded credits on aggregate must be shown in the transcript as a fail but with credit on aggregate. Exam Boards must make this distinction clear when reporting course marks.
- 57.5 The Board of Examiners should take account of any relevant special circumstances and of the student's general academic record, when determining the award of a degree. However, it is not within the power of a Board of Examiners to recommend the award of a degree without substantial evidence of attainment to at least the lowest level required for the award of that qualification. Boards of Examiners may not be generous in cases of failure other than within the limits already set out in these regulations.
- 57.6 The Postgraduate Degree Regulations permit a General Postgraduate Certificate or General Postgraduate Diploma to be attained by students who do not fulfil the requirements for a specific Certificate or Diploma award but who have attained the required volume and level of credits.
- 57.7 PASS marks are defined in the "PASS" section (A1 to PS) of "Recording of Course Assessment Results within EUCLID"
www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/Staff/FAQ/Assessment_Results.html

Regulation 58 Resubmission of postgraduate dissertations or research projects

Students may be permitted to resubmit the dissertation or research project in line with the provisions of the Special Circumstances Policy where a student's performance in assessment has been affected by illness, accident or circumstances beyond their control (58.1-58.2).

Students are also entitled to one resubmission of the dissertation or research project for postgraduate Masters programmes where the student has achieved a mark of 45 to 49% at the first attempt (58.3-58.9).

Application of the regulation

- 58.1 Where a student is granted the opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project due to special circumstances, the Board of Examiners will be responsible for providing the student with a statement which outlines the deficiencies in their



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original submission, and agreeing an appropriate deadline and appropriate supervision. The student will be granted a null sit for their first attempt, and the recorded mark for their revised dissertation or project will not be capped. Paragraphs 58.3 to 58.8 do not apply to students granted the opportunity to resubmit their dissertation or research project due to special circumstances.

- 58.2 Students who have been granted an opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project due to special circumstances may be permitted one further resubmission under this regulation (with reference to paragraphs 58.3 to 58.9), provided they meet the eligibility requirements.
- 58.3 Where a student receives 48 or 49% for the dissertation or research project at the first attempt, they may be considered as a borderline candidate for the award of the Master's degree, in line with published information regarding consideration of borderline cases (see Regulation 44).
- 58.4 Since the concept of borderlines (see Regulation 44) does not apply to the threshold for entitlement to resubmit a dissertation or research project, Boards of Examiners are not able to permit students with marks of 43 or 44% at the first attempt to resubmit their dissertation or project unless special circumstances apply.
- 58.5 Students who achieve a mark of 45 to 49% for the dissertation or research project at the first attempt as a result of a marking penalty, either for late submission or for academic misconduct, are entitled to one resubmission, in line with this regulation.
- 58.6 The relevant Board of Examiners will provide a student permitted to submit a revised dissertation or research project with a statement which outlines the deficiencies in their original submission. The student is also entitled to receive further written advice from their dissertation or research project supervisor on one occasion before resubmission. The student must include with their revised dissertation a statement outlining the changes made to the previous submission. This statement will not be marked.
- 58.7 The Board of Examiners will advise the student of the deadline for submission of their revised dissertation or research project, which will be three months from the date of the student receiving notification of their original result. Extension requests and special circumstances submissions in relation to this deadline will be handled in line with provisions outlined within the Taught Assessment Regulations and the Special Circumstances Policy. Where special circumstances affect the resubmission, Boards of Examiners are permitted to offer a further resubmission under the Special Circumstances Policy, if they consider this appropriate. The mark for a dissertation resubmitted under these circumstances will be capped at 50%, in line with Regulation 58.9.
- 58.8 Where a student declines the opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project, or fails to submit by the stated deadline, the mark they had received for



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their first attempt will be treated as final and they will be considered for a relevant exit award.

- 58.9 If the Board of Examiners agrees that the revised dissertation or research project meets the requirements for a pass at Masters level, the student will be awarded the Masters degree. The recorded mark for the revised dissertation or research project will be capped at 50%.
- 58.10 For MBA programmes students are entitled to one resubmission of the Capstone Project where the student has achieved a mark of 40 to 49% at the first attempt. The Board of Examiners will advise the student of the deadline for submission of their revised Capstone Project, which will be two months from the first meeting meeting/communication with the supervisor to complete the work. Since the concept of borderlines (see Regulation 44) does not apply to the threshold for entitlement to resubmit a Capstone Project, Boards of Examiners are not able to permit students with marks of 38 or 39% at the first attempt to resubmit their Capstone Project unless special circumstances apply. Regulations 58.1-3 and 58.5-9 also apply.

Regulation 59 Award of postgraduate merit

Taught postgraduate degrees may be awarded with merit. To achieve a merit, a student must be awarded at least 60% on the University's Postgraduate Common Marking Scheme for the dissertation, if the programme has a dissertation element, and must achieve an average of at least 60% in the remaining elements. Borderlines, for both the dissertation and course average elements, are considered for merits.

Application of the regulation

- 59.1 Merit may be awarded for postgraduate taught masters, diplomas and certificates.
- 59.2 Where a student has been permitted to resubmit their dissertation or research project in line with Regulation 58 (except where Special Circumstances apply), they are not eligible for the award of the degree with merit.
- 59.3 For degrees which use letter grades in addition to numerical marks, the award of merit will be made where the student meets the above criteria using the numerical mark.
- 59.4 For MFA, the award of merit relates only to grades obtained at stages 3 and 4 (Year 2).
- 59.5 Borderline marks are defined as marks from two percentage points below the boundary up to the boundary itself, e.g. 58.00% to 59.99% for the dissertation



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and for the average of other courses. See also taught assessment regulation 44 above.

59.6 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.

59.7 The Postgraduate Common Marking Scheme can be found at:
www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme

Regulation 60 Award of postgraduate distinction

Taught postgraduate degrees may be awarded with distinction. To achieve a distinction, a student must be awarded at least 70% on the University's Postgraduate Common Marking Scheme for the dissertation, if the programme has a dissertation element, and must achieve an average of at least 70% in the remaining elements. Borderlines, for both the dissertation and course average elements, are considered for distinctions.

Application of the regulation

60.1 Distinctions may be awarded for postgraduate taught masters, diplomas and certificates.

60.2 Where a student has been permitted to resubmit their dissertation or research project in line with Regulation 58 (except where Special Circumstances apply), they are not eligible for the award of the degree with distinction.

60.3 For degree programmes which use letter grades in addition to numerical marks, the award of distinction will be made where the student meets the above criteria using the numerical mark.

60.4 For MFA, the award of distinction relates only to grades obtained at stages 3 and 4 (Year 2).

60.5 Borderline marks are defined as marks from two percentage points below boundary up to the boundary itself, e.g. 68.00% to 69.99% for the dissertation and for the average of other courses. See also taught assessment regulation 44 above.

60.6 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are



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excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.

- 60.7 The Postgraduate Common Marking Scheme can be found at:
www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme

Regulation 61 Award of credit from other universities

Boards of Examiners confirm the award of credit from other universities which is used in the award of a University of Edinburgh degree.

Application of the regulation

- 61.1 There are two types of credit from external bodies: recognition of prior credit at admission, determined by Colleges against published criteria; and recognition of external learning whilst on programme. In both cases recognition of prior learning is recorded on admission.
www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

Regulation 62 Minuting of decisions of Boards of Examiners

The internal and External Examiners must concur in the mark and grade to be awarded to each student and in the classification and award of degree to be made. Boards of Examiners must record all decisions in the minutes of the meeting.

Application of the regulation

- 62.1 Once the Board of Examiners has decided on the final marks, grades and if appropriate, class of degree and award for each student, the students' names must then be made visible to the Board of Examiners. There must then be a final check of the results before the list is agreed and recorded in the minutes. Only in the event of detection of an error, which was not detectable when examination numbers were used, can changes be made to the marks, grades or class of degree at this stage. Any such change should be recorded in the minutes.
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners
- 62.2 The Convener receives and is responsible for ensuring that the minutes of the Board of Examiners' meetings are an accurate record of the meeting and of the approved results.
- 62.3 Minutes should include:
(a) a record of the names of the examiners and those in attendance at the meeting;



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- (b) relevant information considered at the meeting or by the Special Circumstances Committee, and outcomes from this;
- (c) discussion and outcomes of borderline cases;
- (d) details of any modification of marks, grades or classification, and the reasons for these; and
- (e) comments by the External Examiner(s) about the examination of the course, the performance of the students in general, and their approval of results agreed by the Board of Examiners.

62.4 The minute is a confidential document, although information on a particular student may need to be disclosed to that student under the Data Protection Act and generic information may need to be disclosed under Freedom of Information. Further information is available at:

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

62.5 If agreement cannot be reached on concurrence of decisions then the issue is referred to the Head of College.

Regulation 63 Board of Examiners: return of marks

Assessment and course results, degree classification and awards agreed by the Board of Examiners and confirmed by the External Examiner(s) must be recorded on the student record system as the final official results of the University.

Application of the regulation

63.1 Schools have responsibility for ensuring that final results are displayed accurately in the student record system. More than one person should be involved in checking their accuracy.

63.2 When marks for courses are finalised (and not before then), they must be rounded to an integer, i.e. with no decimal places. Any mark which is xx.50 or above is rounded up and any mark which is xx.49 or below is rounded down, e.g. 59.50% is rounded to 60%, 59.49% is rounded to 59%. Individual course marks must be rounded before they are released to students and the rounded marks must be used in calculating the overall mean mark. The overall mean mark is to be used in Honours classification, progression, and award decisions. The overall mean mark is not rounded.

63.3 Schools have responsibility for uploading course results and final award outcomes in line with the deadlines published each year by Student Systems.

www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/staff/Support/awards.htm



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- 63.4 In the case of autumn (August) undergraduate examinations, results should be submitted as soon as possible and not later than 10 days before the start of the next semester.
- 63.5 Provisional marks for components of assessment may also be released to students via the student record system (see regulation 36)

Regulation 64 Status of decisions

Decisions by a Board of Examiners, once certified in writing, are final. In exceptional circumstances a Convener of the Board of Examiners can reconvene the Board to review a decision.

Application of the regulation

- 64.1 A Board of Examiners may, at the request of any of its members or member of the Special Circumstances Committee, review a decision if significant information relevant to that decision, which was unavailable at the time the decision was made, comes to light, or if any error having a material bearing on that decision, or an error in the written certification of that decision, has been made. A member of the Board may request a review but it is the Convener who must review the decision in the light of any new significant information or error. Therefore it is the Convener, and not a member of the Board, who decides whether to reconvene the Board. Where the significant information presented would constitute special circumstances under the Special Circumstances Policy, the Board of Examiners should only consider this information where it believes that there is a good reason why the student did not make the information available in advance of the Board's original decision.
- 64.2 If the Board is satisfied that there are grounds for varying the decision, the Board shall report its decision to Student Systems
- 64.3 Where an error is discovered in the assessment or marking of any examination or any component of an examination or in the calculation, recording or notification of the result of any examination or any component thereof or in the classification or result of any degree or in any process connected with any of these matters, the University shall correct that error and amend its records to show the correct result or classification and that whether or not the result or classification has been published or otherwise notified to the student. The University shall notify the student of the corrected result or classification as soon as practicable and shall also correct any reference or statement which may have been provided by the University whether to the student or to a third party. Where such an error affects degree award or classification, the School should contact the relevant College and Academic Services for approval before notifying the student of any change. Having been notified of the corrected result or classification the student shall return to the University any documentation which may have been issued to the student notifying



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the original result or classification which has been corrected. The student shall have no claim against the University for any loss or damage which may have been incurred by the student as a result of any error which may have been made.

- 64.4 In proved cases of substantial and significant copying, plagiarism or other fraud, the Senatus has the power to reduce the classification of, or to revoke, any degree it has already awarded, and to require the degree, diploma or certificate scroll to be returned.
- 64.5 Any member of Senatus may request Senatus to refer for investigation any matter concerning examinations.

Regulation 65 Convener's Action

The Convener of the Board of Examiners, Progression Board, or Special Circumstances Committee may take decisions by Convener's Action.

Application of the regulation

- 65.1 This may occur when the Board of Examiners takes a decision in principle but needs confirmation or further information, or when the Board, or Special Circumstances Committee considers the possible outcomes and authorises the Convener, once relevant information is known, to apply the appropriate option. Convener's Action may also be appropriate when the decision to be made follows an existing precedent.
- 65.2 Decisions made by Convener's Action should be recorded and reported to the relevant Board or Committee.

Regulation 66 Failure to complete all the assessment requirements of a degree programme

When a student fails to complete all the assessment requirements of a degree programme the Board of Examiners or Undergraduate Progression Board will investigate the case. If there is no satisfactory reason then taught assessment regulation 67 on unsatisfactory progress applies. If the Special Circumstances Committee for the relevant Board of Examiners (including Progression Boards) is given sufficient evidence that the performance of a student has been affected for reasons of illness, accident or other circumstances beyond the student's control, the University's Special Circumstances Policy applies.

- 66.1 The University's Special Circumstances Policy is available at:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf



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Regulation 67 Unsatisfactory academic progress

The University may exclude students who do not meet the criteria for progression and award on their programme.

Application of the regulation

- 67.1 Degree regulations, Degree Programme Tables, programme handbooks and/or course handbooks must contain details of the progress which students are expected to achieve within given periods. They must also include warnings that students are liable to be considered for exclusion if these expectations are not met.
- 67.2 Where a student fails to meet the published progression criteria, the Procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies will be used.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/withdrawal_exclusion_from_study.pdf
- 67.3 Some degree programmes leading to a professional qualification include Fitness to Practise considerations. Any issues of unsatisfactory progress in relation to fitness to practise are dealt with according to the relevant College's published Fitness to Practise procedures.
- 67.4 A student declared to have made unsatisfactory progress under professional Fitness to Practise requirements is normally excluded from all further attendance at classes and examinations leading to the professional qualification, but is entitled to apply to the College for permission to re-enter for assessment in a suitable alternative programme which does not lead to a professional qualification.

Regulation 68 Academic Appeal

Students have the right of academic appeal against the decisions of Boards of Examiners or Progression Boards on specific grounds, which are set out in the University's Student Appeal Regulations

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/appeals



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Section F. Interpretation and Significant Disruption

Regulation 69 Interpretation of regulations

The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee has authority to resolve any dispute arising from these regulations. The University Secretary and their nominees have authority to make urgent decisions relating to assessment issues.

Application of the regulation

69.1 Staff who need guidance on the taught assessment regulations, beyond that provided in the regulations and associated guidance, should contact the relevant College Office, Dean and/or the Academic Policy Officer with responsibility for the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/academic-policy-regulations

Regulation 70 Significant disruption: concessions and standards

When the University's assessment practices are subject to significant disruption then the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee may approve temporary concessions to mitigate the impact of assessment disruption on students, without compromising academic standards. Board of Examiners take decisions that ensure the consistency of treatment of students and the maintenance of academic standards. The overriding principles are that:

- (a) the academic judgement of the Board of Examiners remains paramount;
- (b) the University's academic standards will be maintained; and
- (c) the provisions of the University's Taught Assessment Regulations remain in force except where a concession has been approved by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee.

These concessions will only be used where necessary: if a Board of Examiners is able to operate without a concession then the Board will do so.

Application of the regulation

70.1 Significant disruption can be extremes of weather, loss of facilities, and factors beyond the University's control which have an impact on the assessment of students. This may result in Boards of Examiners only having partial results available.

70.2 In response to individual significant disruptions that may have a widespread impact on assessment, the University will adopt a communication strategy for students, staff and key external stakeholders, e.g. External Examiners, to ensure that they are aware of the measures that are adopted.



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- 70.3 All forms of assessment, such as examination scripts and course assignments, are the property and responsibility of the University, not of individual examiners or markers. They therefore must be accessible to the University when required.
- 70.4 Drawing on previous experience [APRC 14/15 2 C], the issues and regulations where APRC may consider concessions include, but are not limited to:
- (a) External Examiners: number appointed; commenting on examination papers; participation in Boards: confirmation of results [Taught Assessment Regulations 5, 8.1(a), 38, 39.1, 39.2, 39.6, 62.3(e), 63]
 - (b) Ensuring that there is appropriate external input for relevant decisions, for example, External Examiners provide an important quality assurance function in the assessment process. If an External Examiner is unable to act then that quality assurance function still needs to be carried out;
 - (c) Board of Examiners' quorum [TAR 39, 39.1];
 - (d) Progression requirements and timing of progression decisions [TAR 51, 52, 56, 56.1(a) and Degree regulations on *Progression and Permissible Load*];
 - (e) Feedback schedules [TAR 16].

Regulation 71 Significant disruption: where only partial results are available to Boards

The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee must confirm that significant disruption has occurred before the provisions of the significant disruption regulations come into effect. In periods of significant disruption, Boards may need to take decisions on the basis of partial or unreliable information. Boards must maintain the principle that students may only be awarded a pass and a mark / grade for a course, or a progression or award decision, where there is sufficient evidence of performance against relevant learning outcomes. Boards in possession of all information necessary to proceed with the assessment of a student should proceed to determine marks and grades for courses, and progression and award decisions, as usual. Boards in possession of all information necessary to proceed with the assessment of only some students should proceed to determine marks and grades, and progression and award decisions, for those students.

The below Application to the regulation provides information about the principles which Boards will apply when dealing with missing or unreliable results, and some of the actions they may take to address this. In line with TAR 70, Academic Policy and Regulations Committee may approve additional concessions to the regulations to enable Boards to take decisions regarding students with incomplete or unreliable profiles of assessment marks or course results due to disruption.

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Application of the regulation

- 71.1 Where Boards have sufficient evidence to make decisions then the decision will be made and will stand, unless subsequent information becomes available which it would be in the student's academic interest for the Board to consider.
- 71.2 Situations may arise in which assessment results are unavailable for particular elements of assessment for all students or for only some students. Such elements of assessment may become available after the disruption is over.
- 71.3 Within the limits described below, Boards are empowered to make decisions in the absence of assessment results which are expected to become available at a later date.
- 71.4 At the start of the meeting to determine course outcomes, the Board of Examiners must agree on any specific elements of assessment without whose marks they cannot proceed to determine a student's result for the course. Before making such a decision, the Board should consider carefully whether there is sufficient other information already available to allow it to take a view on such elements of assessment. If it is not possible to determine a result or decision then the Board will reconvene when information is available.
- 71.5 Where a very high proportion of the assessment results are available for a course for an individual student, it is possible that the Board may decide it is able to determine a student's marks and grades for the course. The Board must be satisfied that, in its academic judgement, the mark and grade assigned is correct, and that the outcome will not need to be changed when further assessment results become available.
- 71.6 As a guide, where results for less than four-fifths (by weighting) of the assessment for a course are available for an individual student, it is unlikely that the Board will be able to determine a mark or grade for the course for that individual. However, if at least half of the assessment results are available, then the Board may decide it is able to confirm a pass for the student. If unable to reach a decision, even on a pass, the Board should record that insufficient information on which to make a decision was available at that time. When further results become available the Board will need to reconvene to determine the appropriate mark and grade.
- 71.7 Where less than half of the assessment results are available for a course for an individual student, it is unlikely that the Board will have sufficient information to reach any decision, even on a pass, and the Board may need to record that insufficient information on which to make a decision was available at that time. When further results become available the Board will need to reconvene to determine the appropriate mark and grade.



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- 71.8 No Board should return a fail decision in a situation where any unavailable assessment results will become available at a later date, unless it is absolutely clear that even passes at 100% in the unavailable assessments would not be sufficient to turn a fail into a pass.
- 71.9 Boards of Examiners responsible for progression and award decisions may be required to make decisions on these matters where students have incomplete or unreliable profiles of course results. This may occur where students have yet to receive final results for some courses; or where students have been awarded a pass but not a mark or grade for some courses; or where marks for some courses are not regarded as a reliable indicator of students' ability due to disruption. In some circumstances, Boards may be in a position to address this using existing provisions of these regulations, such as the award of credit on aggregate for Honours and postgraduate taught students. Boards may also consider excluding missing or adversely affected course results when making calculations regarding credit on aggregate, progression, award, Honours degree classification, and the award of Merit and Distinction on postgraduate taught degrees. Boards may also wish to take account of the impact of disruption for students who are in the borderline for progression or award purposes.
- 71.10 Once all assessment results are available, Boards should reconvene at the earliest possible opportunity to determine outstanding marks, grades, and progression and award decisions and to review the status of any decisions where significant information is now available.

256 May 20232

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

25 May 2023

Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 2023/24

Description of paper

1. Draft Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 2023/24.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For discussion and approval.

Background and context

3. Academic Services conduct an annual review of the assessment regulations to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Colleges are asked to provide comments regarding any regulations which require necessary amendment or clarification and Academic Services then draft amendments.

Discussion

4. APRC is invited to discuss the draft Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees for academic year 2023/24. Following this meeting, Academic Services will amend the draft regulations to take account of any Committee comments. The current regulations are available at:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf
5. There are no key changes to the regulations for 2023/24. Minor changes to the regulations are noted below:

Regulation

What has changed

Regulation	What has changed
Throughout	Hyperlinks updated as necessary.
10 Reasonable adjustments	References to the Student Disability Service (SDS) have been updated to refer to the Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS).

Resource implications

6. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed amendments.

Risk management

7. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

Equality & diversity

8. Academic Services has not identified any equality and diversity implications associated with the proposed amendments.

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

9. Academic Services will communicate approved regulations in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies. Academic Services will also cover any changes to regulations in Boards of Examiners briefings and other relevant briefing events for staff in Schools and Colleges

Author

Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, and Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services

Presenter

Dr Kathryn Nicol, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team

Freedom of Information

The paper is open.

Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees

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Purpose of Policy

The assessment regulations set minimum requirements and standards for students and staff, articulating the academic goals and policies of the University.

Overview

These regulations:

- (i) replace the previous Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees;
- (ii) set out the rules which must be followed in research assessment for Research Degrees; and
- (iii) provide links to other sources of guidance or related regulations.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

These regulations are University-wide and apply to all postgraduate research degrees at Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework levels 11 and 12. The regulations apply to work submitted for assessment during the current academic year. They relate to all research degrees listed in the University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study: www.drps.ed.ac.uk.

More detail is given in the document.

Contact Officer

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Document control

Dates	Approved: 25 6 .05.23 2	Starts: 19.09.22 01 . 08.23	Equality impact assessment:	Amendments: N/A	Next Review: 2023/24 2 /23
Approving authority	Academic Policy and Regulations Committee				
Consultation undertaken	Colleges, Students' Association, Academic Policy and Regulations Committee, College Academic Misconduct Officers, Records Management, Doctoral College				
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Academic Services				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	Student Appeal Regulations, Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study, Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students, DRPS Glossary of Terms				
UK Quality Code	UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance: Research Degrees, Assessment, External Expertise				
Policies superseded by this policy	Previous versions of the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.				
Keywords	Assessment, assessment regulations, degree award, examination, examiners, progression, research assessment, oral examination, viva				



Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees Academic Year 2023/24

Additional guidance

For research degree programmes that contain a significant proportion of taught courses, taught elements are governed by the University's Taught Assessment Regulations: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf>. The regulations must be applied, unless a concession has been awarded by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) on the basis of a case proposed by a College. The "Application of the regulation" must also be applied, unless the College has approved an exemption on the basis of a case proposed by a School. Concessions and exemptions are recorded by APRC and Colleges as appropriate. The regulations operate in accordance with legislation and University policies on Equality and Diversity: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/about/legislation>. Members of staff who need additional guidance may consult their Head of College or their nominee, their College Postgraduate Office, Academic Services, Student Administration or Student Systems.

Where reference is made to "the relevant Dean" this should be taken as being the Dean with responsibility for postgraduate research matters and "the Committee" is the relevant College Postgraduate Committee, or the Committee of each College which is formally identified as exercising the functions of a College Postgraduate Committee for the purposes of postgraduate research academic decisions. Where reference is made to "the Head of College" or "Head of School" this may also in some cases be a designated representative of that individual. The term MSc by Research includes Masters by Research, MTh by Research and LLM by Research.

For Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) students on courses that use the assessment grade scheme, the term "mark" in the regulations also includes "grade".

Definitions of some of the key terms in the regulations can be found in the Glossary of Terms: <http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/GlossaryofTerms.pdf>

These research assessment regulations, and related University practices, are consistent with the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education, <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

This document should be read in conjunction with University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study; the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students; the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy; and Handbook for External Examining of Research Degrees. These are available via: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/a-to-z



Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees Academic Year 2023/24

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- Regulation 55 Interpretation of the regulations
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Section A Roles and Responsibilities

Regulation 1 Scope of regulations

All relevant provisions of the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees apply to all Doctoral and MPhil degree programmes except where stated.

The Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees also apply to MSc by Research degree programmes where relevant. Information regarding how these regulations apply to MSc by Research degree programmes is provided in Section E of these regulations.

Regulation 2 College Postgraduate Committee: responsibility for research degree programmes

Research degree programmes are the responsibility of the relevant College Postgraduate Committee.

Application of the regulation

- 2.1 The College Postgraduate Committee will consider and ratify the recommendation of the Internal and External Examiners appointed to examine a student for the award of a research degree.
- 2.2 The responsibilities of the College Postgraduate Committee include:
 - (a) approving the format of assessments;
 - (b) the security of and arrangements for assessments; examining and marking assessed work; and processing and storing marks and grades;
 - (c) the quality and standards of marking;
 - (d) ensuring all examiners are aware of their responsibilities;
 - (e) accurate recording, minuting and reporting of decisions of the Committee.
- 2.3 Committees may, where appropriate, delegate operation of some responsibilities to Schools. Such delegation decisions are recorded by the College.
- 2.4 Colleges produce information on postgraduate research assessment:
CAHSS: www.ed.ac.uk/arts-humanities-soc-sci/research-students
CMVM: <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=174612428>
CSE: <https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/CSCE/AcademicAffairs/SitePages/Assessment.aspx>



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Regulation 3 Examiners: appointment

Examiners are appointed by the relevant College. There are Internal Examiners, who are staff of the University nominated by the relevant Head of School, and External Examiners.

Application of the regulation

- 3.1 Where appropriate, upon receipt of a student's Notice of Intention to Submit form, the College Office will contact the Head of the student's School to request that examiners are nominated for the assessment of the thesis or submitted assessment.
- 3.2 Before submitting nominations to the College, the Head of School should consult the student's supervisors over the choice of examiners. Supervisors inform students of the names of possible examiners, and students must inform their supervisor if any problems are likely to arise if particular examiners are appointed. Any comments will be taken into account but students have no right to determine the Head of School's eventual recommendation, and therefore have no right to veto any particular appointment.
- 3.3 The External Examiner will be approached informally by the Head of School to establish their willingness to act. However, the College Postgraduate Committee has responsibility for the approval of all examiners. Any objection to the proposed examiners must be made to the College committee in good time before the relevant assessment. Complete final lists of examiners are maintained by the relevant College Office.
- 3.4 Internal Examiners are academic and/or honorary staff of the University. Honorary staff, in this context include:

Staff from Associated Institutions: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/associated-institutions>;

Teachers and senior staff from partner schools to the Moray House School of Education;

Academic staff from partner higher education institutions as part of specific collaborative agreements;

and NHS staff who are honorary staff members of the University of Edinburgh.
- 3.5 Internal Examiners are appointed by the student's School with approval by the relevant College. Staff who are or who have been a supervisor of the student at any time cannot be an Internal Examiner for that student.



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- 3.6 No person who has held an appointment on the teaching or research staff or has been a student of the University, or who has been granted honorary status in the University, is eligible to act as an External Examiner until a period of four years has elapsed since the termination of the appointment or the status. In exceptional circumstances this rule may be waived by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee. Members of affiliated or associated institutions may be Internal but not External Examiners.
- 3.7 The School must inform the student of the names of their examiners when the examiners have been approved by the College committee.
- 3.8 If more than three months have elapsed between the examiners being appointed and the student submitting the thesis, the College Office has responsibility for checking whether the commitments of any examiner have changed significantly so that consideration may be given to appointing an alternative examiner.

Regulation 4 Non-Examining Chair: appointment

The College must appoint a Non-Examining Chair if the Internal Examiner is acting for the first time, or is a member of honorary staff.

Application of the regulation

- 4.1 The appropriate process for appointing a Non-Examining Chair is the same as for appointing Internal Examiners (see regulation 3).
- 4.2 The role of the Non-Examining Chair is to ensure that due process is carried out and to attend for the duration of the oral examination. The Non-Examining Chair needs to be a person with appropriate experience of postgraduate research examining from within the University. The Non-Examining Chair need not be from the same School as the student. The Non-Examining Chair must ensure that all parties to the examination process fully understand the expectations of them and should offer assistance and facilitation where necessary. The Non-Examining Chair must not express an opinion on the merits of the thesis.



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Regulation 5 Number of examiners

Each student is assessed by at least one External Examiner and one Internal Examiner.

Application of the regulation

- 5.1 In particular cases, such as the assessment of an interdisciplinary topic, a second External Examiner may be appointed.
- 5.2 When the student is or has been a member of staff of the University during their research degree there must be two External Examiners and one Internal Examiner. "Member of staff" will be defined by the student's School with approval by College. There is no requirement for students who are or have only been tutors or demonstrators (or have undertaken similar roles) to have two external examiners.
- 5.3 See also Regulation 7 Avoiding potential conflicts of interest.

Regulation 6 Examiners: responsibilities

Examiners must have the requisite experience to examine the degree programme at the level at which it is offered. They need to meet the responsibilities set out by the College Postgraduate Committee and comply with quality and standards requirements.

Application of the regulation

- 6.1 The College Postgraduate Committee will specify responsibilities and requirements to examiners, and ensure they are aware of these regulations and the recommendations available to them.
- 6.2 It is the responsibility of the College Postgraduate Committee to ensure that the External Examiner is competent to assess the degree. The External Examiner is appointed for their specialist knowledge, whereas the Internal Examiner may be a generalist or an expert in only part of the subject matter of the thesis.
- 6.3 Internal Examiners must be fully conversant with the procedures and regulations for oral examinations within the University. Heads of School must ensure that Internal Examiners are aware of all their duties in the examination process.
- 6.4 During the assessment the examiners must hold the thesis and the abstract in strict confidence.



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Regulation 7 Avoiding potential conflicts of interest

No member of University of Edinburgh staff, Internal Examiner, External Examiner, or Non-Examining Chair shall be involved in any assessment or examination in which they have a personal interest, for example a current or previous personal, family or legal relationship with a student being assessed.

Application of the regulation

- 7.1 If there is a potential conflict of interest the College Postgraduate Committee will be consulted.
- 7.2 The University's Policy on Conflict of Interest is relevant:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/conflict_of_interest_golden_copy_oct_2022.pdf



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Section B Conduct of Assessment

Regulation 8 Assessment requirements: student responsibilities

It is a student's responsibility to be aware of the assessment practices and requirements for the degree programme, including the standards for the Format of a Thesis.

Application of the regulation

- 8.1 The grounds for the award of specified research degrees are provided in the University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study: www.drps.ed.ac.uk/
- 8.2 The student must read the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/copsupervisorsresearchstudents.pdf
- 8.3 It is a supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the student is informed of all assessment practice and requirements, including *The Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students*.
- 8.4 There are flow charts showing the thesis assessment process and the responsibilities of the student, College, School and Examiners: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/doctoralthesisassessment.pdf
- 8.5 The standards for the Format of a Thesis can be found online at: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/thesisbinding.pdf

Regulation 9 Assessment deadlines: student responsibilities

It is a student's responsibility to meet their assessment deadlines, including thesis submission deadlines and oral examination times and location.

Application of the regulation

- 9.1 It is a supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the student is informed of all assessment requirements.



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Regulation 10 Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments will be made to assessments for disabled students.

Application of the regulation

- 10.1 Reasonable adjustments must be determined in advance by the Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS)~~Student Disability Service (SDS)~~. They are recorded in the student's Schedule of Adjustments by the SDS, which communicates the Schedule of Adjustments to the student, the student's supervisor, the School's Co-ordinator of Adjustments, and other relevant areas.
- 10.2 The School's Co-ordinator of Adjustments has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Schedule of Adjustments. The Co-ordinator of Adjustments will liaise with academic colleagues who are responsible for putting the adjustments in place in the School. In the case of oral examinations, the supervisor is responsible for communicating relevant adjustments to the chair of the oral examination.
- 10.3 The Co-ordinator of Adjustments will liaise with the ~~SDS~~DLSS should any adjustments require further discussion, clarification or alteration. If there are any amendments to the Schedule of Adjustments, the ~~SDS~~DLSS will communicate these and ensure that the student is informed.
- 10.4 The ~~DLSS~~SDS provides examples of reasonable adjustments, deadlines and support:
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service/students/support-we-provide>
- 10.5 The SDS supports students in the preparation and review of their Schedule of Adjustments. It is a student's responsibility to ensure that their Schedule of Adjustments covers all types of assessment methods relevant to the programme. For example if a student discovers that an aspect of their programme is likely to impact on their support needs, they should contact the SDS as soon as possible in case any amendment is required to be made to their Schedule of Adjustments.
- 10.6 Arrangements can be made via the ~~SDS~~DLSS for students with temporary injuries or impairment, on the submission of relevant medical information. Students should contact the ~~SDS~~DLSS as soon as possible to allow the ~~SDS~~DLSS to determine any relevant adjustments and support.



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Regulation 11 Language of assessment: languages other than English or Gaelic

The English language is the usual medium of teaching and assessment at the University of Edinburgh. All work submitted for assessment must be written in the English language, with the following exceptions: theses, dissertations or research projects may be submitted in Gaelic (see regulation 12); theses, dissertations or research projects, and other assessed work may be submitted in the language which is being studied where the relevant course or programme handbook specifies that this is allowable.

Application of the regulation

- 11.1 Quotations may be given in the language in which they were written.
- 11.2 In very exceptional circumstances, a candidate may be granted permission to submit a thesis, research project or dissertation written in a language other than English, where this is not specified by the relevant course or programme handbook. Approval will only be given in cases where the nature of the research is such that presentation of the research results in the language(s) of the materials under analysis confers significant intellectual advantage to the community of scholars who are expected to comprise the primary audience of the research. Approval to do so must be sought either at the time of admission to the University or no later than by the end of the first year of full-time study (or equivalent part-time study), and will not normally be granted retrospectively. Approval must be given by the appropriate College Committee, which must be satisfied that there are sound academic reasons for the request, and that appropriate arrangements can be made for supervision and examination, including the availability of both internal and external examiners suitably qualified to read and examine the thesis, research project or dissertation in the proposed language of submission.
- 11.3 Where such approval is given, in addition to the standard requirements, the thesis, research project or dissertation should also include a substantial summary (of approximately 10,000 words in the case of theses) written in English, summarising the main arguments, and an abstract in English must also be produced. Where Examiners' reports are completed in a language other than English, these must be translated into English before submission to the Board of Examiners. Any costs associated with this should be borne by the relevant School.



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Regulation 12 Language of assessment: Gaelic

Theses, research projects and dissertations submitted for assessment and examination may be submitted in Gaelic.

Application of the regulation

- 12.1 The University of Edinburgh wishes to accord Gaelic equal respect with English under the terms of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.
- 12.2 Candidates who wish to submit a thesis, research project or dissertation in Gaelic should seek approval to do so as early as possible, and certainly not later than by the end of the first year of full-time study (or equivalent part-time study) in the case of Doctoral and MPhil students. Approval must be given by the appropriate College Committee, which must be satisfied that appropriate arrangements can be made for supervision and examination, including the availability of both internal and external examiners suitably qualified to read and examine the thesis, research project or dissertation.
- 12.3 Where such approval is given, in addition to the standard requirements, the thesis, research project or dissertation should also include a summary (of approximately 1500 words) written in English, summarising the main arguments, and an abstract in English must also be produced. Where Examiners' reports are completed in Gaelic, these must be translated into English before submission to the Board of Examiners. Any costs associated with this should be borne by the relevant School.

Regulation 13 Progression review

The first progression review will take place for all students within 9 to 12 months of their enrolment. The student must participate in a meeting and may be required to make a written submission and/or prepare an oral presentation. Progress in the subsequent years (at 9 to 12 months) is assessed until the thesis is submitted. The online progression report form must be completed.

Application of the regulation

- 13.1 Guidance on the procedure for the progression review is included in the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/copsupervisorsresearchstudents.pdf
- 13.2 It is expected that progression reviews are normally held early within the 9 to 12 month period, to allow time for a repeat review if this is required.



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- 13.3 There are similar procedures for full-time and part-time students, and reviews of part-time students will also take place within 9 to 12 months of their enrolment. Part-time students will not be expected to have made as much progress as full-time students within this time. Exceptionally, the first progression review may be postponed, with permission from the College. The postponement must be no longer than six months.
- 13.4 Colleges/Schools may also have additional requirements, for example 10 week review.
- 13.5 Schools must ensure that students are aware of how the progression review will be conducted.

Regulation 14 Annual progression review recommendation

The Postgraduate Director or Head of the Graduate School, in consultation with the supervisors will make one of the following recommendations after the annual review:

- (a) confirmation of registration, for example for PhD, MPhil;
- (b) a repeat progression review must be undertaken within three months before confirmation of progression;
- (c) for part-time students only for the first progression review: deferment of the confirmation decision to the second annual review;
- (d) registration for a different research degree such as MPhil or MSc by Research;
- (e) registration for a postgraduate taught degree (for example MSc) or diploma can be recommended if the student has undertaken the coursework for that qualification;
- (f) exclusion from study.

The College Postgraduate Committee is responsible for making the progression decision, having considered the recommendation of the Postgraduate Director or Head of the Graduate School.

Application of the regulation

- 14.1 If the outcome of the annual review is 14(b) then the three month period starts from the date of issue of the progression decision to the student.
- 14.2 If there are doubts about a student's ability to complete a PhD successfully then option (d) must be considered. If there are serious doubts as to the student's research capability, then options (e) or (f) must be considered.
- 14.3 The Procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Study can be found at: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/withdrawal_exclusion_from_study.pdf



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Regulation 15 Repeat progression review

Where a student is offered a repeat progression review under 14(b), the repeat review must be undertaken within three months of the date of issue of the progression decision to the student.

Application of the regulation

- 15.1 The repeat review can contain any or all of the components of the progression review (see regulation 13).
- 15.2 The options for recommendations from the repeat progression review are those listed in regulation 14, with the exception of Regulation 14(b). Only one repeat review may be undertaken before confirmation of registration.
- 15.3 The College has responsibility for providing the student with a statement on expectations for progress.

Regulation 16 Notification of intention to submit a thesis for assessment

Students must notify their supervisor and the College Postgraduate Committee of their intention to submit their work for assessment.

Application of the regulation

- 16.1 The student must complete the suite of submission forms at least two months before the thesis is submitted:
 - Notification of Intention to Submit,
 - Thesis Abstract,
 - Access to a Thesis and Publication of Abstract.

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/forms/student-forms



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Regulation 17 Deadlines for the submission of a thesis for assessment

A student must submit their thesis for assessment, to the relevant College, within 12 months of the completion of their prescribed period of study, except:

- For the degree of **PhD by Research Publications** a student must submit their thesis within three to twelve months of registration.

Application of the regulation

- 17.1 The thesis, containing an abstract and lay summary, must be submitted to the relevant College Office. Only the submission sent by the College Office is assessed by the examiners.
- 17.2 All theses must conform to regulations and guidance in Section C.
- 17.3 Once a student has submitted a thesis they cannot retract it.
- 17.4 The relevant College Office is responsible for transmitting the thesis and the examiners' report forms to the examiners.

Regulation 18 Early submission

Any student wishing to submit their thesis earlier than three months prior to the end of the prescribed period of study must have the permission of the College Postgraduate Committee.

Application of the regulation

- 18.1 The student must discuss early submission with their supervisor. Colleges are unlikely to approve early submission without the agreement of the Principal Supervisor.



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Regulation 19 Examiners' reports

The College will send the thesis to the examiners who must each submit an initial, independent written report in advance of the oral examination. The examiners must not consult with each other in completing their initial report. Examiners will not send any comments or decision to the student prior to the oral examination. After the oral examination the examiners will submit a joint report.

Application of the regulation

- 19.1 At the University of Edinburgh, doctoral and MPhil degrees are assessed through a two-stage process in which each examiner, acting independently, submits an initial ('Part I') report on the thesis before the oral examination is held. Following the oral, the examiners are asked to submit a joint ('Part II') report on the thesis. Examiners submit their own Part I reports and the Internal Examiner is responsible for sending the Part II report to the relevant College Postgraduate Committee. The forms are available online:
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/forms/school-college-forms
- 19.2 Exceptionally, if the examiners do find it necessary to consult before writing their Part I reports, this fact and the reason(s) for it must be noted in their reports.
- 19.3 The reports must be sufficiently detailed to enable members of the College Postgraduate Committee (after the oral examination) to assess the scope and significance of the thesis and to appreciate its strengths and weaknesses. They must be expressed in terms that are intelligible to those who are not specialists in the particular field of the thesis.
- 19.4 Examiners must complete their initial reports (Part I) prior to the oral examination, in the time frame advised by the School or College. The joint report (Part II) should be completed directly after the oral examination and sent to the College Postgraduate Committee within two weeks of the oral.
- 19.5 The chair of the oral examination should ensure that the Part II report gives a full account of the examiners' views. In the unlikely event of examiners failing to reach agreement, separate recommendations may be made and will be subject to arbitration by the College Postgraduate Committee.



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Regulation 20 Preparation for oral assessment

All examiners must participate in any oral assessment of the student. The College has responsibility for overseeing the oral assessment of the student.

Application of the regulation

- 20.1 Oral assessment may be conducted by video link as set out in the University's PhD by Research oral examinations by video link policy.
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations/additional-guidance/viva-by-video-link>
- 20.2 The Internal Examiner is responsible for consulting with the relevant Graduate School and ensuring that all the necessary arrangements for the oral assessment are made. The arrangements, including the date and place of the oral, the chairing of it, and the names of all those participating in it, must be provided in advance to all those who are to be present (i.e. the student, all examiners, any Non-Examining Chair and any observer). Where a Non-Examining Chair has not been appointed the Internal Examiner will chair the oral. (See regulation 4.)
- 20.3 If an examiner is unable to participate in the oral assessment, it may be postponed to a later date. If postponement would be a serious hardship to the student, the College Postgraduate Committee will consider appointing an alternative examiner.
- 20.4 The examiners complete and submit the relevant forms by the specified deadline:
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/forms/school-college-forms

Regulation 21 Oral examination

The examiners will hold an oral examination to assess a student's doctoral or MPhil thesis. Oral examination may be used as part of the assessment process for other research degrees.

Application of the regulation

- 21.1 The expectation is that the oral examination will be held within three months of submission of the thesis.
- 21.2 The oral examination may be used to establish a student's knowledge of the field of their research, to establish the extent of any collaboration and to confirm that the work is the student's own. Through the oral examination, the examiners are assessing jointly whether the thesis and the student's defence of it satisfy the requirements and regulations for the award of the degree.



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- 21.3 Where there is a non-examining chair, they will chair and attend for the duration of the oral. Where a non-examining chair has not been appointed the Internal Examiner will chair the oral. (See regulation 3.)
- 21.4 Supervisors may attend the oral examination, with consent of the student and examiners, but will not participate in or comment during the oral examination. Supervisors must leave the examination room with the student and do not participate in the examiners' discussion and decision on recommendations.
- 21.5 The (oral) examination procedure of practice-led PhDs can include exhibitions, performances and other events, elements and processes.
- 21.6 The professional doctorate oral examination may cover any part of the degree programme.
- 21.7 At the end of the oral examination, the examiners may, if they have agreed a recommendation to make to the College Postgraduate Committee, indicate their recommendation to the student. The examiners must stress, however, that their recommendation is not final but will form the basis of the Part II report (see regulations 22-24). Receipt of the Part II report by the student from the College constitutes formal notification of the decision and beginning of any additional period of study set by the examiners.



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Regulation 22 PhD by Research and other Doctorates: examiner recommendation

After the oral examination, the examiners must make one of the following recommendations to the College Postgraduate Committee:

- (a) **Award PhD/Doctorate.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the doctoral degree as laid down in the University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (see www.drps.ed.ac.uk/) as appropriate. No further changes can be made to the thesis after examination; or
- (b) **Minor Corrections Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the degree except that editorial corrections are required or stated minor weaknesses, as identified by the examiners, must be remedied. In the opinion of the examiners, the student will be able to remedy these without undertaking any further original research. The corrections to the thesis must be completed within three months and are subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or
- (c) **Additional Oral Examination Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree, or satisfies the requirements except for stated minor weaknesses, but the student's oral defence of the thesis has been inadequate in specified respects. The student is required to undergo further assessment, written, oral or practical, and make any corrections to the thesis within a specified period of not more than four months. The degree is awarded subject to the student achieving a satisfactory standard in the further oral examination and subject to certification of the corrections by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests); or
- (d) **Additional Work on Thesis Needed - No Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for PhD/Doctorate.** The thesis needs work above and beyond editorial corrections or minor weaknesses in order to meet one or more of the requirements for the degree, and this work may require further supervision. However, the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements. The revised thesis must be completed within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, and which must not exceed six months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 12 months with permission from the College. In these cases College may also recategorise the recommendation to (e) – see below. The thesis is subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner(s) (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or
- (e) **Substantial Work on Thesis and Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for PhD/Doctorate.** The thesis is substantially inadequate in one or more of the requirements for the degree, but the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements. The student ought



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therefore to be invited to resubmit the thesis for oral examination in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, which must not exceed 12 months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 24 months with permission from the College; or

- (f) **Award MPhil.** The thesis is substantially deficient in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements; but the thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree of MPhil; or
- (g) **Award MPhil following Minor Corrections.** The thesis is substantially deficient in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements. However, the thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree of MPhil except for stated minor corrections in the thesis. The student should be invited to carry out the specified minor corrections as indicated by the examiners. The corrections to the thesis must be completed within three months and are subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or
- (h) **Substantial Work on Thesis Needed before Resubmission and oral examination for MPhil.** The thesis is substantially inadequate in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements. However, the thesis may satisfy the requirements for the degree of MPhil if stated deficiencies in the thesis are remedied. Accordingly, the student should be invited to resubmit the thesis in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners for the degree of MPhil. The revisions should be completed within a further period which must not exceed 12 months; or
- (i) **Award MSc by Research.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements or the requirements of the MPhil. However, the work is of sufficient quality to merit the award of MSc by Research; or
- (j) **Fail.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these or any other research degree requirements.



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Application of the regulation

- 22.1 Students cannot resubmit the thesis more than once in line with 22 (d), (e) and (h).
- 22.2 If the student does not meet the requirements set under 22(b) to (h) then they have not complied with all assessment requirements (see Regulation 9), which will result in a fail.
- 22.3 A student presenting a thesis under Regulation 22 (h) may not subsequently be permitted to resubmit the thesis under Regulation 24 (e).
- 22.4 The College Office is responsible for ensuring that the student receives a written statement of any revisions to be made to the thesis. The supervisor must confirm with the student their understanding of any revisions to be made.
- 22.5 Where a student is offered the award of a different degree under (f), (g) or (i) above then the original word limits for the offered degree are set aside.
- 22.6 Where the examiners' recommendation is (j), the College will provide the student with a written explanation of the decision. In these circumstances the College Postgraduate Dean or nominee will be available to discuss the outcome with the student, should the student request this.
- 22.7 Students failing to meet requirements following resubmission under (d), (e) or (h) may be considered for an exit award.

Regulation 23 PhD by Research Publications: examiner recommendation

After the oral examination, the examiners must make one of the following recommendations to the College Postgraduate Committee:

- (a) **Award PhD/Doctorate.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the doctoral degree as laid down in the University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (see www.drps.ed.ac.uk/) as appropriate. No further changes can be made to the thesis after examination; or
- (b) **Minor Corrections Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the degree except that editorial corrections are required or stated minor weaknesses as identified by the examiners must be remedied. Examiners may only request corrections to the critical review. In the opinion of the examiners, the student will be able to remedy these without undertaking any further original research. The corrections to the thesis must be completed within three months and are subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s),



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and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or

- (c) **Additional Oral Examination Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree, or satisfies the requirements except for stated minor weaknesses, but the student's oral defence of the thesis has been inadequate in specified respects. The student is required to undergo further assessment, written, oral or practical, and make any corrections to the thesis within a specified period of not more than four months. Examiners may only request corrections to the critical review. The degree is awarded subject to the student achieving a satisfactory standard in the further oral examination and subject to certification of the corrections by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests); or
- (d) **Additional Work on Thesis Needed - No Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for PhD by Research Publications.** The thesis needs significant work in order to meet one or more of the requirements for the degree, but the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements. Examiners may only request revisions to the critical review. The revised thesis must be completed within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, and which must not exceed six months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 12 months with permission from the College. In these cases College may also recategorise the recommendation to (e) – see below. The thesis is subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or
- (e) **Substantial Work on Thesis and Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for PhD by Research Publications.** The thesis is substantially inadequate in one or more of the requirements for the degree, but the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy them. Examiners may only request revisions to the critical review. The student ought therefore to be invited to resubmit the thesis for oral examination in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, which must not exceed 12 months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 24 months with permission from the College; or
- (f) **Fail.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these or any other research degree.

Application of the regulation

23.1 Students cannot resubmit the thesis more than once in line with 23 (d) and (e).



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- 23.2 If the student does not meet the requirements set under Regulation 23 then they have not complied with all assessment requirements (see Regulation 9), which will result in a fail.
- 23.3 The College Office is responsible for ensuring that the student receives a written statement of any revisions to be made to the thesis. The supervisor must confirm with the student their understanding of any revisions to be made.

Regulation 24 MPhil: examiner recommendation

After the oral examination, the examiners must make one of the following recommendations to the College Postgraduate Committee:

- (a) **Award MPhil.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the degree of MPhil as laid down in the University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (see www.drps.ed.ac.uk/) as appropriate. No further changes can be made to the thesis after examination; or
- (b) **Minor Corrections Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree except that editorial corrections are required or stated minor weaknesses as identified by the examiners must be remedied. In the opinion of the examiners, the student will be able to remedy these without undertaking any further original research. These corrections to the thesis must be completed within a specified period of not more than three months and are, subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or
- (c) **Additional Oral Examination Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree, or satisfies the requirements except for stated minor weaknesses, but the student's oral defence of the thesis has been inadequate in specified respects. The student is required to undergo further assessment, written, oral or practical, and make any corrections to the thesis within a specified period of not more than four months. The degree is awarded subject to the student achieving a satisfactory standard in the further oral examination and subject to certification of the corrections by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests); or
- (d) **Additional Work on Thesis Needed - No Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for MPhil.** The thesis needs significant work in order to meet one or more of the requirements for the degree, but the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements. The revised thesis must be completed within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, and which must not exceed six months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 12 months with permission from the



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College. In these cases College may also recategorise the recommendation to (e) – see below. The thesis is subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or

- (e) **Substantial Work on Thesis and Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for MPhil.** The thesis is substantially inadequate in one or more of the requirements for the degree, but the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy them. The student ought therefore to be invited to resubmit the thesis for oral examination in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, which must not exceed 12 months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 24 months with permission from the College; or
- (f) **Award MSc by Research.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the MPhil and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements. However, the work is of sufficient quality to merit the award of MSc by Research; or
- (g) **Fail.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these or any other research degree.

Application of the regulation

- 24.1 Students cannot resubmit the thesis more than once in line with 24 (d) and (e).
- 24.2 If the student does not meet the requirements set under Regulation 24 then they have not complied with all assessment requirements (see Regulation 9), which will result in a fail.
- 24.3 The College Office is responsible for ensuring that the student receives a written statement of any revisions to be made to the thesis. The supervisor must confirm with the student their understanding of any revisions to be made.
- 24.4 Students failing to meet requirements following resubmission under (d) or (e) may be considered for an exit award.
- 24.5 Where the student is offered the award of an MPhil as an exit degree, having originally submitted for a doctorate, the MPhil word count will be set aside.



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Regulation 25 Thesis resubmissions

Where the examiners decide that resubmission of a thesis is required, they must write a detailed statement of the aspects which require revision. The resubmitted thesis is judged only against this written statement. A student is permitted only one opportunity to resubmit their thesis.

Application of the regulation

- 25.1 No further criticism of other material or aspects of the thesis passed as satisfactory at the first assessment can be introduced at a later stage. The written statement and the aspects of the thesis which require revision must be approved by the College Postgraduate Committee and cannot subsequently be altered without the agreement of that Committee.
- 25.2 A student is permitted only one opportunity to resubmit their thesis. Thereafter, at most, they may make only minor corrections.
- 25.3 In the event of resubmission, the examiners will re-assess the thesis and may hold a second oral examination, if they consider it appropriate.
- 25.4 If resubmission is recommended, only one copy of the original thesis should be returned to the student. The other should be retained by the Internal Examiner to facilitate checking of revisions when the thesis is resubmitted.

Regulation 26 Academic misconduct

It is an offence for any student to make use of unfair means in any University assessment, to assist a student to make use of such unfair means, to do anything prejudicial to the good conduct of the assessment, or to impersonate another student or allow another person to impersonate them in an assessment. Any student found to have cheated or attempted to cheat in an assessment may be deemed to have failed that assessment and disciplinary action may be taken.

Application of the regulation

- 26.1 Plagiarism is the act of copying or including in one's own work, without adequate acknowledgement, intentionally or unintentionally, the work of another or your own previously assessed original work. It is academically fraudulent and an offence against University discipline. Plagiarism, at whatever stage of a student's course, whether discovered before or after graduation, will be investigated and dealt with appropriately by the University. The innocent misuse or quotation of material without formal and proper acknowledgement can constitute plagiarism, even when there is no deliberate intent to cheat. Work may be deemed to be plagiarised if it



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consists of close paraphrasing or unacknowledged summary of a source, as well as word-for-word transcription. Any failure adequately to acknowledge or properly reference other sources in submitted work could lead to lower marks and to disciplinary action being taken.

- 26.2 It is academically fraudulent and an offence against the University's Code of Student Conduct for a student to invent or falsify data, evidence, references, experimental results or other material contributing to any student's assessed work or for a student knowingly to make use of such material. It is also an offence against the University's Code of Student Conduct for students to collude in the submission of work that is intended for the assessment of individual academic performance or for a student to allow their work to be used by another student for fraudulent purposes.
- 26.3 A student who has submitted work for one course at this or another University must not submit the same work or part of the work to attempt to achieve academic credit through another course. See also the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Degree Regulations at: www.drps.ed.ac.uk/
- 26.4 Students need to be careful when asking peers to proof-read their work. Proof-readers should only comment on the vocabulary, grammar and general clarity of written English. They should not advise on subject matter or argumentation.
- 26.5 Students need to be careful to avoid academic misconduct when submitting group projects and to be clear about their individual contribution to the submission.
- 26.6 Information on academic misconduct and plagiarism, and how such cases will be handled, is given on the Academic Services website.
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct

Regulation 27 Security of marks

Assessed work, marks and grades must be handled, transported, recorded and stored securely.

Application of the regulation

- 27.1 The College has responsibility for the security of arrangements. In practice, the operation of this may be delegated to the College Office, Graduate School or equivalent.
- 27.2 Security arrangements must also include sending assessed work, marks and grades to examiners, including External Examiners; marking arrangements for online assessment; and correspondence about marks, which may be by email.



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Section C Thesis Regulations

Regulation 28 Format of thesis

Students are responsible for ensuring that the submitted thesis is presented in a clear, accessible and consistent format.

Application of the regulation

- 28.1 Guidance regarding the standards for the Format of a Thesis is available at: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/thesisbinding.pdf
- 28.2 If the School or the examiners have concerns regarding the presentation of a thesis they should seek advice from the College. If the College considers the presentation of a thesis to make it unreasonable for the examiners to conduct the examination, it may require the student to represent and resubmit the thesis.

Regulation 29 Copyright

The student holds copyright as author of all work submitted for assessment.

Doctoral and MPhil students must grant the University the right to publish the thesis, abstract or list of works, and/or to authorise its publication for any scholarly purpose with proper acknowledgement of authorship.

Application of the regulations

- 29.1 The student reserves the copyright on both the thesis and the abstract.
- 29.2 Students must complete the Access to a Thesis and Publication Abstract form available to download from: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/forms/student-forms
- 29.3 Where students on MSc by Research programmes are required to deposit their research project or dissertation in the University library, the provisions of this regulation apply.



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Regulation 30 Thesis title

The student must provide a thesis title with the Notice of Intention to Submit Form (where this form is used).

Application of the regulation

- 30.1 The Notification of Intention to Submit Form is available online:
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/forms/student-forms
- 30.2 The expectation is that the student's thesis title on the Notification of Intention to Submit Form will be the final title for the thesis.

Regulation 31 Thesis length

Research degree theses, research projects and dissertations must not exceed the length specifications set out in the regulations for the degree.

Application of the regulation

- 31.1 Word count specifications are provided in the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS) or programme documentation: www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

Regulation 32 Previously published material

Where material to be included in a thesis, research project or dissertation has been published before the thesis, research project or dissertation is submitted, the student must acknowledge the fact of such publication.

Application of the regulation

- 32.1 The signed declaration must contain a clear statement on the inclusion of any previously published material. See also regulation 34.
- 32.2 A student cannot include in a thesis material that has been accepted for publication prior to the start of their programme of study, unless registered for a PhD by Research Publications degree. Guidance on including publications in a thesis is available online: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/publications_in_thesis.pdf
- 32.3 See also regulation 26.



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Regulation 33 PhD by Research Publications: submission

The portfolio of published work submitted for the PhD by Research Publications must be accompanied by an abstract and also by a general critical review by the student of all the submitted work.

Application of the regulation

- 33.1 The critical review must summarise the aims, objectives, methodology, results and conclusions covered by the work submitted in the portfolio. It must also critically assess how the work contributes significantly to the expansion of knowledge, and indicate how the publications form a coherent body of work and what contribution the student has made to this work.
- 33.2 The specifications for submission of PhD by Research Publications are listed in the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS): www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

Regulation 34 Signed declaration

Every student must incorporate a signed declaration in the thesis, research project or dissertation submitted for assessment, stating:

- (a) that the thesis, research project or dissertation has been composed by the student, and
- (b) either that the work is the student's own, or, if the student has been a member of a research group, that the student has made a substantial contribution to the work, such contribution being clearly indicated, or
- (c) that the work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification except as specified, and
- (d) that any included publications are the student's own work, except where indicated throughout the thesis and summarised and clearly identified on the declarations page of the thesis.

Application of the regulation

- 34.1 Guidance on completing the signed declaration is available online: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/thesis_signed_declaration.pdf



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Section D Assessment Decisions

Regulation 35 College Postgraduate Committee: approval of assessment decisions

The College Postgraduate Committee discusses the examiners' reports and decides whether or not to approve the recommendations made by the examiners.

Application of the regulation

- 35.1 Prior to the meeting of the College Postgraduate Committee, examiners' recommendations are provisional until approved or modified by the Committee.
- 35.2 The examiners for individual students do not participate in any assessment decisions regarding these students in the relevant meeting of the College Postgraduate Committee.
- 35.3 The Secretary to the College Postgraduate Committee is responsible for giving reasonable notice of meetings: ensuring that the recommendations of the Committee are approved in writing and made available to Student Administration at the required time; and ensuring that a minute of the meeting is produced.
- 35.4 The minute is a confidential document although information on a particular student may need to be disclosed to that student under the Data Protection Act and generic information may need to be disclosed under Freedom of Information legislation.

Regulation 36 Committee recommendation

The College Postgraduate Committee must *either* confirm the examiners' recommendation and transmit it to the Senatus without further comment *or* for stated reasons make a different recommendation to the Senatus, including, where appropriate, assessment by different examiners.

Application of the regulation

- 36.1 The Committee, on receipt of a recommendation by the examiners, must consider whether it appears to be adequately justified in the light of the full reports by the examiners, and may make further inquiry of the examiners and the student's supervisor(s).
- 36.2 If the Committee receives reports by the examiners indicating disagreement as to the appropriate recommendation, it may recommend to Senatus that the recommendation of one of the examiners be accepted in preference to that of the



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other. The Committee may require that a further report on the thesis be obtained from some other examiner or examiners, or that the assessment of the thesis be conducted from the beginning by different examiners.

- 36.3 If the Committee is offering an alternative award to that for which a student had originally submitted (for example MPhil as an exit award for PhD submission), the student must either agree or decline to accept the alternative award.
- 36.4 If the Committee varies the recommendation of the examiners for the degree, the College will provide the student with a written explanation of the decision. In these circumstances the College Postgraduate Dean or nominee will be available to discuss the outcome with the student, should the student request this.

Regulation 37 College Postgraduate Committee: quorum for assessment decisions

Provided reasonable notice of a meeting has been given, a meeting is properly constituted and empowered to act if at least three academic members (including the Convenor) are present.

Application of the regulation

- 37.1 The Convenor of the Committee may, at their discretion, invite any person who has been involved in the assessment of the work under consideration by the Committee to be present 'in attendance' but without voting rights.

Regulation 38 Confidentiality

All discussion about the assessment of an individual student at a College Postgraduate Committee meeting is confidential.

Application of the regulation

- 38.1 The College Postgraduate Committee reaches a collective decision. The decision does not need to be unanimous.
- 38.2 The views of a particular committee member should not be made known to a student. If a student makes a request under the Data Protection Act, information recorded in the minutes on that particular student will need to be disclosed. In doing so, comments should be anonymised, for example assigned to Member 1, Member 2. Further information is available at:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf



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- 38.3 Students have a right to see information about themselves recorded in minutes of the College Postgraduate Committee meeting.
- 38.4 Other than with the written permission of the student concerned, members of staff should not make available information about marks to persons or bodies outside the University except when necessary in the context of a reference.
- 38.5 Guidance on disclosing information on students can be found at:
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/data-protection/data-protection-guidance/sharing-personal-data>

Regulation 39 Retention and destruction of material

Assessed material must be retained and destroyed in accordance with the University's student records retention guidance.

Application of the regulation

- 39.1 Information about the student records retention schedule is online:
www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/guidance/records/retention/student-records
- 39.2 Material which contributes to the assessment of the degree will be retained in the School, College Office or Library for a suitable period after the College Postgraduate Committee meeting which decides the overall classification or award of the degree, diploma or certificate. This enables the University to respond to any student appeal.
- 39.3 Assessment material should be destroyed at the end of the retention period. For students who submit appeals, the retention period will need to be extended until the end of the appeal process. Other material which contributes to the final assessment of the degree may be returned to the student after the expiry of the retention period providing they do not make known the views of a particular examiner (see regulation 38). Theses, research projects and dissertations may be retained by Schools, who have the responsibility to make them available to any enquirer in response to a Freedom of Information request (unless an exemption applies). Assessment samples may be retained for specified periods as supporting documentation for accreditation and quality assurance purposes, for example Internal Periodic Reviews. Material which is not retained or returned should be destroyed at the end of the retention period.



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Regulation 40 Award of degrees

Degrees are awarded by the Senatus on the basis of recommendations of the College, or Board of Examiners.

Regulation 41 College Postgraduate Committee: return of decision

Decisions and awards recommended by the examiners and confirmed by the College Postgraduate Committee must be recorded on the Student Records System as the final official results of the University.

Application of the regulation

- 41.1 Doctoral and MPhil students receive Part II reports, which constitute formal notification of the Committee decision, after the meeting of the College Postgraduate Committee.
- 41.2 The decisions of the Committee must be notified to Student Administration as soon as possible and certainly no later than 21 days before the date of graduation.
- 41.3 Notification of final results and recommendation of the award of qualification to students, following the meeting of the Committee, is the responsibility of the College Office.
- 41.4 Because of the nature of research degrees, transcripts for such degrees are not issued by the University. Colleges may instead provide students with an explanation of the specific degree awarded and confirmation that the student has been awarded (or is eligible to be awarded) this degree.

Regulation 42 Status of Decisions

Decisions by a College Postgraduate Committee, once certified in writing are final. In exceptional cases the College Postgraduate Committee can review its decision.

Application of the regulation

- 42.1 A College Postgraduate Committee may, review a decision if significant information relevant to that decision, which was unavailable at the time the decision was made, comes to light or if any error having a material bearing on that decision or an error in the written certification of that decision has been made.
- 42.2 If the Committee is satisfied that there are grounds for changing its decision it will report its decision to Student Systems.



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- 42.3 Where an error is discovered in the assessment or marking of any examination or any component of an assessment or in the calculation, recording or notification of the result of any assessment or any component thereof or in the classification or result of any degree or in any process connected with any of these matters, the University shall forthwith correct that error and amend its records to show the correct result or classification and whether or not the result or classification has been published or otherwise notified to the student. The University shall notify the student of the corrected result or classification as soon as practicable and shall also correct any reference or statement which may have been provided by the University whether to the student or to a third party. Having been notified of the corrected result or classification the student shall return to the University any documentation which may have been issued to the student notifying the original result or classification which has been corrected. The student shall have no claim against the University for any loss or damage which may have been incurred by the student as a result of any error which may have been made.
- 42.4 In proved cases of substantial and significant copying, plagiarism or other fraud, the Senatus has the power to reduce the classification of, or to revoke, any degree it has already awarded, and to require the degree, diploma or certificate scroll to be returned.
- 42.5 Any member of Senatus may request Senatus to refer for investigation any matter concerning assessment.

Regulation 43 Convener's Action

The Convener of the College Postgraduate Committee or Progression Board may take decisions by Convener's Action.

Application of the regulation

- 43.1 This may occur when the College Postgraduate Committee takes a decision in principle but needs confirmation or further information, or when the Committee considers the possible outcomes and authorises the Convener, once relevant information is known, to apply the appropriate option. Convener's Action may also be appropriate when the decision to be made follows an existing precedent.
- 43.2 Decisions made by Convener's Action should be recorded and reported to the relevant Board or Committee.



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Regulation 44 Final version of the thesis

The student is required to submit the final version of the thesis to the College Postgraduate Office.

Application of the regulation

- 44.1 Degrees are conferred upon receipt of the final version of the thesis and following approval by the Senate at graduation.
- 44.2 The final version of the thesis must be submitted within one month of approval of corrections and/or recommendation of award. A student cannot graduate until they have submitted the final version of their thesis to the College Postgraduate Office. See:
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration/graduations.
- 44.3 Final submission must be notified by the College Office to Student Systems as soon as possible. Graduation deadline information is available online:
www.ed.ac.uk/student-systems/key-dates
- 44.4 Students are responsible for submitting the final version of their thesis in electronic form.
- 44.5 Further details on the submission of theses are available in the *Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students* and from the Edinburgh Research Archive (ERA) at <https://era.ed.ac.uk/>.

Regulation 45 Academic Appeal

Students have the right of academic appeal against the decisions of the College Postgraduate Committee on specific grounds, which are set out in the University's Student Appeal Regulations:

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/appeals



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Section E MSc by Research Degrees

Regulation 46 MSc by Research degrees: examination

There are two types of MSc by Research degrees:

1. MSc by Research degrees which are examined by the relevant College Postgraduate Committee, and are subject to all relevant provisions of the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees except for those regulations listed below.
2. MSc by Research degrees for which the responsibilities of the College Postgraduate Committee are carried out by a Board of Examiners within a School. For these programmes, the provisions of the Taught Assessment Regulations relating to the operation of Boards of Examiners apply instead of the following regulations in the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees: 2 to 7; 35-38; 41 to 43.

Both types of MSc by Research degrees are exempt from the following provisions of the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees: 13-19; 22-25; 33; 44.

Schools will inform students at the start of an MSc by Research programme which examination arrangements apply to their programme.

Regulation 47 MSc by Research degrees: submission of research project or dissertation

Students on MSc by Research degrees must submit their research project or dissertation on or prior to the completion of the prescribed period of study.

Application of the regulation

- 47.1 Once a student has submitted a research project or dissertation, they cannot retract it.
- 47.2 Students on some MSc by Research programmes may be required to complete Notification of Intention to Submit forms prior to submission of their research project or dissertation. The relevant School or College will inform students where they are required to submit the form.



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Regulation 48 MSc by Research degrees: markers

For MSc by Research programmes, staff who are or have been a supervisor of the student may not act as a marker or Internal Examiner for the research project or dissertation, where the research project or dissertation is worth more than 60 credits.

Regulation 49 MSc by Research degrees: oral assessment

Oral assessment may be used as part of the examination process for MSc by Research degrees. Schools will inform students at the start of an MSc by Research programme whether oral assessment is to be used as part of the examination process for their degree. Where oral assessment is used on an MSc by Research programme, the relevant College Postgraduate Committee or Board of Examiners will determine whether regulations 20 and 21 of the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees, or the provisions of the Taught Assessment Regulations relating to Oral assessment will apply. Schools will inform students which regulations apply to their programme.

Regulation 50 MSc by Research degrees: requirements for award

In order to be awarded the degree of MSc by Research, students must pass at least 180 credits' worth of courses. This may include the award of credits on aggregate for up to 40 credits. Where credit on aggregate is offered, the provisions of the Taught Assessment Regulations (under "Postgraduate assessment progression") apply.

Where marks are awarded for assessment on MSc by Research degrees, these must be expressed using the postgraduate common marking scheme:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme>

Application of the regulation

- 50.1 In each Common Marking Scheme, Colleges and Schools may amplify, but not alter, the overall description of grades.
- 50.2 For some MSc by Research programmes the examiners may award a mark or grade, merit or distinction.
- 50.3 There will be no progression hurdle to proceed to the research project or dissertation.
- 50.4 Where a mark is awarded for the research project or dissertation, this must be passed at a minimum of 50%. Failure to achieve this standard will automatically result in no award at MSc level being made.



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Regulation 51 MSc by Research degrees: examiner recommendation

The examiners may recommend:

- (a) **Award Pass with Distinction in MSc by Research.** See Regulation 52; or
- (b) **Award Pass with Merit in MSc by Research.** See Regulation 53; or
- (c) **Award MSc by Research.** The research project or dissertation satisfies the requirements for the award of the degree as laid down in the University's [Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study](#) as appropriate and that the degree should be awarded; or
- (d) **Offer resubmission for MSc by Research.** The dissertation or research project satisfies the requirements for the degree except that minor corrections are required or stated minor weaknesses as identified by the examiners must be remedied. In the opinion of the examiners, the student will be able to remedy these with minimal supervision and without undertaking any further original research; or
- (e) **Award exit award.** The research project or dissertation is substantially inadequate in one or more of the requirements for the MSc by Research. However, the work is of sufficient quality to merit the award of postgraduate diploma or certificate; or
- (f) **Fail.** The research project or dissertation is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the degree and does not meet the requirements for any award.

Application of the regulation

- 51.1 For those MSc by Research degrees assessed by a Board of Examiners within a School, the Board makes a single recommendation for each student directly to the Senatus.
- 51.2 Corrections to MSc by Research dissertations or research projects are only permitted where the recommendation is (d) Offer resubmission for MSc by Research. Corrections are not permitted to MSc by Research dissertations or research projects where the recommendation is (a), (b) or (c) above.



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Regulation 52 MSc by Research degrees: distinction

MSc by Research degrees may be awarded with distinction. Different criteria for the award of distinction may be used depending on the volume of credit allocated to the research project or dissertation.

Where the research project or dissertation is worth 120 credits or more:

- (a) Where a mark has been awarded for the research project or dissertation, a student may be awarded a distinction if they have attained a mark of at least 70% on the postgraduate assessment common marking scheme for the research project or dissertation; or
- (b) Where a mark has been awarded for the research project or dissertation and other courses taken as part of the degree, a student may be awarded a distinction if they have attained a mark of at least 70% on the postgraduate assessment common marking scheme for the research project or dissertation, and an average of at least 70% for all other components for which a mark has been awarded; or
- (c) Where a mark has not been awarded for the research project or dissertation, the Examiners may recommend that the student be awarded the MSc by Research with Distinction.

Where the research project or dissertation is worth less than 120 credits:

- (d) Where a mark has been awarded for the research project or dissertation and other courses taken as part of the degree, a student may be awarded a distinction if they have attained a mark of at least 70% on the postgraduate assessment common marking scheme for the research project or dissertation, and an average of at least 70% for all other components for which a mark has been awarded.

Where an MSc by Research may be awarded with distinction, Schools must inform students in advance which criteria apply to their programme.

Application of the regulation

- 52.1 Where a student has been permitted to resubmit their dissertation or research project following a marginal fail at the first attempt in line with Regulation 54, they are not eligible for the award of distinction.
- 52.2 The postgraduate common marking scheme can be found at:
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme>



Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees Academic Year 2023/24

Regulation 53 MSc by Research degrees: merit

MSc by Research degrees may be awarded with merit. Different criteria for the award of merit may be used depending on the volume of credit allocated to the research project or dissertation.

Where the research project or dissertation is worth 120 credits or more:

- (a) Where a mark has been awarded for the research project or dissertation, a student may be awarded the degree with merit if they have attained a mark of at least 60% on the postgraduate assessment common marking scheme for the research project or dissertation; or
- (b) Where a mark has been awarded for the research project or dissertation and other courses taken as part of the degree, a student may be awarded the degree with merit if they have attained a mark of at least 60% on the postgraduate assessment common marking scheme for the research project or dissertation, and an average of at least 60% for all other components for which a mark has been awarded; or
- (c) Where a mark has not been awarded for the research project or dissertation, the Examiners may recommend that the student be awarded the MSc by Research with Merit.

Where the research project or dissertation is worth less than 120 credits:

- (d) Where a mark has been awarded for the research project or dissertation and other courses taken as part of the degree, a student may be awarded the degree with merit if they have attained a mark of at least 60% on the postgraduate assessment common marking scheme for the research project or dissertation, and an average of at least 60% for all other components for which a mark has been awarded.

Where an MSc by Research may be awarded with merit, Schools must inform students in advance which criteria apply to their programme.

Application of the regulation

- 53.1 Where a student has been permitted to resubmit their dissertation or research project following a marginal fail at the first attempt in line with Regulation 54, they are not eligible for the award of merit.



Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees Academic Year 2023/24

Regulation 54 MSc by Research degrees: resubmission of the research project or dissertation

Where the Board of Examiners has offered resubmission in line with Regulation 51 (d), students are entitled to one resubmission of the research project or dissertation. Students may also be offered the opportunity to resubmit the research project or dissertation where a special case regarding an individual student's circumstances has been approved by the College.

Application of the regulation

- 54.1 The relevant Board of Examiners will provide a student permitted to submit a revised dissertation or research project with a statement, which outlines the deficiencies in their original submission. The student is also entitled to receive further written advice from their dissertation or research project supervisor on one occasion before resubmission.
- 54.2 The Board of Examiners will advise the student of the deadline for submission of their revised dissertation or research project, which will be three months from the date of the student receiving notification of their original result.
- 54.3 Where a student declines the opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project, or fails to submit by the stated deadline, the Board of Examiners will treat the mark the student received for their first attempt as final and the Board of Examiners will consider the student for a relevant exit award.
- 54.4 If the Board of Examiners agrees that the revised dissertation or research project meets the requirements for a pass at MSc by Research level, the student will be awarded the MSc by Research degree. Where a mark is recorded for the dissertation or research project, the recorded mark for the revised dissertation or research project will be capped at 50%. Where no mark is recorded for the dissertation or research project, the revised dissertation may be awarded a pass or fail only, and will not be eligible for merit or distinction.
- 54.5 Where students on MSc by Research programmes are required to deposit their research project or dissertation in the University library, they may be permitted to submit a revised version within one month of recommendation of award, but the revised version will not be subject to reassessment. A student cannot graduate until they have submitted the final version of their research project or dissertation to the College Postgraduate Office.



Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees Academic Year 2023~~2~~/24~~3~~

Section F Interpretation and significant disruption

Regulation 55 Interpretation of the regulations

The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee has authority to resolve any dispute arising from these regulations. The University Secretary and their nominees have authority to make urgent decisions relating to assessment issues.

Application of the regulation

- 55.1 Staff who need guidance on the postgraduate assessment regulations for research degrees, beyond that provided in the regulations and associated guidance, should contact the relevant Dean and/or the Academic Policy Officer with responsibility for the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/academic-policy-regulations>
- 55.2 The University uses questions on the regulations as a source of information for training and development of the regulations.

Regulation 56 Significant disruption: concessions and standards

When the University's assessment practices are vulnerable to significant disruption then the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee may approve temporary concessions to mitigate the impact of assessment disruption on students, without compromising academic standards. The College takes decisions that ensure the consistency of treatment of students and the maintenance of academic standards. The overriding principles are that:

- (a) the academic judgement of the examiners remains paramount;
- (b) the University's academic standards will be maintained; and
- (c) the provisions of the University's Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees remain in force except where a concession has been approved by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee.

These concessions will only be used where necessary: if a College Postgraduate Committee is able to operate without a concession then the Committee will do so.

Application of the regulation

- 56.1 Significant disruption can be extremes of weather, loss of facilities, and factors beyond the University's control which have an impact on the assessment of students. This may result in College Postgraduate Committees only having partial results available.



Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees Academic Year ~~2022/23~~2023/24

- 56.2 In response to individual significant disruptions that may have a widespread impact on assessment, the University will adopt a communication strategy for students, staff and key external stakeholders, for example External Examiners, to ensure that they are aware of the measures that are adopted.
- 56.3 All forms of assessment, such as theses submitted for assessment, examination scripts and course assignments, are the property and responsibility of the University, not of individual examiners or markers. They therefore must be accessible to the University when required.
- 56.4 Drawing on previous experience [CSPC 14/15 2 C], the issues and regulations where APRC may consider concessions include, but are not limited to:
- (a) participation of External Examiners;
 - (b) College Postgraduate Committee quorum;
 - (c) annual progression decisions.

~~17 X June 2022~~2023 25 May 2023

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**25 May 2023****Deadline for late Special Circumstances applications
for PGT dissertations 2022/23****Description of paper**

1. The paper proposes an amendment to the schedule of deadlines for late Special Circumstances (SC) applications for 2022/23.

Action requested / recommendation

2. APRC approval of an approach to setting an amended deadline for late submission of SC applications relating to PGT Dissertations in 2022/23, based on the options presented in paragraphs 12 and 13 below.

Background and context

3. The Special Circumstances Policy (3.1) states that 'No late applications will be considered after the deadline for the relevant Semester published on the ESC [Extensions and Special Circumstances Service] web pages.' The publication of a deadline for 'late' applications is intended to allow an opportunity for students whose application is late due to extenuating circumstances to submit a late application.
4. As agreed at the APRC meeting on [27 January 2022](#), APRC approve University-level deadlines for late SC applications on an annual basis. These are then published in the University [Key Dates](#) and the [ESC website](#).
5. The deadlines for 2022/23 were approved on [26 May 2022](#), and the deadline for late applications 'for assessments completed in the resit diet and PGT assessments' was set as 'two weeks after the end of the August resit diet for assessments completed in the resit diet and PGT assessments.'
6. Via e-business in March 2023, APRC agreed to amend the late SC application deadline for resit assessments to Monday 28 August 2023. Please see Paper 7C https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/aprcmarche-business_agendaandpapers.pdf. At that time, APRC agreed to delay making a decision on amending the late SC deadline for PGT dissertations to 25 May 2023.

Discussion

7. Schools are asked to set local deadlines for Special Circumstances applications, and these are published to students by the Schools and via the [ESC website](#). The 'late' SC application deadline is also published on the ESC website. This applies to all students. The existence of a deadline for late SC applications is in recognition of the fact that some students may miss the School deadline by a short period due to the impact of their circumstances.

8. Any applications submitted to ESC after the School deadline but up to the 'late' deadline must be accompanied by an explanation for submitting the application late, and this reason must be supported by evidence. Late applications are only accepted if there is an exceptional and evidenced reason for an application being submitted past the deadline. Any applications submitted to ESC after the late application deadline are treated as 'retrospective' and are not accepted.
9. APRC have previously preferred to set a single late SC deadline for the resit diet and PGT dissertations. However, based on School SC deadlines set in 2021/22, School SC application deadlines for PGT dissertation SC are often significantly later than School deadlines for assessment submissions during the resit diet (based on 2021/22 data, 13 Schools had SC application deadlines for PGT dissertations that were on or after 30 August). In addition, the deadline for uploading resit results to EUCLID is Friday 1st September, while the date for publication of awards for students graduating in November is 6 November 2023. Therefore, there is good reason to consider setting different deadlines for late SC applications for assessments submitted as part of the resit diet and for PGT dissertations.
10. In 2021/22, School deadlines for PGT dissertation SC applications covered a very wide range of dates. Deadlines ranged from 5 August to 29 September. Part-time MSc programmes and two year MSc programmes often have earlier deadlines (for example, deadlines in mid-July in Clinical Sciences). It is not known at this stage if the range of dates is a consequence of PGT dissertation dates, Board of Examiner meeting dates, or another reason.
11. Data on School SC deadlines for PGT dissertations in 2022/23 has not yet been submitted to ESC. However, it seems reasonable to assume that the range of dates may be similar to those in 2021/22, and that some of these dates may have been published to students.
12. The options below are presented for consideration:
 - a. Publish a single late SC deadline for all submissions in the August period: this would be 28 August 2023 (the published deadline for late SC submissions during the resit diet). This is likely to be in advance of some School deadlines for SC applications relating to PGT dissertations, therefore presenting conflicting information to students.
 - b. Set the late SC deadline for PGT dissertations as 'one week after the School deadline'. This does not achieve the aims of a single, easily communicated deadline for all students. However, this avoids setting a single deadline that is likely to be either / both before some School SC deadlines, and very significantly after some School SC deadlines and Board of Examiner meetings have ratified outcomes.
 - c. Set the late SC deadline for PGT dissertations one week after the last School deadline. This creates one deadline for all students, but is likely to result in a deadline that is very significantly after the deadlines for some

Schools, and potentially significantly after some Board of Examiner meetings have ratified outcomes. This would be contrary to the aims endorsed by APRC at its meeting on [27 January 2022 \(please see paper 3H\)](#) If this option is selected, information on School deadlines for 2022/23 is required before this date can be set.

13. Option b is recommended and is supported by Colleges and ESC. However, this option requires that all Schools provide their deadlines to ESC so that these can be published on the ESC website.

Resource implications

14. No specific resource implications.

Risk management

15. The paper has considered risks to PGT students relating to conflicting information about SC deadlines for PGT dissertations and risks to School procedures created by inappropriately early or late deadlines.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

16. N/A

Equality & diversity

17. Equality and Diversity has been considered and the proposal does not carry likely impacts for student in any particular characteristic groups. The impact of disabilities upon study are primarily addressed through Schedules of Adjustments, though students with disabilities may submit Special Circumstances applications in relation to unexpected or temporary flare-ups in their condition. Students who miss the deadline for late applications for Special Circumstances may still be able to have their application considered, where their School is amenable to this, and will always have the right to an academic appeal.

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

18. If the amendment is approved, the Key Dates and ESC webpages will be updated accordingly and the amendment will be communicated to Schools.

Author

Dr Kathryn Nicol
Head of Academic Policy and Regulations
18 May 2023

Freedom of Information

Open

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**25 May 2023****Deadlines for late Special Circumstances applications 2023/24****Description of paper**

1. The paper proposes a schedule of deadlines for late Special Circumstances (SC) applications in 2023/24.

Action requested / recommendation

2. APRC approval of an amendment to the approach to setting late SC deadlines (paragraph 6), and approval of the proposed deadlines for 2023/24 (paragraph 8).

Background and context

3. The Special Circumstances Policy (3.1) states that 'No late applications will be considered after the deadline for the relevant Semester published on the ESC [Extensions and Special Circumstances Service] web pages.' The publication of a deadline for 'late' applications is intended to allow an opportunity for students whose application is late due to extenuating circumstances to submit a late application. Student who submit a late application due to extenuating circumstances must provide evidenced reasons for applying late.
4. As agreed at the APRC meeting on [27 January 2022](#), APRC approve University-level deadlines for late SC applications on an annual basis. These are then published in the University [Key Dates](#) and the [ESC website](#).
5. On 27 January 2022, APRC agreed late SC deadlines will be no later than:
 - 5.1. The end of the January welcome period, for courses completed in Semester 1;
 - 5.2. One week after the end of the Semester 2 exam diet, for courses completed in Semester 2;
 - 5.3. Two weeks after the end of the August resit diet, for assessments completed in the resit diet.

Discussion

6. Following review of the 2022/23 late SC deadlines, it is proposed that the approach to setting late SC deadlines around the resit diet (5.3 above) is amended as below. This change is proposed in order to avoid a clash between the late SC deadline and the deadline to upload results on Euclid, and to separate the resit deadline and PGT dissertation deadline, in line with the separation of these deadlines in the information published by Schools to students. Going forward, late SC deadlines will be no later than:
 - 6.1. One week after the end of the August resit diet, for assessments completed in the resit diet.
 - 6.2. One week after the published School SC deadline for PGT dissertations

7. This decision does not preclude APRC reviewing this approach in future, particularly in line with any amendments to the Special Circumstances Policy or consideration of whether School SC deadlines for PGT dissertations might be more standardised.
8. If APRC approves the amended approach above, the proposed deadlines for 2023/24 are:
 - 8.1. 12 noon, Friday 12 January 2024 for courses completed in semester 1.
 - 8.2. 12 noon, Friday 31 May 2024 for courses completed in semester 2.
 - 8.3. 12 noon, Friday 23 August 2024 for courses completed in the August resit diet
 - 8.4. One week after the published School SC deadline for PGT dissertations

Resource implications

9. The proposals above do not create any new resource requirements.

Risk management

10. The proposal does not present any significant risks.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

11. N/A

Equality & diversity

12. Equality and Diversity has been considered and the proposal does not carry likely impacts for student in any particular characteristic groups. The impact of disabilities upon study are primarily addressed through Schedules of Adjustments, though students with disabilities may submit Special Circumstances applications in relation to unexpected or temporary flare-ups in their condition. Students who miss the deadline for late applications for Special Circumstances may still be able to have their application considered, where their School is amenable to this, and will always have the right to an academic appeal.

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

13. If the proposals are approved, the deadlines will be included in the Key Dates, the ESC pages and will be communicated to Schools.

Author

Dr Kathryn Nicol
Head of Academic Policy and Regulations
18 May 2023

Freedom of Information

Open

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

25 May 2023

Revised curriculum approval arrangements for the Edinburgh Futures Institute

Description of paper

1. The EFI education vision is to offer interdisciplinary courses and programmes that take challenge-led, data-focused, and externally-engaged approaches in partnership with Schools. Currently the EFI Curriculum Oversight Board, administratively managed by the CAHSS College Office, is the governing body with responsibility for the approval of EFI's curriculum. This paper sets out the proposal to establish a Board of Studies for EFI with effect from September 2023, superseding the existing Curriculum Oversight Board.
2. The proposal will support EFI in its efforts to contribute to the delivery of the following outcomes outlined in Strategy 2030:
 - i. The undergraduate curriculum will support breadth and choice, preparing students, graduates and alumni to make a difference in whatever they do, wherever they do it.
 - ii. We will be a global leader in artificial intelligence and the use of data with integrity.
 - iii. Improved digital outreach will see us enabling global participation in education.
 - iv. We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and amplify our impacts.
 - v. Edinburgh will become the Data Capital of Europe. We will deliver inclusive growth, provide data skills to at least 100,000 individuals, and create new companies and solutions for global challenges.
 - vi. We will have more user-friendly processes and efficient systems to support our work.
 - vii. Multidisciplinary postgraduate education pathways will support flexible whole-life learning.

Action requested / recommendation

3. The paper invites the Committee to approve the formation of a Board of Studies for EFI as detailed in the paper and to disband the Curriculum Oversight Board with effect from September 2023.

Background and context

4. At its meeting on 19 September 2019, the Committee agreed to establish an EFI Curriculum Oversight Board to take responsibility for curriculum approval for EFI courses and programmes: some modest changes to the membership and operation of the Board were approved by the Committee at its meeting on 25 November 2021 until the end of 2023-24. The full paper from 25 November 2021 is available [here](#) and details EFI's agreed operating model for education and the remit, membership, operation and quorum of the current Curriculum Oversight Board.

5. To date, the Curriculum Oversight Board has considered and approved the following:

- Five new undergraduate pre-Honours elective courses
- One new undergraduate MA (Honours) degree programme and the associated compulsory courses
- Ten new postgraduate taught programmes and over 100 associated courses
- Seven new non-credit Executive Education courses

It will convene again in June 2023 to consider a further three taught postgraduate programmes and associated courses. There is one further taught postgraduate programme currently in development, for which EFI plans to seek approval during 2023-24 for launch in 2025-26.

Discussion

Rationale

6. Now that EFI has approved and is delivering such a significant number of courses and programmes, and is nearing the end of a phase of significant new curriculum development, there is an increased need for a governing body constituted appropriately to review EFI's curriculum and approve minor and major changes. The future-orientated nature of EFI's curriculum will require an approach to curriculum change that ensures that courses and programmes are able to be agile and stay abreast of any changes in the landscape to which the courses and programmes are responding. In March 2023, the Curriculum Oversight Board convened sub-Boards to consider and approve a number of changes to courses: as EFI grows this model does not seem proportionate or scalable.

Remit and levels of approval

7. In line with the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy, it is proposed to constitute EFI's Board of Studies as a formal sub-group of the EFI Education Committee with the remit and authority to approve proposals for new, changes to, and/or closure of existing courses and to endorse proposals for new, changes to, and/or closure of existing programmes and awards. The Board will also keep teaching, learning and assessment methodologies under review, offer advice on EFI's portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and fulfil any other functions required by a School-level Board of Studies, including the approval of course and programme handbooks.
8. EFI's Board of Studies would have the same authorised levels of approval as a School Board of Studies.

Membership, mode of operation and quorum

9. The EFI Director of Education would be appointed as Convener of the EFI Board of Studies, and a Director of Teaching as Deputy Convener.

10. All of the following would be invited to participate in EFI's Board of Studies, in addition to the Convener and Deputy Convener:
- Director of EFI (Head of School equivalent)
 - EFI Chief Operating Officer
 - All members of the EFI Education Directorate (Co-Directors of Education and Directors of Teaching)
 - EFI Head of Education Administration
 - EFI Learning Technology and Design Lead
 - All academic staff involved in the teaching of EFI's programmes and courses
 - A representative from every School contributing to the delivery of EFI's courses and programmes – this might be a Board of Studies Convener, a member of the Learning and Teaching Directorate or a nominee delegated by the Head of School, to be confirmed by the relevant School at the start of the academic year
 - EFI's designated Academic Liaison Librarian
 - At least one UG and one PG EFI student representative: ideally at least one on-site and one online PG student representative
 - EFI Teaching Administrator (secretariat support)
11. Of the full membership, it is proposed that the following key colleagues must participate in any decisions about any EFI course or programme in order for them to be considered quorate:

New, changes to, and/or closure of existing courses	<p>All Programme Directors of the programme owning the course</p> <p>A representative from each School contributing to the delivery of the course</p> <p>An EFI Board of Studies Convener or Deputy Convener</p>
New, changes to, and/or closure of existing programmes	<p>All Programme Directors of the programme</p> <p>A representative from each School contributing to the delivery of the programme</p> <p>An EFI Board of Studies Convener or Deputy Convener</p>

12. The EFI Board of Studies would operate as a committee, either synchronously or asynchronously, as business requires: we anticipate between 1 and 3 meetings or events per academic year.

Responsibility for business case and resourcing approval

13. While the EFI Board of Studies may make comment on the business case for any proposals, full consideration and approval of the business case would be provided by the EFI Education Management Group for any resource from EFI. Approval of any School-level resource to contribute to an EFI course or

programme would be provided by the relevant Head of School or a delegated nominee such as a Head of Department/Subject, Director of Professional Services or relevant management group to be confirmed by the School. Any proposals for tuition fees would continue to require sign off by the CAHSS Finance and Planning team before seeking University-level approval where necessary.

Training for Board members

14. Given the breadth of academic disciplinary expertise within its academic community and its distinct academic vision and pedagogic approaches, EFI will develop training for all Board of Studies members, drawing on and supplementing the existing training provided by the IAD and Academic Services. This training will cover the operation of Boards of Studies generally, as well as introduce EFI's principles and ethos for its innovative curriculum and pedagogy. This training will be developed by EFI's Education team and will be in place for the 2023-24 academic year.

Arrangements for approval of non-traditional learning

15. EFI has partnered with the Business School to develop a portfolio of Executive Education, CPD and open learning activities. The majority of this work is non-credit bearing and will be considered and approved by the Business School and their existing approval mechanisms. Details of these approvals can be shared with EFI's Board of Studies for information. Any credit-bearing courses being offered as part of this EFI Portfolio will be directed to EFI's Board of Studies for approval.

Anticipated business in 2023-24

16. During the 2023-24 academic year, EFI expects to bring one further MSc programme for approval for launch in 2025-26. We anticipate a number of new elective courses and changes to a number of existing courses, number to be determined, for approval for implementation from 2024-25.

Programme approval mechanisms

17. As EFI's Board of Studies will not have the authority to approve new programmes or major changes to programmes, any programme validation events will need to be convened by a College-level committee. As EFI is an interdisciplinary Institute with contributions spanning all 3 Colleges, any validation event would need to be coordinated by a College on behalf of the University, drawing in expertise from the various schools contributing to the programme including those from CSE and CMVM. In the absence of any mechanisms at University level to undertake this work currently, it is proposed that CAHSS, as the lead College for EFI and the College to which EFI reports, undertake this role in the first instance: the CAHSS College Office are aware of the planned business in 2023-24 and have confirmed that they can support this work as planned. However, it is suggested to keep this under review and consider longer term whether programme validation events might be led by another College on behalf of the University in future. While this suggestion has been raised with key colleagues in the relevant Colleges, this requires further discussion, with a view to a longer term agreement being reached in advance of the 2024-25 academic year.

Consultation

18. An earlier draft of this proposal was discussed and endorsed in principle by EFI's Education Committee at its meeting on 6 March 2023: the revised proposal has the endorsement of EFI's Director of Education as Convener of the EFI Education Committee. In addition, the following colleagues were consulted during the development of the proposal:

- CAHSS: Dr Paul Norris (Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Validation), Prof Sabine Rolle (Dean of Education), Dr Lisa Kendall (Director of Academic and Student Administration), Léopoldine Barde (Quality Assurance Manager),
- CSE: Prof Tim Stratford (Dean of Learning and Teaching), Adam Bunni (Head of Academic Affairs)
- CMVM: Dr Sarah Henderson (Director of PGT Education), Philippa Burrell (Head of Academic Administration)

Resource implications

19. The operation of the Board of Studies will be resourced by the EFI Education team within existing budgets and staffing levels. Programme level validation events will be coordinated and resourced by the CAHSS College Office within existing budgets and staffing levels. Both teams currently support the EFI Curriculum Oversight Board which would be superseded by these proposals.

Risk management

20. The proposed amendments to arrangements will enable EFI to deliver its educational portfolio on schedule while ensuring that the programmes and courses are of a high quality.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

21. The proposal responds to the Sustainable Development Goal 4, Quality Education, to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all".

Equality & diversity

22. The proposal does not have any implications for equality and diversity.

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

23. The EFI Education Directorate will take responsibility for communicating with Schools and Colleges regarding the implementation of these amended arrangements, in liaison with the CAHSS College Office. The impact of the implementation of the proposal will be monitored and overseen by EFI's Education Committee.

Authors

Sarah Harvey, Head of Education Administration, EFI
Dr Kate Orton-Johnson, Director of Education, EFI
11th May 2023

Presenter

Sarah Harvey, Head of Education Administration, EFI

Freedom of Information
24. This paper is Open

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**25 May 2023****Major change to an existing programme: MSc in Clinical Trials****Description of paper**

1. This paper describes a proposal for the introduction of a fully taught Year 3 for students enrolled on the online part-time MSc Clinical Trials programme, to be offered as an alternative option to the current 60-credit dissertation. Both routes will enable learners to demonstrate attainment of the approved programme learning outcomes (see Appendix A).

This proposal contributes to the Strategy 2030 outcomes, through the provision of multidisciplinary postgraduate education pathways to support flexible whole-life learning. The range of courses on offer will provide students with the opportunity to tailor their degree programme to their own professional context, and encompasses self-designed experiential learning.

Action requested / recommendation

2. We are seeking approval to offer the online part-time MSc Clinical Trials students two options (rather than one) as how to conduct their third year of study for AY2024/25 and onwards. Students will be offered the choice of:

- 1) 60-credit dissertation (the existing model)
- 2) 20+40-credit mode (20 credit SLICC course + 40 credits of existing course electives –

We also seek approval to remove the progression hurdle following the completion of the first 120 taught credits of the programme (see discussion for further detail).

Background and context

3. Currently, the third and final year of our MSc programme consists of students undertaking a dissertation project worth 60 credits. This can be a quantitative, qualitative, systematic review or design of a clinical trial. We would like to offer an alternative to this single design of the final year. The alternative choice would consist of a 20 credit SLICC project and 40 credits from our existing elective course choices. This provides students with the opportunity to take further elective courses that they may not have been able to take in the first two years of the programme.

There are precedents for fully taught Masters' programmes within the Deanery of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences, and also in other areas within the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, so this proposal enhances parity across our PGT portfolio.

A brief summary of the two pathways for the third year is provided below, with further detail in Appendices A and B.

The SLICC project (20 credits):

The SLICC framework requires students to reflect on their progress and learning using a blog across the duration of their third year at a minimum of two blogs per term, overseen by a mentor. The student will submit and receive formative feedback on a proposal and a draft final report. The final report will consist of two parts, this will be a critical literature review of their chosen clinical trials topic and a reflective account of their learning journey and extracts from their own blogs to illustrate their learning. The three stages of the SLICC will be a proposal, a mid-way report and a final summative report. This SLICC proposal allows students to obtain academic credit for work that is of direct professional benefit and will enable students to address challenges in their own professional context.

Taught elective courses (40 credits):

We currently offer the following 20 credit electives (of which all students will have completed four by their final year):

- Principles of clinical trial management
- Monitoring and auditing
- Clinical trials in special populations
- Patient and public involvement
- Pharmacovigilance
- Introduction to health economics and applied health economics
- Trial design

From AY2023/24 we will also be offering the following 10 credit electives:

- Health data science
- Data ethics and ownership

By AY24-25 we aim to add three more elective courses, these will be 'Data enabled clinical trials' (20 credits), 'Translational imaging and clinical trials' (10 credits) and a more generic elective on research methods relevant to clinical trials (10 credits).

A diverse and international cohort, most of our clinical trials students are already working in clinical trials in some form, be that through private industry, medical practice or even academia. As such, offering such a diverse group only one option for completion of their degree could restrict the benefits one could achieve from their degree. Additionally, we must remain competitive with other academic institutions which offer various dissertation options to their students in their Master/MSc Clinical Trials.

Some of our students would benefit from continuing to learn through taught modules to increase knowledge required for their job as well self-reflective practice to correlate their real time work experience, with real world health and personal growth. We believe such students will benefit from the option of the 20-credit SLICC + 40 credits of taught courses over and above the traditional research 60-credit dissertation project.

The traditional dissertation offered works well for students who may go onto become researchers, are already involved in research and analysis, or may undertake PhDs, however might not be as beneficial to those who will continue only with their professional work.

Discussion

4.

Alignment with Curriculum Transformation

Students on our part-time online programmes are mid-career professionals who are seeking to develop specific skills and enhance their career options. The proposal aligns with the principles of the Curriculum Transformation projects by offering students opportunities to tailor their degree to their own professional context. The proposed programme structures align well with the working model for PGT archetype Mode 1, whereby in their final semester/year, students can do a 60-credit project or 60 credits of coursework. The Curriculum Transformation project also encourages us to think about alternative approaches to the traditional research dissertation, and suggests students could do an installation, film, performance, product design or other alternatives.

Progression requirements for programmes with alternative to dissertation options

Following discussion at the APRC meeting of 23 March 2023 regarding the progression hurdle for programmes with non-dissertation routes, we propose to remove the progression requirements for students continuing in to Year 3 given that Regulation 56 would no longer clearly apply to students taking the taught-only option. Regulation 56 states that “For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project or dissertation component, students must pass the assessment requirements of the taught stage at an appropriate level at the first attempt before progression to the dissertation.”

In order to achieve parity between students doing the dissertation option and students doing the taught-only option, we propose that the progression hurdle be removed. If possible, we would retain part of the progression requirements in the form of a pre-requisite for the dissertation course: “students must [...] attain an average of at least 50% for the 120 credits of study examined”.

Students will be made aware that they will still need to meet the requirements in Regulation 57 in order to complete their Masters degree.

Resource implications

5. Dissertation supervision and marking is challenging and time-consuming and recruiting suitable supervisors and markers is difficult. This proposal will allow us to increase our student numbers in Year 3 without having to add more pressures to our limited resources. However, initially we recognise there will be a need to train a small number of supervisors and markers for the SLICC option to ensure students gain the best guidance and experience possible. This training is good for the development of staff and furthermore, widens the pool of SLICC markers and supervisors which could be beneficial to the Deanery's Teaching Organisation.

Risk management

6. We do not envisage any risk to University reputation, compliance, or financial risk. We believe the education and student experience will be enhanced by this initiative, offering flexibility and choice. We believe this proposal will make a third year of study more attractive to students, increase our student retention and demonstrate the responsiveness of the University to market demands.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

7. This is an online programme and there will be no requirement for face-to-face meetings in the third year. This proposal contributes to the SDGs, since our MSc in Clinical Trials programme can directly impact SDG3 (Good Health and Well-Being) and SDG4 (Quality Education) by providing health professionals with world-class training in clinical trials. By using online learning as a mode of delivery, we are directly combating the brain-drain of skilled healthcare professionals from low- and middle-income countries who may otherwise travel overseas to pursue their training and fail to return. The part-time, online delivery also promotes SDG5 (Gender Equality) since students can study in a flexible manner, irrespective of their professional and/or personal commitments.

Equality & diversity

8. This proposal brings the programme into line with several other Master's programmes in the College, which currently offer a fully taught Year 3. Students enrolled on the programme are a diverse and international group, and this diversity can present challenges in pursuing a traditional research dissertation. Increasing the options available for attaining an MSc will have a positive impact on equality and diversity.

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

9. We hope to offer the alternative dissertation option in AY 2024-2025. The Programme Manager would inform students in Year 1 of the programme of the

changes as soon as possible once approval has been granted. We will also update the information on the relevant webpages for prospective applicants to the programme. We are requesting this proposal early for three main reasons:

- 1) In order to be able to give our current students time to understand the SLICC course and research which option is most suited for them
- 2) To advertise this amendment on our website with the intention it may increase recruitment of, and appeal to, new students on to our programme
- 3) To have ample time to train supervisors and markers, should this proposal be approved

Author

Afshan Dean

27/03/2023

Presenter

Freedom of Information *Open*

Major Change to an Existing Programme

1 OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME

Grey text has been added to provide guidance. Please delete as you add your own text, remove italics, and change the font colour to black.

1.1 ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

Programme name (including degree award)	MSc Clinical Trials
Programme Code(s)	PTMSCCLITR1U PTMSCCLITR2U
Programme Director	Prof Stuart Ralston
UG/PGT/PGR	PGT
Owning School/Deanery	Deanery MGPHS
Other contributing Schools/Deaneries and any collaborative partners (if applicable)	n/a
Have the other contributing departments/collaborative partners/external examiners/accrediting bodies been consulted and have they agreed to the major change? (if applicable)	n/a
Detail of any implications highlighted through discussion with any of the above (if applicable)	n/a

1.2 REQUESTED CHANGES FOR CONSIDERATION

Major changes to be effective from:	<p>Effective from 2023/24 on DPTs, although the alternative options will not be delivered until 2024/25.</p> <p>We are requesting this proposal early for three main reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) In order to be able to give our current students time to understand the SLICC course and research which option is most suited for them2) To advertise this amendment on our website with the intention it may increase recruitment of, and appeal to, new students on to our programme3) To have ample time to train SLICC tutors and markers, should this proposal be approved
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<p>Which cohorts will the changes apply to?</p>	<p>As this is a 3 year part-time programme, the changes will apply to current Y1 students, who will reach Y3 in 2024/25. This proposal is offering students more choice in Y3, rather than removing any of the current programme delivery, so we do not anticipate issues with this, i.e. students who wish to do a traditional dissertation can continue to do so.</p>
<p>Provide a summary explanation of amendments and what the drivers are.</p>	<p>We seek approval to amend the Clinical Trials Dissertation year (60 credits). We propose to offer an alternative structure to the third year of the MSc Clinical Trials, predominantly to increase student options in the best way for them to achieve a MSc, following feedback from students that they would like to have alternative options to a dissertation.</p> <p>Another driver for this change is to achieve parity across the online Masters programmes in the Deanery of MGPHS which offer alternative to dissertation routes. Additionally, we must remain competitive with other academic institutions which offer various options to their students to complete their MSc Clinical Trials.</p> <p>Background and context:</p> <p>Currently, the third and final year of our MSc programme consists of students undertaking a dissertation project worth 60 credits. This can be a quantitative, qualitative, systematic review or design of a clinical trial. We would like to offer an alternative to this single design of the final year. The alternative choice would consist of a 20 credit SLICC project (new course to be added to the programme, details in the attached course proposal form), and 40 credits taught from our existing elective choices running which the student has not had the opportunity to partake in in the first two years of their programme. Further information on the SLICC course is available under <i>Appendix B Course proposal form</i>.</p> <p>A diverse and international cohort, most of our clinical trials students are already working in clinical trials in some form, be that through private industry, medical practice or even academia. As such, offering such a diverse group, only one method/ option for completion of dissertation year, could restrict the benefits one could achieve from the final year.</p> <p>Some of our students would benefit from continuing to learn through taught modules to increase knowledge required for their job as well self-reflective practice to correlate their real time work experience, with real world health and personal growth. We believe such students will benefit from the option of the 20 credit SLICC and 40 credit taught modules over and above the traditional research 60 credit dissertation project.</p>
<p>Name of person responsible for managing the major change to the programme (if different from Programme Director named above)</p>	<p>Dr Afshan Dean</p>
<p>Have the School/Deanery considered the implication, if any, to the following: Staffing, Library, IT, Estates, etc.?</p>	<p>Dissertation supervision (and marking) is challenging and time consuming and recruiting suitable supervisors and markers is difficult. This proposal will allow us to increase our student numbers in Year 3 without having to add more pressures to our limited resources. However, initially we recognise we would have to train a small number of supervisors and markers for the SLICC to ensure students gain the best guidance and experience possible. This training is</p>

	good for the development of staff and furthermore, widens the pool of SLICC markers and supervisors which could be beneficial to the MGPHS Teaching Organisation.
What discussions have taken place within the School/Deanery, with staff and students?	<p>Current 3rd year students on programme have been consulted regarding whether they would have liked to have the option to have a taught year 3, including a SLICC. This has also been discussed at the last SSLC meetings. No students had concerns about this, and many said they would welcome (or would have welcomed, in the case of Y2 and Y3 students) the option to take more elective courses instead of a dissertation, and that they felt this was more directly applicable to their professional careers.</p> <p>The proposal has also been widely discussed with Deanery staff at Boards of Studies meetings and more informally. There is consensus across the staff that offering more flexibility and choices is positive for students, and that this aligns with the general direction of travel for more flexible degrees across the University (e.g. Curriculum Transformation). We also already have the precedent of having a fully taught Y3 (SLICC + 40 credits of electives) in our MPH online programme, which has offered this option since it launched in 2015/16, and runs well for staff and students.</p>
What discussions have taken place with External experts regarding the change?	The Clinical Trials steering group, which comprises staff in DMGPHS, DCS, and Edinburgh Clinical Trials Unit (ECTU) (Prof Rustam Salman, Prof Chris Weir, Kat Oatey, Michelle Evans and Prof Stuart Ralston), has also been consulted and are supportive of this change.
Have the School/Deanery contacted Recruitment and Admissions regarding the changes and informing any students who have been offered a place?	No, given that the changes have not yet been approved.

2 APPROVAL

2.1 SCHOOL/DEANERY BOARD OF STUDIES REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Date of BoS: 26 January 2023

Convener Name: Prof Sarah Wild

Comment and Approval (BoS Minute):

ADean presented an alternative option to a dissertation for the MSc Clinical Trials, for delivery from AY 2024/25. The programme team are aware that the approval process takes time and also that it will take time to make other curriculum

changes needed to enable this route (e.g. development of new course electives), as well as to train SLICC supervisors, hence the early submission.

The programme team have been talking to students about this potential option and it seems that many students would value this alternative route to completing the MSc. Members noted that the SLICC is not necessarily less resource intensive, considering the SLICC is 20 credits' worth vs 60 credits dissertation.

APPROVED.

2.2 COLLEGE POSTGRADUATE LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Date of College PG Learning and Teaching approval:

Convener Name:

Outcome (please select as appropriate)

Proposal approved ➔ Proceed to updating DTP and all other processes

Proposal approved with conditions

Proposal rejected with recommendations

Comment:

APPENDIX A –CMVM PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

CMVM PGT Programme Specification			
<p>This programme specification template has been developed to fulfil three main functions, acting as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a source of information for students and prospective students seeking an understanding of a programme and as a basis for gaining feedback on the extent to which the opportunities for learning were successful in promoting the intended outcomes • to ensure that there is clarity concerning the aims and intended learning outcomes for the programme for the University during the approval and periodic review processes • to provide information for external examiners, professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and employers as to the skills and other transferable abilities developed by the programme 			
Section 1	ABOUT THE PROGRAMME		
1	Name of programme	MSc Clinical trials	
2	Interim awards <i>(Insert name or delete as appropriate, eg PG Dip, PG Cert)</i>	PPD, PGCert, PG Dip	
3	College	CMVM	
4	School / Deanery	Usher institute, Deanery of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences	
5	Programme Director <i>(at time of approval)</i>	Professor Stuart Ralston	
6	Programme start dates	(existing programme)	
7	SCQF level of highest award	11	
8	Total credit value of programme <i>(for highest award)</i>	180	
9	Partner institution(s) if any		
10	Mode of delivery <i>(Please ü those which apply to this programme)</i>	On campus	
		Online	x
		FT	

		PT	x
		Intermittent	
11	Expected length of programme	FT	
		PT	x
		Intermittent	

12	Description of the programme and its structure	
	<p>Around 150 words, written to be accessible to a lay audience, to be used for marketing purposes. Identify the programme's distinctive features (and unique selling points).</p> <p>The MSc in Clinical Trials programme equips global students with the principles underpinning the ethical design, management, appraisal and reporting of clinical trials, to improve health. Our suite of online courses allows students to qualify at Certificate, Diploma and Masters level. Our courses are designed for students wishing to move into the field of health care research, or looking to develop their career by broadening their skills and understanding of the design, implementation, management and reporting of clinical trials. Students join a lively online community of health care professionals from around the globe, each bringing their own knowledge and experience as they learn from each other. Our Programme is uniquely placed to tap into the clinical trials expertise that exists in the Edinburgh Bioquarter, a leading global destination for healthcare delivery, ground-breaking medical research and life sciences innovation and entrepreneurship. We enjoy close links with clinical trials professionals in NHS Lothian, Edinburgh Clinical Research Facility and Edinburgh Clinical Trials.</p>	
13	Programme aims	
	<i>(Programme aims are broad statements of intent. Up to 150 words.)</i>	
14	Programme Learning Outcomes	
	<i>Learning outcomes are statements of what a student is expected to understand or be able to do after completing the process of learning. No programme may have more than 5 learning outcomes.</i>	
	1	A critical understanding of the principles, science and evidence underpinning clinical trials

	2	The ability to critique current approaches in clinical trial design and implementation												
	3	The ability to communicate the design, implementation and results of clinical trials to a variety of audiences												
	4	the resolve to work professionally and with integrity in a multi-disciplinary research team to deliver effective clinical trials												
	5	The skills to design, implement and report clinical trials												
15	<p>Indicative learning and teaching hours for the programme</p> <p><i>Learning hours comprise face-to-face and virtual contact hours plus directed and independent learning and time spent on assessment and placements (if appropriate). Please give an indication of the percentage of anticipated learning hours for the programme, taking into account core courses and indicative options. Students should note that these figures may change depending on the exact combination of options taken.</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>Method</i></th> <th><i>Number and percentage of learning hours</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Scheduled learning and teaching activities eg lectures, seminars, synchronous discussions and other timetabled sessions</td> <td>200 hours per 20 credit elective spanning 11 week term. Lecture Hours 50, Seminar/Tutorial Hours 3, Feedback/Feedforward Hours 20, Formative Assessment Hours 6, Summative Assessment Hours 5, Revision Session Hours 4, Programme Level Learning and Teaching Hours 4, Directed Learning and Independent Learning Hours 108</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Directed learning</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Independent learning</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Assessment</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>200 hours / 100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<i>Method</i>	<i>Number and percentage of learning hours</i>	Scheduled learning and teaching activities eg lectures, seminars, synchronous discussions and other timetabled sessions	200 hours per 20 credit elective spanning 11 week term. Lecture Hours 50, Seminar/Tutorial Hours 3, Feedback/Feedforward Hours 20, Formative Assessment Hours 6, Summative Assessment Hours 5, Revision Session Hours 4, Programme Level Learning and Teaching Hours 4, Directed Learning and Independent Learning Hours 108	Directed learning		Independent learning		Assessment		Total	200 hours / 100%
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Directed learning														
Independent learning														
Assessment														
Total	200 hours / 100%													
16	<p>PSB accreditations (where relevant)</p> <p><i>(Please note accreditations awarded or planned)</i></p>													

17	<p>Admissions requirements, to be demonstrated through certificated or experiential learning (<i>around 30 words</i>)</p> <p>Students require a strong background, at least a 2:1 or its equivalent at undergraduate level, in one of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medicine • nursing • pharmacy • life sciences • biological sciences • statistics <p>If you fall below these requirements but have three to five years of relevant work experience we will consider your eligibility on a case-by-case basis.</p>
18	<p>Details of organised work experience / work based learning opportunities available during the programme (<i>if applicable</i>)</p>
19	<p>Career, employability and opportunities for continuing professional development. <i>Around 35 words, written in language which is accessible to a lay audience, to be used for marketing purposes. Should include examples of potential career destinations and how the skills and abilities gained through the programme contribute to career development.</i></p> <p>Our Certificate, Diploma and Masters courses are designed to improve the students prospects in the rapidly growing field of clinical trials research. Equipped with a qualification in leading clinical trials, our graduates have found excellent opportunities in academia, the public and non-profit health sectors and industry including pharmaceutical and biotech companies and contract research organisations (CROs).</p> <p>If you have general or specialist experience and wish to broaden your role in the design, management, analysis and reporting of clinical trials, our programme will provide you with the necessary skills and knowledge to progress further.</p> <p>A specialised qualification such as this will demonstrate to employers your commitment to continual professional development and will ensure a competitive edge when applying for future positions.</p> <p>Roles exist in a variety of areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical research – trial managers, administrators, clinical research associates • Quality Assurance and Control – trial monitors, QA managers, pharmacovigilance • Data management – data managers, biostatistics and programming • Regulatory affairs - global regulatory lead, information management associate, executive roles • Medical affairs – Chief and Principal Investigators, medical liaison, medical communications and writing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Product development – medical devices
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Section 2	PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND ASSESSMENT			
20	Programme Structure Diagram <i>(Please complete for all awards that will be available, entering course codes for any existing courses)</i>			
	PG Cert			
	Course code	Course title	Course Status (Core/compulsory/ optional)	Credit value
	MCLM11079	Introduction to Randomised Controlled Trials and Medical Statistics	Core	20
	MCLM11078	Ethical and Regulatory Considerations in Clinical Trials	Core	20
		<i>The third 20 credit elective for first years is chosen from the 2nd year elective choice outlined below.</i>		
	PG Dip			
	Course code	Course title	Course Status	Credit value

			Core/compulsory/ optional	
MCLM11020	Principles of Clinical Trial Management		Optional	20
MCLM11021	Monitoring and Audit		Optional	20
MCLM11027	Patient and Public Involvement		Optional	20
MCLM11054	Pharmacovigilance		Optional	20
MCLM11072	Introduction to Health Economics and Applied Health Economics		Optional	20
MCLM11080	Trial Designs		Optional	20
MCLM11023	Clinical Trials in Special Populations		Optional	20
MSc				
Course code	Course title		Couse Status (Core/compulsory/ optional)	Credit value

	MCLM11026	MScCT Dissertation	Compulsory	60
21	Mapping matrix of courses delivering the programme learning outcomes			
	Programme LOs		<i>Met by course aim/learning outcome (List all relevant course titles)</i>	
	1 A critical understanding of the principles, science and evidence underpinning clinical trials		Introduction to randomised control trials and medical statistics Ethical and regulatory considerations principles of clinical trial management,-	
	2 The ability to critique current approaches in clinical trial design and implementation		Introduction to randomised control trials and medical statistics Patient public involvement Principles of clinical trials management Introduction to health economics Clinical trials in special populations Ethical and regulatory considerations	
	3 The ability to communicate the design, implementation and results of clinical trials to a variety of audiences		Trial design Pharmacovigilance Clinical trials in special populations Dissertation	
	4 the resolve to work professionally and with integrity in a multi-disciplinary research team to deliver effective clinical trials		Trial design Clinical trials in special populations Patient public involvement Dissertation	
	5 The skills to design, implement and report clinical trials		Ethics and regulatory considerations Pharmacovigilance Introductions to randomised control trials and medical statistics Trial design Principles of clinical trials management	

		Dissertation
22	<p>Programme assessment strategy</p> <p><i>(Please explain the programme's overall approach to assessment, in no more than 100 words)</i></p> <p>Our intention is that students not only complete the programme with the knowledge they have been taught but with key skills such as critical appraisal, self-reflection, independent thinking as well as group working and debating. In general, each course has three assessments, one tends to be an individual piece, one group piece and one reflective piece although this does vary depending on the course and objectives.</p>	
23	<p>Mapping of assessments by type and week of semester</p> <p><i>Please append assessment timeline as per example in appendix 1</i></p>	

Section 3	PROGRAMME SPECIFIC REGULATIONS	
24	<p><i>Programmes shall conform University Academic Regulations. Where a programme has programme specific regulations which are to be formally approved by the University, these should be included below.</i></p>	
25	HESA/JACS code	

APPENDIX B – Course Descriptor Template

The programme will consist of individual courses; each course will require a Course Proposal Form. Once approved, the initiating school will be responsible for adding the new course into EUCLID CCAM. Further information on course creation and approval can be found at: http://www.euclid.ed.ac.uk/staff/Support/User_Guides/CCAM/Course_Creation_and_Approval_Menu.html

You will be expected to have the content and assessment of the first course of your programme written by validation.

The list appears in the same order as it would when proposing a new course in EUCLID.

Fields with an asterisk * are required fields

Have you confirmed that the appropriate resources are in place (finance, teaching staff, IT)*:	Yes
Have you confirmed that the appropriate support services are in place (library, computing services)*:	Yes

1. Owing School

Proposer*	Afshan Dean – MSc clinical trials programme manager
Owning School*	MGPHS: Usher Institute

2. Course descriptor

Course name*	Integrating Clinical Trials Practice- A Student-Led Individually Created Course (SLICC)
Summary description*	<p>This 20 credit course will provide students with an opportunity to integrate the learning gained in the Masters in the clinical trials courses, and apply it to address problems and challenges in the real world. Students will create their own learning using the Student-Led Individually Created Course (SLICC) approach – a university framework for self-designed experiential learning:</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/employability/sliccs/</p> <p>The student will plan, propose, carry out, reflect on and evaluate a piece of work from their own contexts, encompassing the cross-disciplinary nature of clinical trials. The SLICC framework requires that students use the generic learning outcomes to articulate their learning in their own defined project, reflect frequently using a blog, collect, formulate, organise and present evidence of their learning in an e-portfolio. Students will receive relevant formative feedback on a draft final report, which is the same format as the final reflective report, which forms the summative assessment. The above will be with guidance of a mentor. The course will encourage critical appraisal of students' own practical experiences, and allow them to reflect on their learning in the context of the cross-disciplinary nature of clinical trials.</p>

	<p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/sliccs/staff/example-courses</p> <p>Reflective Writing: Toolkit: https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit</p> <p>Gibbs' reflective cycle: https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/gibbs-reflective-cycle</p> <p>Other frameworks: https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience</p> <p>What is Pebblepad: https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/1.+What+is+PebblePadF/1_2zpdtu48</p> <p>How to Create a blog: https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/3.+How+to+Create+a+Blog/1_uioiqj6j</p>
<p>Learning outcomes*</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student will be able to demonstrate how they have developed a deep critical understanding of the cross-disciplinary nature of clinical trials, using their own SLICC to identify complexities, challenges and wider implications in their area. 2. The student will apply relevant clinical trials skills and approaches gained during the programme teaching to effectively and critically explore their chosen SLICC clinical trials question. 3. The student will self-reflect to demonstrate personal and intellectual autonomy to critically evaluate ideas, evidence and experiences from an open-minded and reasoned perspective 4. The student will draw on the quality, depth and breadth of their experiences to engage with the communities and world around them. With an informed international perspective, they seek to contribute positively, ethically and respectfully 5. In their self-assessment, critically review, evaluate and reflect upon their knowledge, skills and practices in clinical trials, how they have met the learning outcomes for the SLICC course or reflect on the learning they have gained from not progressing as originally anticipated.
<p>Components of Assessment* (for discussion at Board of Studies)</p>	<p>Written exam 0%, Practical exam 0%, Coursework 100%</p>

Components of Assessment* (for publication on DRPS)	Written exam 0%, Practical exam 0%, Coursework 100%
Exam Information	NA
Feedback	<p>Students will be provided detailed formative feedback at:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The proposal stage in deciding what they wish to achieve in their SLICC project, and defining own learning outcomes 2) The draft final report to gain insight into how insightful/ effective the students reflective blogging is and the structure of the report to prepare the student for the final report. 3) Summative feedback on the final report which will be in two parts. This will be a critical literature review of their chosen clinical trials topic and a reflective account of their learning journey and extracts from their own blogs to illustrate their reflection, development how they have achieved their SLICC goals or what they have learnt from not being able to achieve these.

4. Administrative information

Additional course information

Course availability*	- Available to all students in 3 rd year who wish to do SLICC +40 credits rather than the 60 credit dissertation
Normal year taken*	Postgraduate 3 rd year
SCQF Credit Volume*	20 credits
SCQF Credit Level*	- SCQF Level 11
Home subject area*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usher - Health Information
Other subject area	Clinical Trials
Course organiser	Afshan Dean
Deputy course organiser	Antonia Sophocleous
Secretary	Rebecca Sewell

Classification

Course type*	Online Distance Learning
Default delivery period*	Choose from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible
Default course mode of study*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distance Learning -
Marking scheme*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - APT PG Mark/Grade

Course requirements

These can be enabled or left blank. If enabled text must be entered.

Pre-requisites	none
Co-requisites	none

Prohibited combinations	
Visiting student pre-requisites	
Any costs to be met by students	Laptop and internet connection

Collaboration

% not taught by this institution	na
Collaboration information (across Schools/across Institutions)	na
Collaboration information (within Deanery)	Once established for the CT students, we will collaborate with other part time online MSC programme offering SLICC to share best practice, relevant teaching resources/ supervisors/ markers.

Equality and Diversity

<p>Are there any equality and diversity implications related to this course? For example, is it clear who the intended market is? Was the course designed to be accessible and adaptable to meet the needs of potential participants? Are the materials and topics inclusive, i.e. representing perspectives from a range of social and cultural backgrounds? Are there any health and safety implications, and is a risk assessment required?</p>	<p>All students on the clinical trials programme are valued and respected for their individual perspectives and contributions and we work to ensure no student is treated differently or less favourably based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender or sexual orientation.</p> <p>Online etiquette and expectations are outlined in our programme handbook, page 31-2, where we outline that students are expected to treat their peers and supervisors with dignity and respect and address them in a professional and inclusive manner. All components of the assessment will be marked anonymously by an independent marker to ensure they are marked fairly. Extension and exceptional circumstances processes are also in place to support students who experience unexpected and unanticipated difficulties which adversely impact on their studies and their ability to complete any components of the dissertation.</p>
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Additional information

Taught in Gaelic (Gàidhlig)?*	No
Study Abroad	no
Special Arrangements	No
Fee Code if Invoiced at Course level	If being invoiced at course level, enter a Fee Code

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**24 May 2023****Major change to an existing programme:
MSc Data Science for Health and Social Care****Description of paper**

1. This paper describes a proposal for the introduction of two alternatives to the current 60-credit dissertation, for students in their third year of study on the online part-time MSc Data Science for Health and Social Care programme:

- a Student Led Individually Created Course (SLICC), which will consist of a 20-credit SLICC course, complemented by 40 credits worth of taught elective courses, OR
- a Work-Based Placement with Industry or Public Sector organisation (60 credits), OR
- a Dissertation (60 credits, as currently offered)

All three routes will enable learners to demonstrate attainment of approved programme learning outcomes (see Appendix A). Our proposal aligns with the University's mission to provide the highest-quality teaching and learning to students who are curious and creative. We plan to continue and offer a 'traditional' 60-credit dissertation that is focused on narrative relating to (empirical or desk-based) research.

This proposal contributes to the Strategy 2030 outcomes, through the provision of multidisciplinary postgraduate education pathways to support flexible whole-life learning. The range of courses on offer will provide students with the opportunity to tailor their degree programme to their own professional context, and encompasses self-designed experiential learning.

The University of Edinburgh Community Benefits Policy commits to building connections with industry partners to achieve impact for society and support commitments like our Community Engagement Strategy, Widening Participation goals, Zero by 2040 Climate Strategy and our work to enhance the student experience. We believe that offering a variety of dissertation projects will enhance the student learning experience and produce industry-ready graduates, with increased relevance to their professional practice. It will also offer professional development opportunities for teaching staff through the exploration of new curriculum design methods.

Action requested / recommendation

2. We are seeking approval to allow the MSc Data Science for Health and Social Care, three year part-time online programme to offer additional dissertation options in

the third year of study. These additional options are to include the SLICC + course electives option, and the Work-Based Placement with the Public Sector or Industry option.

We also seek approval to remove the progression hurdle following the completion of the first 120 taught credits of the programme (see discussion for further detail).

Background and context

3. The part-time online MSc in Data Science for Health and Social Care programme, taught over three years (PgCert, PgDip and MSc) aims to equip learners with a range of skills, tools and understanding to use the transformational power of data to improve health and wellbeing, and the management of care systems, locally and globally. This unique postgraduate programme brings together a wide range of learners with a passion for data-driven innovation across healthcare and social services. Students come from a [variety of backgrounds](#) but all share the aspiration to use their newly acquired skills to transform the use of data in their context-specific practice to make positive changes in health and care systems across the world.

Our students include:

- professionals working in Health and Social Care delivery
- health professionals seeking to develop skills in data science, epidemiology and statistics
- those working with a computing background who wish to acquire advanced data science skills in health/social care context
- those seeking to develop skills in digital health

All MSc programmes in the Deanery of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences (MGPHS) Teaching Organisation offer third-year students the option of undertaking empirical research or a desk-based study. Yet, we know that many of our MSc Data Science for Health and Social Care students will not go on to become researchers, nor will they go on to undertake doctoral studies. In fact, we have evidence from individual meetings with our current students that many of them are leaving the programme before Year 3 as they do not wish to undertake a 'traditional' research-focussed dissertation and would prefer more applied and practical dissertation routes.

Our current and targeted students are already working in the health, housing or care sectors. Their needs are better addressed by a more flexible and practical approach to learning, compared to the traditional research route. This proposal would support a more flexible approach with students better able to tailor their studies to their own career aspirations with increased relevance to their sphere of practice.

The alternative dissertation routes presented in this proposal support the ambitions of the Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) Edinburgh and South East Scotland City (ESEC) Region, which is designed around five challenge areas that will deliver benefits for

citizens, services, and businesses, which include: Talent; Research; Adoption; Data; and Entrepreneurship (TRADE). This innovation network will help organisations tackle challenges for industry and society by improving the use of data. It should also support Edinburgh in its ambition to become the data capital of Europe. The additional learning and development opportunities in year 3 will increase the skills and qualifications of graduates, those in training, and members of the workforce, as well as help public, private and third sector organisations adopt data-driven innovation to improve products and services.

The experience and impact of work placement and work-based project learning is a significant factor in developing and enhancing student employability and the student experience. The University of Edinburgh aims to produce confident, aspirational graduates who can successfully compete in a global economy. Developing student employability not only impacts positively on the outcomes for the student but influences the University's ranking in higher education league tables and recruitment. Our proposal is also in line with the Curriculum Transformation programme and the strategic curriculum design principles e.g. opportunities for experiential and interdisciplinary learning, student centred approaches to teaching and learning, substantive choice for students, supports pathways into HE for students from all backgrounds and focus on priorities like EDI and sustainability.

To progress to their third year, students are required to undertake a compulsory 20-credit Research Design in Data Science for Health and Social Care course in their second year of study. They are also encouraged to develop a critical approach to the academic literature and relevant research, throughout the programme. Courses that fit the requirements to show such proficiency include:

1. Introduction to Data Science in Health and Social Care
2. Health and Social Delivery and Organisation
3. Data Ethics for Health and Social Care
4. Managing and Leading data-driven innovation
5. Data Security and Protection in Health and Social Care
6. Research Design in Data Science for Health and Social Care

The assessment of each of our courses is carefully designed to allow students to directly link their academic studies with their professional work, which takes a high degree of analytical skills required for Master's level study.

The SLICC and work placement options will require the same notional effort (i.e. 600 hours of study), at the same level (SCQF level 11) as the research-focussed Dissertation. The difference between the two courses being that, for the SLICC and the work placement, students can choose the topic and the way they curate their evidence of learning to demonstrate how they addressed the Intended Learning Outcome. This choice will allow the student to best determine the content and the path that best suit their individual career aspirations and the needs of their employers or service users.

Description of rationale for alternative dissertation options

1) Work-Based Placement with Public Sector or Industry

It is widely acknowledged that work-based learning strategies are a vital part in the ongoing and future development of the existing workforce. Work-based and placement learning opportunities can greatly enhance the development of graduate attributes and the student experience.

A Work-Based placement would involve students working with public sector organisations or industry, onsite or remotely, to learn and gain insight into a sector and complete a designated piece of work. All work-based project opportunities will be offered as virtual placements and there will be no requirement for students to be based in the UK. Projects with the public sector or industry would involve students working closely with an organisation to assist with a real-life active project or piece of work e.g., a consultancy project, policy brief or data analysis project, service user driven design project plan or improvement, digital innovation or improvement etc.

Students will have an opportunity to work with all sizes and types of external organisations: public, private, third sector. Students will experience real-world scenarios and apply their skills and knowledge to business challenges; gaining a unique insight into how their skills and knowledge from the MSc can be utilised in industry.

We currently work with the [Bayes Centre | The University of Edinburgh](#) who have strong links with [industry partners](#) and several projects have already been offered to our programme. We also have direct access to industry and public sector organisations through the [Usher Innovation](#) network. The work-based project will be assessed as part of the degree programme and is designed to meet identified programme level learning outcomes.

The advantages of offering this work-based project option as an alternative to a dissertation include:

- The opportunity for teaching and learning undertaken on the MSc to translate in the context of the workplace
- to learn more about a particular organisation, perhaps the students' chosen industry for their anticipated future career or change of career
- to gain practical 'on the job' training, skills and experience

2) SLICC + 40 credits elective courses

The SLICC option offers a reflective learning and assessment framework for students to gain academic credit for experiential learning. This SLICC framework will enable the student to demonstrate knowledge gains and skills acquisition, through scaffolded, incremental, dialogic and collaborative outcomes. It sets to promote learning that is developmental, authentic, personal, evidenced and reflective. It does

that by providing a structured framework for learning, where students are prompted to reflect on the impact of an activity, how it connects to other experiences, and how it may inform their own data science journey. Using a purposeful digital repository of learning experiences, projects and activities, students can curate artefacts that they have collected in any environment, during their time as learners. Being able to showcase their craft, achievements and experiences, to a wider audience beyond the community of learners, may unleash learners' creativity. This will be encouraged and rewarded in the review (formative) and summative assessment of the final submission.

Discussion

4. Alignment with Curriculum Transformation

Students on our part-time online programmes are mid-career professionals who are seeking to develop specific skills and enhance their career options. The proposal aligns with the principles of the Curriculum Transformation projects by offering students opportunities to tailor their degree to their own professional context. The proposed programme structures align well with the working model for PGT archetype Mode 1, whereby in their final semester/year, students can do a 60-credit project or 60 credits of coursework. The Curriculum Transformation project also encourages us to think about alternative approaches to the traditional research dissertation, and suggests students could do an installation, film, performance, product design or other alternatives.

5. Achievement of programme learning outcomes

The current dissertation requires students to produce a narrative of up to 15,000 words. It has to be an original piece of work that demonstrates the ability to undertake an investigation into an issue relating to Data Science in the context of health and social care. Current learning outcomes for the 60-credit dissertation states that on completing of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate a critical understanding of theories, concepts and principles relating to data-driven innovation in health and/or social care.
- 2) Apply a range of data science skills, theories, practices, and creativity to produce a significant research, investigation, or development project.
- 3) Critically review, consolidate, and extend knowledge, skills, practices, and thinking in data science to extract value from health and social care data.
- 4) Develop innovative responses to problems and issues and communicate data-related issues in the health and social care sector.
- 5) Exercise autonomy and reflexivity to contribute to change, development and/or new thinking within the health and social care sector.

These learning outcomes will remain for the dissertation course.

MSc programme level learning outcomes:

- 1) Critical understanding of the principles and methods, and governance and implications of data science in health and social care.
- 2) Able to create, identify and evaluate data-driven solutions to solve complex problems in health/social care contexts.
- 3) The capacity to analyse facts and situations and apply creative and inventive thinking to develop appropriate solutions.
- 4) The ability to articulate and effectively explain information and to adapt their communication style for different people, situations and audiences.
- 5) The motivation to work collaboratively in a multi-disciplinary environment to deliver data-driven solutions.

Further details included in Appendices A and B.

6. Progression requirements for programmes with alternative to dissertation options

Following discussion at the APRC meeting of 23 March 2023 regarding the progression hurdle for programmes with non-dissertation routes, we propose to remove the progression requirements for students continuing in to Year 3 given that Regulation 56 would no longer clearly apply to students taking the taught-only option. Regulation 56 states that “For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project or dissertation component, students must pass the assessment requirements of the taught stage at an appropriate level at the first attempt before progression to the dissertation.”

In order to achieve parity between students doing the dissertation option and students doing the taught-only option, we propose that the progression hurdle be removed. If possible, we would retain part of the progression requirements in the form of a pre-requisite for the dissertation course: “students must [...] attain an average of at least 50% for the 120 credits of study examined”.

Students will be made aware that they will still need to meet the requirements in Regulation 57 in order to complete their Masters degree.

Resource implications

7. We anticipate that we will need to recruit additional tutors and supervisors, but this will be covered through student fees. It is envisaged that all master's level dissertation supervision will be undertaken by the core programme team with additional recruited staff. New staff will be paired with more experienced staff members until they are confident to supervise independently. We will also develop detailed dissertation guidelines and support sessions for each dissertation option. Given the expanding programme team and the independent nature of the work highlighted in the two proposed routes, we don't expect the need to cap these routes.

Risk management

8. We do not envisage any risk to University reputation, compliance, or financial risk. We believe the education and student experience will be enhanced by this initiative, offering flexibility and choice. We believe this proposal will make a third year of study more attractive to students, increase our student retention and demonstrate the responsiveness of the University to market demands.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

9. This is an online programme and there will be no requirement for face-to-face meetings in the third year. This proposal contributes to the SDGs, since our MSc in Clinical Trials programme can directly impact SDG3 (Good Health and Well-Being) and SDG4 (Quality Education) by providing health professionals with world-class training in clinical trials. By using online learning as a mode of delivery, we are directly combating the brain-drain of skilled healthcare professionals from low- and middle-income countries who may otherwise travel overseas to pursue their training and fail to return. The part-time, online delivery also promotes SDG5 (Gender Equality) since students can study in a flexible manner, irrespective of their professional and/or personal commitments.

Equality & diversity

10. The purpose of postgraduate study can no longer be seen solely as a research pipeline producing future PhD candidates. Online teaching has opened the possibilities of further opportunities for flexible studies to those previously unable to engage in class-based learning, such as working professionals in health and social care. Students and employers are increasingly seeking more flexibility in their studies that can demonstrate impact in the workplace.

This proposal brings the programme into line with several other Master's programmes in the College, which currently offer a fully taught Year 3. Students on the programme are from diverse clinical and non-clinical environments including social services and the housing sector. This proposal increases choice options and opportunities. It will encourage greater diversity of students and widen participation in postgraduate study at the University of Edinburgh.

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

9. We wish to make the alternative options for Year 3 available for AY 2023/2024. We would inform current Year 1 and Year 2 students on the programme once approval has been granted. We would also include the information on the University website for prospective applicants to the programme.

Authors

Sophie Marion de Proce & Michelle Evans
March 2023

Presenter

Freedom of Information *Open*

Major Change to an Existing Programme

1 OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME

Grey text has been added to provide guidance. Please delete as you add your own text, remove italics, and change the font colour to black.

1.1 ABOUT THE PROGRAMME	
Programme name (including degree award)	MSc Data Science for Health and Social Care
Programme Code(s)	PTMSCDSHSC1P PTMSCDSHSC1U
Programme Director	Michelle Evans
UG/PGT/PGR	PGT
Owning School/Deanery	Deanery MGPHS
Other contributing Schools/Deaneries and any collaborative partners (if applicable)	Bayes Centre
Have the other contributing departments/collaborative partners/external examiners/accrediting bodies been consulted and have they agreed to the major change? (if applicable)	Yes
Detail of any implications highlighted through discussion with any of the above (if applicable)	No implications beyond information included below.

1.2 REQUESTED CHANGES FOR CONSIDERATION	
Major changes to be effective from:	Effective and to be delivered from 2023/24.
Which cohorts will the changes apply to?	As this is a 3 year part-time programme, the changes will apply to current Y1 and Y2 students, who will reach Y3 in 2024/25 and 2023/24 respectively. This proposal is offering students more choice in Y3, rather than removing any of the current programme delivery, so we do not anticipate issues with this, i.e. students who wish to do a traditional dissertation can continue to do so.
Provide a summary explanation of amendments and what the drivers are.	This paper, approved by the MGPHS Board of Studies in March 2023, requests the College of MVM to consider permitting the MSc to offer two alternatives to the current 60-credit dissertation, for students in their third year of study. This paper outlines the options of offering a 60-credit dissertation as:

- a Student Led Individually Created Course (SLICC), which will consist of a 20-credit SLICC course, complemented by 40 credits worth of taught elective courses, OR
- a Work-Based Placement with Industry or Public Sector organisation (60-Credits)

Both routes will enable learners to demonstrate attainment of approved Intended Learning Outcomes. Our proposal aligns with the University's mission to provide the highest-quality teaching and learning to students who are curious and creative. We plan to continue and offer a 'traditional' 60-credit dissertation that is focused on narrative relating to (empirical or desk-based) research. Further information on the SLICC course and work-based placement course is available under *Appendix B Course Proposal Forms*.

Another driver for this change is to achieve parity across the online Masters programmes in the Deanery of MGPHS which offer alternative to dissertation routes.

Background and context:

The part-time online MSc in Data Science for Health and Social Care programme, taught over 3 years (PgCert, PgDip and MSc) aims to equip learners with a range of skills, tools and understanding to use the transformational power of data to improve health and wellbeing, and the management of care systems, locally and globally. This unique postgraduate programme brings together a wide range of learners with a passion for data-driven innovation across healthcare and social services. Students come from a variety of backgrounds but all share the aspiration to use their newly acquired skills to transform the use of data in their context-specific practice to make positive changes in health and care systems across the world.

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Our current and targeted students are already working in the health, housing or care sectors. Their needs are better addressed by a more flexible and practical approach to learning, compared to the traditional research route. This proposal would support a more flexible approach with students better able to tailor their studies to their own career aspirations with increased relevance to their sphere of practice.

Discussion

The alternative dissertation routes presented in this proposal support the ambitions of the Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) Edinburgh and South East Scotland City (ESEC) Region, which is designed around five challenge areas that will deliver benefits for citizens, services, and businesses, which include: Talent; Research; Adoption; Data; and Entrepreneurship (TRADE). This innovation network will help organisations tackle challenges for industry and society by improving the use of data. It should also support Edinburgh in its ambition to become the data capital of Europe. The additional learning and development opportunities in year 3 will increase the skills and qualifications of graduates, those in training, and members of the workforce, as well as help public, private and third sector organisations adopt data-driven innovation to improve products and services.

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Description of rationale for alternative dissertation options

1) Work-Based Placement with Public Sector or Industry

It is widely acknowledged that work-based learning strategies are a vital part in the ongoing and future development of the existing workforce. Work-based and placement learning opportunities can greatly enhance the development of graduate attributes and the student experience.

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Students will have an opportunity to work with all sizes and types of external organisations: public, private, third sector. Students will experience real-world scenarios and apply their skills and knowledge to business challenges; gaining a unique insight into how their skills and knowledge from the MSc can be utilised in industry.

We currently work with the [Bayes Centre | The University of Edinburgh](#) who have strong links with [industry partners](#) and several projects have already been offered to our programme. We also have direct access to industry and public sector organisations through the [Usher Innovation](#) network. The work-based project will be assessed as part of the degree programme and is designed to meet identified programme level learning outcomes.

The advantages of offering this work-based project option as an alternative to a dissertation include:

- The opportunity for teaching and learning undertaken on the MSc to translate in the context of the workplace
- to learn more about a particular organisation, perhaps the students' chosen industry for their anticipated future career or change of career
- to gain practical 'on the job' training, skills and experience

Work-based learning skills:

1. Develop solutions to workplace problems drawing on theory and practice
2. Exploit the workplace as a learning resource

	<p>3. Manage oneself (and others) 4. Reflect on what has been learnt in and from the workplace 5. Transfer existing knowledge, capabilities and competences to new or different contexts</p> <p>Work-related skills:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Action planning 2. Contribute to meetings 3. Entrepreneurship 4. Goal setting 5. Negotiating 6. Networking 7. Project management 8. Self-appraisal 9. Team working 10. Using, and acting as, a consultant <p>2) SLICC</p> <p>The SLICC option offers a reflective learning and assessment framework for students to gain academic credit for experiential learning. This SLICC framework will enable the student to demonstrate knowledge gains and skills acquisition, through scaffolded, incremental, dialogic and collaborative outcomes. It sets to promote learning that is developmental, authentic, personal, evidenced and reflective. It does that by providing a structured framework for learning, where students are prompted to reflect on the impact of an activity, how it connects to other experiences, and how it may inform their own data science journey. Using a purposeful digital repository of learning experiences, projects and activities, students can curate artefacts that they have collected in any environment, during their time as learners. Being able to showcase their craft, achievements and experiences, to a wider audience beyond the community of learners, may unleash learners' creativity. This will be encouraged and rewarded in the review (formative) and summative assessment of the final submission.</p>
<p>Name of person responsible for managing the major change to the programme (if different from Programme Director named above)</p>	<p>Michelle Evans</p>
<p>Have the School/Deanery considered the implication, if any, to the following: Staffing, Library, IT, Estates, etc.?</p>	<p>For the work-based placements: We aim to follow the same framework and approach as <u>Bayes Centre</u> and the School of Informatics to establish our work-based placements. We collaborate with Bayes on the Data Science Upskilling Workforce Development programme and we are also working with them to widen our contacts with industry and build our list of partners together. This cross DDI hub collaboration creates a sustainable resource to meet the needs of our students. We have also recently launched the <u>Usher Innovation Community</u>, which is part of the Health and Social Care Data-Driven Innovation Programme. The Usher Innovation Community will support collaboration between academics, service professionals and industry to identify, evaluate, validate and adopt new data-driven solutions to transform the delivery of care and improve outcomes for people in Scotland and around the world. We will be drawing from this community to support our industry and public sector collaborations to</p>

	<p>enable industry placements. Therefore we will have plenty of work-based opportunities for our students. See course proposal for further detail.</p> <p>For the SLICC route: Initially we recognise we would have to train a small number of supervisors and markers for the SLICC to ensure students gain the best guidance and experience possible, however we are already planning to do this for other programmes. This training is good for the development of staff and furthermore, widens the pool of SLICC markers and supervisors which could be beneficial to the MGPHS Teaching Organisation.</p> <p>Rather than increase pressure on staffing, we expect these alternative routes will relieve some of the pressure on staffing, i.e. supervising industry-based projects or SLICCs will be a more attractive option for many staff than supervising dissertation projects.</p>
<p>What discussions have taken place within the School/Deanery, with staff and students?</p>	<p>Discussions with our current students have revealed that many of our MSc Data Science for Health and Social Care students do not plan to go on to become researchers or undertake doctoral studies. In fact, we have evidence from individual meetings with our current students that many of them are intending to leave the programme before Year 3 as they do not wish to undertake a 'traditional' research-focussed dissertation and would prefer more applied and practical dissertation routes.</p> <p>No students had concerns about this proposal.</p> <p>The proposal has also been widely discussed with Deanery staff at Boards of Studies meetings and more informally. There is consensus across the staff that offering more flexibility and choices is positive for students, and that this aligns with the general direction of travel for more flexible degrees across the University (e.g. Curriculum Transformation). We also already have the precedent of having a fully taught Y3 (SLICC + 40 credits of electives) in our MPH online programme, which has offered this option since it launched in 2015/16, and runs well for staff and students.</p>
<p>What discussions have taken place with External experts regarding the change?</p>	<p>The changes are supported by the DDI (Data Driven Innovation) Delivery Board as they are in line with our KPIs and ambitions to establish connections with industry and public sector organisations.</p> <p>We have discussed the additional dissertation options with our External Examiner. They have already identified the need to ensure that our students are exiting the programme with relevant skills, knowledge and competencies required for industry. We have also discussed the need for a variety of dissertations options to retain students, due to the diverse range of health and social care backgrounds. The external has also held several meetings with our students ahead of our SSLC meetings. The theme of work based placements and student led projects was well received and considered as an appealing option for current and future cohorts.</p>
<p>Have the School/Deanery contacted Recruitment and Admissions regarding the changes and informing any students who have been offered a place?</p>	<p>No, given that the changes have not yet been approved. Also, these are additional dissertation options, therefore should be very appealing for students currently being offered a place on the programme.</p>

2 APPROVAL

2.1 SCHOOL/DEANERY BOARD OF STUDIES REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Date of BoS: 13 March 2023

Convener Name: Prof Sarah Wild

Comment and Approval (BoS Minute):

Initially submitted and reviewed at the MGPHS Board of Studies meeting on 26 January 2023. Subsequently amended and approved by electronic business 17 March 2023.

2.2 COLLEGE POSTGRADUATE LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Date of College PG Learning and Teaching approval:

Convener Name:

Outcome (please select as appropriate)

Proposal approved ➡ Proceed to updating DTP and all other processes

Proposal approved with conditions

Proposal rejected with recommendations

Comment:

APPENDIX A –CMVM PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

CMVM PGT Programme Specification			
<p>This programme specification template has been developed to fulfil three main functions, acting as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a source of information for students and prospective students seeking an understanding of a programme and as a basis for gaining feedback on the extent to which the opportunities for learning were successful in promoting the intended outcomes • to ensure that there is clarity concerning the aims and intended learning outcomes for the programme for the University during the approval and periodic review processes • to provide information for external examiners, professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and employers as to the skills and other transferable abilities developed by the programme 			
Section 1	ABOUT THE PROGRAMME		
1	Name of programme	MSc in Data Science for Health and Social Care	
2	Interim awards <i>(Insert name or delete as appropriate, eg PG Dip, PG Cert)</i>	PG Cert in Data Science for Health and Social Care PG Dip in Data Science for Health and Social Care	
3	College	CMVM	
4	School / Deanery	Deanery of Molecular, Genetic & Population Health Sciences /Usher Institute	
5	Programme Director <i>(at time of approval)</i>	Ms Michelle Evans	
6	Programme start dates	September 2021	
7	SCQF level of highest award	11	
8	Total credit value of programme <i>(for highest award)</i>	180	
9	Partner institution(s) if any	N/A	
10	Mode of delivery <i>(Please ü those which apply to this programme)</i>	On campus	
		Online	100% Online
		FT	

		PT	1 year PG Cert 2 year PG Dip 3 year MSc
		Intermittent	
11	Expected length of programme	FT	
		PT	
		Intermittent	Up to 7 year for MSc

12	<p>Description of the programme and its structure</p> <p><i>Around 150 words, written to be accessible to a lay audience, to be used for marketing purposes. Identify the programme's distinctive features (and unique selling points).</i></p>		
	<p>Data science can be used to improve health and wellbeing, and the management of health and social care delivery systems locally and globally. However, there are concerns about the use of data science in health and social care regarding data ownership, protection and privacy and outsourcing decision making to computer algorithms and machines. This programme will provide students with comprehensive and up-to-date knowledge of data science in the health and social care context, which will allow them to maximise the value from service user data while promoting best practices.</p> <p>Students will experience detailed coverage of the fundamentals of the data science in the health and social care context through the compulsory elements of the programme, whilst concurrently developing expertise in accessing, interpreting, and integrating the findings of data-intensive research into practice. Students will have the opportunity to customise their experience by selecting elective courses based on expertise within the Usher Institute.</p>		
13	<p>Programme aims</p> <p><i>(Programme aims are broad statements of intent. Up to 150 words.)</i></p>		
	<p>This flexible online programme aims to equip students with a range of skills, tools and understanding to use the transformational power of data to improve health and wellbeing and the management of care systems locally and globally.</p>		
14	<p>Programme Learning Outcomes</p> <p><i>Learning outcomes are statements of what a student is expected to understand or be able to do after completing the process of learning. No programme may have more than 5 learning outcomes.</i></p>		

	1	Critical understanding of the principles and methods, and governance and implications of data science in health and social care.
	2	Able to create, identify and evaluate data-driven solutions to solve complex problems in health/social care contexts.
	3	The capacity to analyse facts and situations and apply creative and inventive thinking to develop appropriate solutions.
	4	The ability to articulate and effectively explain information and to adapt their communication style for different people, situations and audiences.
	5	The motivation to work collaboratively in a multi-disciplinary environment to deliver data-driven solutions.
15	Indicative learning and teaching hours for the programme <i>Learning hours comprise face-to-face and virtual contact hours plus directed and independent learning and time spent on assessment and placements (if appropriate). Please give an indication of the percentage of anticipated learning hours for the programme, taking into account core courses and indicative options. Students should note that these figures may change depending on the exact combination of options taken.</i>	
	<i>Method</i>	<i>Number and percentage of learning hours</i>
	Scheduled learning and teaching activities eg lectures, seminars, synchronous discussions and other timetabled sessions	120 hours (7%)
	Directed learning	120 hours (7%)
	Independent learning	1440 hours (79%)
	Assessment	120 (7%)
	Total	1800 hours (100%)
16	PSB accreditations (where relevant) <i>(Please note accreditations awarded or planned)</i>	
	N/A	
17	Admissions requirements, to be demonstrated through certificated or experiential learning <i>(around 30 words)</i>	
	A UK 2:1 Honours degree, or its international equivalent in a health-related degree or in a relevant subject appropriate to the course of study (e.g. mathematics, statistics, engineering, computer science, life sciences, social care).	

	<p>Applicants who do not satisfy these above requirements may still be admitted at the discretion of the Programme Director based on their academic qualifications, work experience and references or professional qualification appropriate to the programme of study to be followed. Relevant work experience (3-5 years) will be considered on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>If applicable, proven English language proficiency</p> <p>We will also recognise demonstrated prior learning in health and social care organisation, delivery, databases and information systems, data governance, ethics and security, and advanced data handling, analysis and modelling, programming skills in R and Python, data visualisation and storytelling, and research methods.</p>
18	<p>Details of organised work experience / work based learning opportunities available during the programme <i>(if applicable)</i></p> <p>See proposal for alternative dissertations as part of this proposal</p>
19	<p>Career, employability and opportunities for continuing professional development. <i>Around 35 words, written in language which is accessible to a lay audience, to be used for marketing purposes. Should include examples of potential career destinations and how the skills and abilities gained through the programme contribute to career development.</i></p> <p>Graduate opportunities will depend on the base speciality group:</p> <p>Graduates from health and social care backgrounds will be highly competitive for post-graduate training schemes in health service research and practitioner training positions. They will also be highly competitive for leadership positions in their base speciality in the health and social care sector.</p> <p>Graduates from computational backgrounds will be highly competitive for post-graduate training schemes in data science, data scientist roles and advanced practitioner training positions within the health and social care sector.</p> <p>Entrepreneurial graduates will have the commercial awareness and venture creation skills needed to take up opportunities to work for or grow the next generation of data-driven health and social care companies.</p>

Section 2	PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND ASSESSMENT		
20	<p>Programme Structure Diagram</p> <p><i>(Please complete for all awards that will be available, entering course codes for any existing courses)</i></p>		
	<u>PG Cert</u>		
	Course code	Course title	Course Status
			Credit value

			(Core/compulsory/ optional)	
HEIN11037	Introduction to data science in health and social care	Compulsory	20	
PUHR11105	Principles of epidemiology and statistics	Elective	20	
HEIN11059	Data ethics in health and social care	Elective	10	
HEIN11039	Introduction to statistics in health and social care	Elective	10	
HEIN11043	Digital Technologies in Health and Social Care	Elective	10	
PUHR11103	Data Analysis with R	Elective	10	
HEIN11042	Managing and leading data-driven innovation	Elective	10	
HEIN11058	Managing and leading data-driven innovation (work-based)	Elective	10	
PUHR11067	Intermediate epidemiology	Elective	10	
HEIN11045	Introduction to software development in health and social care	Elective	10	
HEIN11041	Health and care delivery and organisation	Elective	10	
HEIN11040	Data visualisation: Knowledge transfer	Elective	10	
HEIN11050	Working with data types and	Elective	10	

		structure in Python and R		
	HEIN11047	Data security and protection in health and social care	Elective	10
	GLHE11017	Introduction to qualitative research methods	Elective	10
	PUHR11064	Statistical modelling for epidemiology	Elective	10
	HEIN11060	Health Data Science	Elective	10
PG Dip				
	Course code	Course title	Couse Status Core/compulsory/ optional	Credit value
	HEIN11057	Research design in data science for health and social care	Compulsory	20
	HEIN11046	User driven service design in health and social care	Elective	10
	HEIN11055	Big data analytics	Elective	10
	New course code	Applied software development in health and social care	Elective	10
	HEIN11056	Implementation science: putting evidence based interventions into practice	Elective	10
	PUHR11069	Systematic Reviews	Elective	10
	HEIN11049	Entrepreneurship and data-driven innovation	Elective	10

	PGSP11401	Engaging with Digital Research	Elective	10
	PGSP11388	The use and evolution of digital data analysis and collection tools	Elective	10
	HEIN11048	Introduction to databases and information systems	Elective	10
	HEIN11054	Systems thinking	Elective	10
	HEIN11044	Data standards and core technologies in health and social care	Elective	10
	HEIN11060	Health Data Science	Elective	10
	<u>MSc</u>			
	Course code	Course title	Couse Status (Core/compulsory/optional)	Credit value
	HEIN11053	Dissertation (Data Science for Health and Social Care)	Compulsory	60
21	Mapping matrix of courses delivering the programme learning outcomes			
	Programme LOs		<i>Met by course aim/learning outcome (List all relevant course titles)</i>	
	1 Critical understanding of the principles and methods, and governance and implications of data science in health and social care.		<p>Compulsory Course: Introduction to data science in health and social care.</p> <p>Elective Courses: Introduction to epidemiology and statistics; Data ethics and ownership; Data standards and core technologies in health and social care; Telehealth and technology-enabled care; Managing and leading data-driven innovation; Intermediate epidemiology, Health and care delivery and organisation; Data visualisation: Knowledge transfer and exchange;</p>	

		<p>Service user-driven design; Data security and protection in health and social care; Databases and information systems; Statistical modelling for epidemiology; Quantitative data analysis; Entrepreneurship and data science; Introduction to data types and data structures in health and social care; Advanced epidemiology; Big data computing in health and social care; Python programming for health and social care; Implementation science in health and social care; Genomics in health and social care; Health and social care data resources and their uses; Introduction to health and social care economics; Decision support systems; Stratified health and social care; Health and social care policy in data science; Systems thinking for data in health and social care; Student-led and dissertation.</p>
	<p>2 Able to create, identify and evaluate data-driven solutions to solve complex problems in health/social care contexts.</p>	<p>Elective Courses: Introduction to epidemiology and statistics; Data ethics and ownership; Probability and statistics in health and social care; Data standards and core technologies in health and social care; Telehealth and technology-enabled care; Introduction to R programming; Managing and leading data-driven innovation; Intermediate epidemiology, Health and social care software development; Data visualisation: Knowledge transfer and exchange; Service user-driven design; Data security and protection in health and social care; Databases and information systems; Qualitative methods for health and social care; Statistical modelling for epidemiology; Quantitative data analysis; Introduction to data types and data structures in health and social care; Research methods for health and social care; Advanced epidemiology; Big data computing in health and social care; Python programming for health and social care; Implementation science in health and social care; Advanced</p>

		<p>statistics; Genomics in health and social care; Working with unstructured data in health and social care; Introduction to health and social care economics; Decision support systems; Stratified health and social care; Machine learning and artificial intelligence and dissertation.</p>
	<p>3 The capacity to analyse facts and situations and apply creative and inventive thinking to develop appropriate solutions.</p>	<p>Elective Courses: Introduction to epidemiology and statistics; Data ethics and ownership; Probability and statistics in health and social care; Data standards and core technologies in health and social care; Telehealth and technology-enabled care; Introduction to R programming; Managing and leading data-driven innovation; Intermediate epidemiology, Health and social care software development; Health and care delivery and organisation; Data visualisation: Knowledge transfer and exchange; Service user-driven design; Data security and protection in health and social care; Databases and information systems; Qualitative methods for health and social care; Statistical modelling for epidemiology; Quantitative data analysis; Entrepreneurship and data science; Introduction to data types and data structures in health and social care; Research methods for health and social care; Advanced epidemiology; Big data computing in health and social care; Python programming for health and social care; Implementation science in health and social care; Advanced statistics; Genomics in health and social care; Health and social care data resources and their uses; Working with unstructured data in health and social care; Introduction to health and social care economics; Decision support systems; Stratified health and social care; Machine learning and artificial intelligence; Health and social care policy in data</p>

		<p>science; Systems thinking for data in health and social care and dissertation.</p>
	<p>4 The ability to articulate and effectively explain information and to adapt their communication style for different people, situations and audiences.</p>	<p>Compulsory Course: Introduction to data science in health and social care.</p> <p>Elective Courses: Data ethics and ownership; Data standards and core technologies in health and social care; Managing and leading data-driven innovation; Intermediate epidemiology, Health and social care software development; Health and care delivery and organisation; Service user-driven design; Data security and protection in health and social care; Databases and information systems; Entrepreneurship and data science; Introduction to data types and data structures in health and social care; Research methods for health and social care; Big data computing in health and social care; Python programming for health and social care; Implementation science in health and social care; Genomics in health and social care; Health and social care data resources and their uses; Introduction to health and social care economics; Decision support systems; Stratified health and social care; Health and social care policy in data science; Systems thinking for data in health and social care and dissertation.</p>
	<p>5 The motivation to work collaboratively in a multi-disciplinary environment to deliver data-driven solutions.</p>	<p>Elective Courses: Data ethics and ownership; Data standards and core technologies in health and social care; Managing and leading data-driven innovation, Health and social care software development; Health and care delivery and organisation; Service user-driven design; Data security and protection in health and social care; Databases and information systems; Entrepreneurship and data science; Introduction to data types and data structures in health and social care; Research methods for health and social care; Implementation science in health and social care; Introduction to</p>

		health and social care economics; Health and social care policy in data science; Systems thinking for data in health and social care and dissertation.
22	<p>Programme assessment strategy</p> <p><i>(Please explain the programme's overall approach to assessment, in no more than 100 words)</i></p>	
	<p>The programme assessment strategy is constructively aligned with the programme mission and the learning outcomes. The programme aims to provide assessments that allow students to demonstrate their grasp of the learning outcomes by producing outputs that reflect real-world scenarios in health and social care. These scenarios would, for example, include: developing ethical and data ownership guidelines; assessing security risks to service user data; writing data analysis pipelines; communicating system-level issues to specialist and non-specialist audiences; producing or writing reports, or giving presentations that convey complex service user-related data issues to health and social care professionals from non-computational backgrounds.</p>	
23	<p>Mapping of assessments by type and week of semester</p>	
	<p>See Assessment Matrix Template for the online MSc in DSHSC below.</p>	

Section 3	PROGRAMME SPECIFIC REGULATIONS	
24	<p><i>Programmes shall conform University Academic Regulations. Where a programme has programme specific regulations which are to be formally approved by the University, these should be included below.</i></p>	
25	HESA/JACS code	

Assessment Matrix Template

Year 1 2021/22															
WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Semester 1 September - End of December	TEACHING BLOCK 1					TEACHING BLOCK 2					Flexible Learning				
20/09/2021	27/09/2021	04/10/2021	11/10/2021	18/10/2021	25/10/2021	01/11/2021	08/11/2021	15/11/2021	22/11/2021	29/11/2021	06/12/2021	13/12/2021	20/12/2021	27/12/2021	
Introduction to data science in health and social care, 20 credits		Poster presentation to peers 10%		Discussion board posting 5%		Communicati. assignment 20%				Discussion board posting 10%		Discussion board posting 15%		1800 word critical review 40%	
Introduction to epidemiology and statistics, 20 credits					Formative assignment			Groupwork task formative assessment		1800 word essay 30%			Study design & analysis 70%		
Data ethics and ownership, 10 credits							Discussion board posting 10%			Discussion board posting 30%		1800 word reflective report 60%			

Semester 2	Flexible Learning	TEACHING BLOCK 3					Flexible Learning	TEACHING BLOCK 4					Flexible Learning	
January - End of April	10/01/2022	17/01/2022	24/01/2022	31/02/2022	07/02/2022	14/02/2022	21/02/2022	28/02/2022	07/03/2022	14/03/2022	21/03/2022	28/03/2022	04/04/2022	11/04/2022
Probability and statistics in health and social care 10 Credits		Discussion board posting 10%	Discussion board posting 20%	PBL assignment 10%		PBL assignment 60%								
Data standards and core technologies in health and social care, 10 Credits		Discussion board posting 10%	Discussion board posting 20%		1800 word essay 40%			Oral presentation 30%						
Telehealth and technology-enabled care, 10 Credits			Discussion board posting 10%	Poster presentation to peers 20%		Discussion board posting 30%								
Introduction to R programming, 10 Credits					Formative assignment			Project (2000 words) 100%						
Managing and leading Data Driven Innovation, 10 Credits									Discussion board posting 10%		Discussion board posting 30%		Management plan 60%	
Intermediate epidemiology, 10 Credits									Formative assignment				Briefing paper 100%	
Health and social care software development, 10 Credits									Discussion board posting 10%	Discussion board posting 30%			Programming assignment 60%	
Health and care delivery and organisation, 10 Credits								Discussion board posting 10%		Discussion board posting 30%		1800 word reflective essay 60%		
Data visualisation: Knowledge transfer and exchange, 10 Credits									Presentation 40%		Project 60%			

Semester 3	TEACHING BLOCK 5					Flexible Learning	TEACHING BLOCK 6					Flexible Learning			
End of April-July	18/04/2022	25/04/2022	02/05/2022	09/05/2022	16/05/2022	23/05/2022	30/05/2022	06/06/2022	13/06/2022	20/06/2022	27/06/2022	04/07/2022	11/07/2022	18/07/2022	25/07/2022
Service user driven design, 10 Credits		Reflective blog 40%		Group project 60%											
Data security and protection in health and social care, 10 Credits		Discussion board posting 10%	Discussion board posting 30%		1800 word reflective essay 60%										
Databases and information systems, 10 Credits	Discussion board posting 10%	Discussion board posting 20%	SQL assignment 30%				1800 word database report 40%								
Qualitative methods for health and social care, 10 Credits	Discussion board posting 10%	Discussion board posting 30%	Group project 20%		1800 word case report 40%										
Statistical modelling for epidemiology, 10 Credits											Formative assignment			Stat. ana.: 2000 word report 100%	
Quantitative data analysis, 10 Credits, 10 Credits								Discussion board posting 10%	Discussion board posting 30%	Group project 20%			1800 word case report 40%		
Entrepreneurship and data science, 10 Credits							Discussion board posting 10%		CWK 2000 word essay 60%		Discussion board posting 30%				
Introduction to data types and data structures in health and social care, 10 Credits								Discussion board posting 10%		Discussion board posting 30%	Group project 20%	Programming assignment 40%			

Year 2 2022/23													
WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Semester 1	TEACHING BLOCK 1					TEACHING BLOCK 2							
September - End of December	19/09/2022	26/09/2022	03/10/2022	10/10/2022	17/10/2022	24/10/2022	31/10/2022	07/11/2022	14/11/2022	21/11/2022	28/11/2022	05/12/2022	12/12/2022
Research methods for health and social care, 10 Credits		Discussion board posting 10%		PBL assignemnt 10%		Discussion board posting 20%		PBL assignemnt 20%			1800 word case report 40%		
Advanced epidemiology			Formative assignment		Assignment TBC 100%								
Big data computing in health and social care, 10 Credits						Programmig assignment 10%			Programmig assignment 30%			1800 word report 60%	
Python programming for health and social care, 10 credits							Programmig assignment 10%			Programmig assignment 30%			1800 word report 60%

Semester 2	Flexible Learning	TEACHING BLOCK 3					Flexible Learning	TEACHING BLOCK 4					
January - End of April	09/01/2023	16/01/2023	23/01/2023	30/01/2023	06/02/2023	13/02/2023	20/02/2023	27/02/2023	06/03/2023	13/03/2023	20/03/2023	27/03/2023	03/04/2023
Implementation science in health and social care, 10 Credits			commun. assignment 50%		Project proposal 50%								
Advanced statistics, 10 Credits					Formative assignment			2000 word Project					
Genomics in health and social care, 10 Credits			Discussion board posting 10%	Discussion board posting 20%	PBL assignemnt 10%			Critical review 60%					
Health and social care data resources and their uses, 10 Credits								Discussion board posting 10%	Discussion board posting 20%	PBL assignemnt 30%		1800 word essay 40%	
Working with unstructured data in health and social care, 10 Credits									Programmig assignment 10%		Programmig assignment 30%		1800 word report 60%
Introduction to health and social care economics, 10 Credits								Discussion board posting 10%	commun. assignment 20%	Poster presentation 30%	1800 word report 40%		

Semester 3	Flexible Learning	TEACHING BLOCK 5					Flexible Learning	TEACHING BLOCK 6					
End of April-July	24/04/2023	01/05/2023	08/05/2023	15/05/2023	22/05/2023	29/05/2023	05/06/2023	12/06/2023	19/06/2023	26/03/2023	03/07/2023	10/07/2023	17/07/2023
Decision support systems, 10 Credits		Discussion board posting 10%	Discussion board posting 20%	PBL assignemnt 20%		1800 word case report 50%							
Stratified health and social care, 20 Credits			Discussion board posting 10%	Discussion board posting 20%	PBL assignemnt 10%			1800 word essay 60%					
Machine learning and artificial intelligence, 10 Credits								Programmig assignment 10%		Programmig assignment 30%		1800 word report 60%	
Health and social care policy in data science, 20 Credits								Discussion board posting 10%	Discussion board posting 20%		Discussion board posting 40%		Group report 30%
Systems thinking for data in health and social care, 20 Credits									commun. assignment 20%		Poster presentation 30%		1800 word reflective report 50%

Year 3 2022/23	
September - mid-August	
Dissertation 60 credits	Dissertation 10-15,000 words Submission Mid August

APPENDIX B – Course Proposal Forms

The programme will consist of individual courses; each course will require a Course Proposal Form. Once approved, the initiating school will be responsible for adding the new course into EUCLID CCAM. Further information on course creation and approval can be found at: http://www.euclid.ed.ac.uk/staff/Support/User_Guides/CCAM/Course_Creation_and_Approval_Menu.html

You will be expected to have the content and assessment of the first course of your programme written by validation.

The list appears in the same order as it would when proposing a new course in EUCLID.

Course Proposal Form

Fields with an asterisk * are required fields

Have you confirmed that the appropriate resources are in place (finance, teaching staff, IT)*:	Yes
Have you confirmed that the appropriate support services are in place (library, computing services)*:	Yes

1. Owing School

Proposer*	Sharon Levy – CPD Lead
Owning School*	MGPHS: Usher Institute

2. Course descriptor

Course name*	Data-Driven Innovation (Student-Led Individually Created Course)
Summary description*	<p>This 20 credit course will provide students with an opportunity to integrate the learning gained in the Masters programme and apply it to address problems and challenges in the 'real world'. Students will create their own learning using the Student-Led Individually Created Course (SLICC) approach – a university framework for self-designed experiential learning:</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/employability/sliccs/</p> <p>The student will plan, propose, carry out, reflect on and evaluate a piece of work from their own contexts, encompassing the cross-disciplinary nature of their domain. The SLICC framework requires that students use the generic learning outcomes to articulate their learning in their own defined project, reflect frequently using a blog, collect, formulate, organise and present evidence of their learning in an e-portfolio. Students will receive relevant formative feedback on a draft final report, which is the same format as the final reflective report, which forms the summative assessment. The above will be with guidance of a mentor.</p>

	The course will encourage critical appraisal of students' own practical experiences, and allow them to reflect on their learning in the context of the cross-disciplinary nature of the domain.
Course description*	<p>Students are expected to spend approximately 140-200 hours in total on this course. Students who opt not to do a dissertation will take a SLICC + 40 electives.</p> <p>Planning the SLICC should commence once students begin 3rd year. Ideally the chosen piece of work should link to their own contexts, experience and/or relevant employment. Students will be given an overview of what is expected well in advance. They will be provided with relevant support, materials and resources. Students define their own learning outcomes as a 'Proposal' and by looking forward into their future professional/personal aims and career aspirations and will examine the development of their attributes. Students will receive formative feedback on their 'Project Proposal' in block 1 of Year 3. Thereafter the student will reflect frequently using blogs to build and present evidence of their learning in an e-portfolio. They will submit and receive formative feedback in a draft report. Their work is then incorporated into a final written self-reflective report which will be the summative assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Course proposal (10%) -10 mandatory blogs using pebble pad -Draft final report -Final report (90%) – 5000 words <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2000 words for relevant literature review 3000 words for Reflective report <p>Two student peer meetings throughout the year</p>
	Postgraduate
Keywords	Student Led, integration of knowledge, self-reflection and development

3. Teaching, learning and assessment

Total contact teaching hours*	Total Hours: 200 (Lecture Hours 10, Seminar/Tutorial Hours 2, Online Activities 70, Feedback/Feedforward Hours 10, Formative Assessment Hours 10, Revision Session Hours 2, Programme Level
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	Learning and Teaching Hours 4, Directed Learning and Independent Learning Hours 92)
Graduate attributes, personal and professional skills	The student will be required to unite the knowledge gained from the previous 2 years of their programme and integrate this knowledge with self-reflection in their own practice and experience. The process will require the student to deeply reflect on both knowledge, experience, practice and self-development. As the reflective blogs will be done throughout the 3 rd year, whilst the student is undergoing taught courses, the student will further develop generic skills such as planning, organising, executing, time management, critical analysis, and presentation.
Reading List/Learning Resources	<p>University wide SLICC resources:</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/sliccs</p> <p>postgraduate examples:</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/sliccs/staff/example-courses</p> <p>Reflective Writing:</p> <p>Toolkit:</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit</p> <p>Gibbs' reflective cycle:</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/gibbs-reflective-cycle</p> <p>Other frameworks:</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience</p> <p>What is Pebblepad:</p> <p>https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/1.+What+is+PebblePadF/1_2zptu48</p> <p>How to Create a blog:</p> <p>https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/3.+How+to+Create+a+Blog/1_uioiqj6j</p>
Learning outcomes*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student will be able to demonstrate how they have developed a deep critical understanding of the cross-disciplinary nature of the domain, using their own SLICC to identify complexities, challenges and wider implications in their area. 2. The student will apply relevant skills and approaches gained during the programme teaching to effectively and critically explore their chosen SLICC question.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The student will self-reflect to demonstrate personal and intellectual autonomy to critically evaluate ideas, evidence and experiences from an open-minded and reasoned perspective 4. The student will draw on the quality, depth and breadth of their experiences to engage with the communities and world around them. With an informed international perspective, they seek to contribute positively, ethically and respectfully 5. In their self-assessment, critically review, evaluate and reflect upon their knowledge, skills and practices in the domain, how they have met the learning outcomes for the SLICC course or reflect on the learning they have gained from not progressing as originally anticipated.
Components of Assessment* (for discussion at Board of Studies)	Written exam 0%, Practical exam 0%, Coursework 100%
Components of Assessment* (for publication on DRPS)	Written exam 0%, Practical exam 0%, Coursework 100%
Exam Information	NA
Feedback	<p>Students will be provided detailed formative feedback at:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The proposal stage in deciding what they wish to achieve in their SLICC project, and defining own learning outcomes 2) The draft final report to gain insight into how insightful/ effective the students reflective blogging is and the structure of the report to prepare the student for the final report. 3) Summative feedback on the final report which will be in two parts. This will be a critical literature review of their chosen relevant topic and a reflective account of their learning journey and extracts from their own blogs to illustrate their reflection, development how they have achieved their SLICC goals or what they have learnt from not being able to achieve these.

4. Administrative information

Additional course information

Course availability*	- Available to all students in 3 rd year who wish to do SLICC +40 credits rather than the 60 credit dissertation
Normal year taken*	Postgraduate 3 rd year

SCQF Credit Volume*	20 credits
SCQF Credit Level*	- SCQF Level 11
Home subject area*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usher - Health Information
Other subject area	Data Science in Health and Social Care
Course organiser	TBC
Deputy course organiser	TBC
Secretary	TBC

Classification

Course type*	Online Distance Learning
Default delivery period*	Choose from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible
Default course mode of study*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distance Learning
Marking scheme*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APT PG Mark/Grade

Course requirements

These can be enabled or left blank. If enabled text must be entered.

Pre-requisites	none
Co-requisites	none
Prohibited combinations	
Visiting student pre-requisites	
Any costs to be met by students	Laptop and internet connection

Collaboration

% not taught by this institution	na
Collaboration information (across Schools/across Institutions)	na
Collaboration information (within Deanery)	Once established as a TO wide course we will collaborate with other part time online MSC programme offering SLICC to share best practice, relevant teaching resources/ supervisors/ markers.

Equality and Diversity

<p>Are there any equality and diversity implications related to this course? For example, is it clear who the intended market is? Was the course designed to be accessible and adaptable to meet the needs of potential participants? Are the materials and topics inclusive, i.e. representing perspectives from a range of social and cultural backgrounds? Are there any health and safety implications, and is a risk assessment required?</p>	<p>All students on the programme are valued and respected for their individual perspectives and contributions and we work to ensure no student is treated differently or less favourably based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender or sexual orientation.</p> <p>Online etiquette and expectations are outlined in our programme handbook, page 31-2, where we outline that students are expected to treat their peers and supervisors with dignity and respect and address them in a professional and inclusive manner. All components of the assessment will be marked anonymously by an independent marker to ensure they are marked fairly. Extension and exceptional circumstances processes are also in place to support students who experience unexpected and unanticipated difficulties which adversely impact on their studies and their ability to complete any components of the dissertation.</p>
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Additional information

Taught in Gaelic (Gàidhlig)?*	No
Study Abroad	no
Special Arrangements	No
Fee Code if Invoiced at Course level	If being invoiced at course level, enter a Fee Code

Course Proposal Form

Fields with an asterisk * are required fields

<u>Have you confirmed that the appropriate resources are in place (finance, teaching staff, IT)*:</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Have you confirmed that the appropriate support services are in place (library, computing services)*:</u>	<u>Yes</u>

1. Owing School

Proposer*	Michelle Evans
Owing School*	MGPHS: Usher Institute

Course descriptor

Course name*	Work-based placement (Data-Driven Innovation)
Summary description*	<p>Learners will undertake a supervised work-based placement, building on skills and knowledge previously acquired from the foundational 120 credits of academic study that forms the final stage of the MSc Data Science for Health and Social Care programme.</p> <p>The work-based project is designed to develop students' academic skills and ability to use and apply a range of data science skills, theories, concepts and principles relating to data-driven innovation in health and/or social care in a real-world setting. Students will develop innovative responses to problems and issues and communicate data-related issues in the health and social care sector and undertake an independent piece of work, scholarly or creative, demonstrating the ability to work independently under supervision.</p> <p>The work-based placement is agreed-upon between all participating stakeholders: student, UoE academic supervisor and work-based mentor. A learning contract will be designed prior to the placement to ensure all stakeholder needs are met.</p>
Course description*	The work-based placement allows the student to put theory into practice within a 'real-world' setting in an industry setting or public sector organisation. Students will develop their skills and knowledge, both specialist and transferrable, enhancing their employability. The work-based project will provide students with the opportunity to build their networks by connecting and working with professionals in industry or public sector. Crucially, it will develop commercial, professional or situational awareness, developing knowledge of the current local and global business landscapes, industries, organisations and specific roles. Working under the guidance of an academic

	<p>supervisor (based at UoE) and work mentor (based at placement setting) students will be offered the opportunity to work on an industry/public sector-based project to solve practical problems that require an application-oriented thinking.</p> <p>Students will gain transferable skills through applied, practical experience with host organisations. Host organisations may be based in Scotland, rest of the UK or internationally and include industry, public sector, charities, third sector, think tanks, charities, NGOs and community-based groups. All work-based projects will be offered as virtual placements with no requirement to visit the UK.</p> <p>A list of pre-arranged work-based projects will be presented to students in Year 2. Alternatively, students may choose to arrange their own placement. Input from the Programme Director will be necessary to confirm that the scope of the proposed project is suitable for a work-based dissertation.</p> <p>The work based project takes nine months part-time to complete. The work base placement course supports students with a dedicated virtual learning environment, including online tools such as informal and formal asynchronous discussion boards and an e-portfolio. Supplementary (optional) online tutorials and expert guest lectures will also feature utilising synchronous web applications whenever possible. Students will be allocated a UoE supervisor with relevant expertise and a work based mentor. Supervisors will hold a minimum of 10 timetabled meetings with the student and will be available for consultation throughout the placement. A record of supervisory meetings will also be logged. Supervisor support can take on many forms and may be provided face-to-face, or remotely, via e-mail, or telephone, zoom/teams. Supervisory support will be supplemented by the detailed work based placement handbook. Regular community learning sessions will provide students with the opportunity to reflect on the experience of their peers and identify opportunities for learning while building a strong sense of academic community within and outwith the programme.</p>
Course level*	Postgraduate /SCQF Level 11
Keywords	<p><i>Enter keywords that describe the course separated by commas (maximum 100 characters across all tags)</i></p> <p>Work-based learning, experiential learning, reflection, industry, data-driven innovation, real-world setting, collaboration, entrepreneurship, leadership</p>

Teaching, learning and assessment

<p>Total contact teaching hours*</p>	<p>Total Hours: 600 (Feedback/Feedforward Hours 20, Programme Level Learning and Teaching Hours 12, Work Based Learning and Independent Learning Hours 568)</p>
<p>Graduate attributes, personal and professional skills</p>	<p>1) Mindsets: Enquiry and lifelong learning</p> <p>Students on this course will be encouraged to seek out ways to develop their expertise in data science in health and social care. They will also be encouraged to strive for excellence in their professional practice and to use established and developed approaches to data-related issues as they arise in health and social care systems.</p> <p>Aspiration and personal development</p> <p>Students will be encouraged to draw on the quality, depth and breadth of their experiences to expand their potential and identify areas they wish to develop and grow. Students will also be encouraged to understand their responsibility within and contribute positively, ethically and respectfully to the health and social care community while acknowledging that different students and community members will have other priorities and goals.</p> <p>Outlook and engagement</p> <p>Students will be expected to take responsibility for their learning. Students will be asked to use their initiative and experience, often explicitly relating to their professional, educational, geographical or cultural context, to engage with and enhance the learning of students from the diverse communities on the programme. Students will also be asked to reflect on the experience of their peers and identify opportunities to enhance their learning.</p> <p>2) Skills: Research and enquiry</p> <p>Students will use self-reflection to seek out learning opportunities. Students will also use the newly acquired knowledge and critical assessment to identify and creatively tackle problems and assimilate the findings of primary research and peer knowledge in their arguments, discussions and assessments.</p> <p>Personal and intellectual autonomy</p> <p>Students will be encouraged to use their personal and intellectual autonomy to critically evaluate the literature and their learning. Students will be supported through their active participation in self-directed learning, discussion boards and collaborative activities to critically evaluate concepts, evidence and experiences of peers and supervisors from an open-minded and reasoned perspective.</p> <p>Personal effectiveness</p>

	<p>Students will be effective and proactive learners that can articulate what they have learned and have an awareness of their strengths and limitations and a commitment to learning and reflection to complete this course successfully.</p> <p>Commercial / Professional / Situational awareness</p> <p>Students will display commercial/situational acumen and knowledge of the current local and global business landscapes, industries, organisations and specific roles. They will have the ability to work collaboratively with colleagues both internally and externally building and maintaining relationships. Students will acquire basic understanding of the key drivers for success in the current landscape and situations and understand the importance of innovation and taking calculated risks</p> <p>Enterprise and Entrepreneurship</p> <p>Students will broadly, have an ability to demonstrate an innovative approach, creativity, collaboration and risk taking. The work placements will require inventive thinking—adaptability, managing complexity and self-direction and be commercially/professionally/situationally aware, creative and entrepreneurial</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Effective data scientists' practitioners in the health and social care sector require excellent oral and written communication, presentation and interpersonal skills. The structure of the dissertation courses will reinforce and develop these skills.</p>
<p>Reading List/Learning Resources</p>	<p>Work-based learning resources.</p>
<p>Learning outcomes*</p>	<p>On completion of this course, the student will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a critical understanding of theories, concepts and principles relating to data-driven innovation in health and/or social care. • Apply a range of data science skills, theories, practices, and creativity to produce a significant research, investigation, or development project. • Critically review, consolidate, and extend knowledge, skills, practices, and thinking in data science to extract value from health and social care data. • Develop innovative responses to problems and issues and communicate data-related issues in the health and social care sector. • Exercise autonomy and reflexivity to contribute to change, development and/or new thinking within the health and social care sector.

<p>Components of Assessment*</p>	<p>Written Exam 0 %, Coursework 100 %, Practical Exam 0 %</p> <p>Formative assessment:</p> <p>E-portfolio</p> <p>Students will maintain their own e-portfolio, using Pebblepad, where they will be expected to keep a monthly learning blog which will serve as the evidence base for their reflection(s) on the dissertation experience. Blog entries will be reviewed by supervisors on a regular basis.</p> <p>Discussion board posts</p> <p>The student discussion board is a vital way for placement students to remain in contact with each other and with tutors to exchange experiences. Students will be encouraged to post on the discussion board once a week (no less than 250, no more than 500 words). A prompt will be published every week.</p> <p>Summative assessment:</p> <p>Reflective blog (10%; 500 words)</p> <p>The students will be asked to reflect and write a blog on their work-based learning experience, drawing from their e-portfolio.</p> <p>Presentation (20%; 10 slides, 10 minutes)</p> <p>The presentation is a chance for students to showcase some of the highlights of their work-based learning experience. It can take the form of self-reflection, especially in the context of how their initial expectations of the project changed considering real experience. Reflection on what kinds of skills gained, and how they relate to the degree will be of significance. It could also take the form of direct project outputs and the benefit to the organisation and to the improvement of health/social care/housing service or delivery.</p> <p>Work-Based Learning Project (70%; Maximum 10,000 words). The students will present a comprehensive written piece of work for the work-based project.</p>
<p>Exam Information</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Feedback</p>	<p>Feedback is information provided to the students about their learning relative to learning outcomes. Feedback is also important to identify areas for improvement; for example, course feedback surveys will be an integral component of course development. The two main types of feedback are formative and summative. Formative feedback involves feedback given during an assessment, while summative feedback is provided after an assessment has been completed. Feedback focuses on the student's current performance. On the other hand, feedforward offers constructive guidance on how to do better in the future.</p>

	We will use a combination of feedback and feedforward to ensure that students achieve the five learning outcomes from this course. A balance of formative feedback and feedforward will be provided throughout the course, for example, during live question and answer sessions and on discussion boards, supervisor meetings and work-based environment. Formative tasks will be offered before the student submit their summative assessed coursework. All components of summative assessment will be marked, and feedback will be provided.
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Administrative information

Additional course information

Course availability*	Not available to visiting students
Normal year taken*	Postgraduate – third year for p/t students MSc students
SCQF Credit Volume*	60 Credits
SCQF Credit Level*	SCQF Level 11
Home subject area*	Usher, Health Information
Other subject area	
Course Organiser	Michelle Evans
Course Administrator	Laura Miller

Classification

Course type*	Online/Blended
Default delivery period*	Flexible

Default course mode of study*	Distance Learning
Marking scheme*	PG Mark/Grade

Equality and Diversity

Through our proactive practice, we strive to ensure that all students on this course are respected and valued for their unique perspectives and contributions and that no student is treated differently or less favourably based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender or sexual orientation.

Online etiquette and expectations will be outlined and discussed with students and detailed in the course handbook to ensure students treat their peers and supervisors with dignity and respect and address them in a professional and inclusive manner. All components of the assessment will be marked anonymously by an independent marker to ensure they are marked fairly. Extension and exceptional circumstances processes are also in place to support students who experience unexpected and unanticipated difficulties which adversely impact on their studies and their ability to complete any components of the dissertation.

Additional information

Taught in Gaelic (Gàidhlig)?*	No
Study Abroad	No
Special Arrangements	This course will be supported online using the Learn virtual learning environment. Work base learning placements will be organised by the programme team or students can suggest their own work placement.
Fee Code if Invoiced at Course level	Not applicable.

Course requirements

These can be enabled or left blank. If enabled text must be entered.

Pre-requisites	None
Co-requisites	None
Prohibited combinations	
Visiting student pre-requisites	
Any costs to be met by students	

Collaboration

% not taught by this institution	N/A
Collaboration information (School/Institution)	N/A

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

27 March 2023

Major change to a new programme: MSc Leading Digital Transformation for Health and Care in Scotland

Description of paper

1. This paper describes a proposal for the introduction of two alternatives to the current 60-credit dissertation, for students in their third year of study on the online part-time MSc Leading Digital Transformation for Health and Care in Scotland programme:

- a Student Led Individually Created Course (SLICC), which will consist of a 20-credit SLICC course, complemented by 40 credits worth of taught elective courses, OR
- an ePortfolio (60 credits) that enables learners to demonstrate attainment of approved programme learning outcomes, OR
- a Dissertation (60 credits, as currently offered)

Our proposal aligns with the University's mission to provide the highest-quality teaching and learning to students who are curious and creative. It matches the requirements of our strategic partner, NHS Education Scotland, who wish to see learners obtaining academic credit for work that is of direct benefit to employers. It is also aligned to our aspiration to see our graduates being able to use learning to tackle challenges in their own professional context, to the benefits of the people in Scotland.

Action requested / recommendation

2. We are seeking approval to allow the MSc Leading Digital Transformation in Health and Social Care in Scotland, three year part-time online programme to offer an ePortfolio as a 60 credit alternative to a Dissertation. We are also seeking an approval to offer an entirely taught third year comprised by a SLICC plus 40 credits of elective courses.

We also seek approval to remove the progression hurdle following the completion of the first 120 taught credits of the programme (see discussion for further detail).

Background and context

3. The newly approved part-time online MSc programme, taught over 3 years (PgCert, PgDip and MSc) is set to enable established leaders in Scottish health, housing and social care sectors to plan and evaluate, lead and influence digital transformation in their own domain. Students will be in a role where they are required to drive and implement practical digital transformational change, within their

organisation or system. Students will explore key theories and concepts relating to digital transformation and innovation, and be guided by an academic supervisor as well as a work-based sponsor and mentor. They are required to progress their own practice-based project, which is likely to have national impact, using new knowledge and experience gained through the programme. It is envisaged that graduates will go on to lead and influence the transformation of health and social care in Scotland, propelling the vision articulated in Scotland's Digital Health and Care Strategy.

Pedagogical context

The proposal in this paper relates to aligning the Dissertation course to a demonstration of knowledge gains and skills acquisition, through scaffolded, incremental, dialogic and collaborative outcomes. It sets to promote learning that is developmental, authentic, personal, evidenced and reflective. It does that by providing a structured framework for learning, where students are prompted to reflect on the impact of an activity, how it connects to other experiences, and how it may inform their own leadership journey ahead. Using a purposeful digital repository of learning experiences, projects and activities, students can curate artefacts that they have collected in any environment, during their time as learners. Being able to showcase their craft, achievements and experiences, to a wider audience beyond the community of learners, may unleash learners' creativity. This will be encouraged and rewarded in the review (formative) and summative assessment of the final submission.

All MSc programmes in our Deanery offer third year students the option of undertaking empirical research or a desk-based study, to hone these skills. Yet, we envisage that the graduates of the new MSc programme will not go on to become researchers, nor will they go on to undertake doctoral studies. In fact, we now that many of our potential students already have higher degrees, obtained before commencing their studies with us.

Our targeted students are primarily managers or aspiring leaders who are anchored in service delivery organisations across Scotland. Their needs are better addressed by a more flexible approach to learning, than current regulations allow. This proposal would support a more flexible approach with students better able to tailor their studies to their own particular career aspirations with increased relevance to their sphere of practice.

The options of a SLICC + elective taught courses or a Dissertation by ePortfolio have a better pedagogical alignment for our students.

To progress to their third year, students are required to undertake a 10-credit research methods course in their second year of study. They are also encouraged to develop a critical approach to the academic literature and relevant research, throughout the programme. Core courses that fit the requirements to show such proficiency include:

1. Leading Digital Transformation
2. Evaluation for Digital Transformation Impact
3. Critical Perspectives of Digital Health & Social Care
4. Designing & Implementing Digital Strategies for Service Transformation
5. Research Design

The assessment of each of our courses is carefully designed to allow students to directly link their academic studies with their professional work, which takes a high degree of analytical skills required for Master's level study. Moreover, the unique setup where students have a work based sponsor/mentor aligns each learning unit to progression of a project that they are required to progress by their sponsor.

The ePortfolio and taught third year options will require the same notional effort (i.e. 600 hours of study), at the same level (SCQF level 11) as the research-focussed Dissertation. The difference between these options is that for the ePortfolio and the SLICC students can choose the topic and the way they curate their evidence of learning to demonstrate how they addressed intended learning outcomes. This choice will allow the student to best determine the content and the path that best suit their individual career aspirations and the needs of their employers or service users.

Discussion

4.

Alignment with Curriculum Transformation

Students on our part-time online programmes are mid-career professionals who are seeking to develop specific skills and enhance their career options. The proposal aligns with the principles of the Curriculum Transformation projects by offering students opportunities to tailor their degree to their own professional context. The proposed programme structures align well with the working model for PGT archetype Mode 1, whereby in their final semester/year, students can do a 60-credit project or 60 credits of coursework. The Curriculum Transformation project also encourages us to think about alternative approaches to the traditional research dissertation, and suggests students could do an installation, film, performance, product design or other alternatives.

Principal aims of the programme and programme learning outcomes

The aim of this Scotland-led Masters level programme is to provide students with the necessary skills and competencies to lead digital transformation across the health and care sector in Scotland:

1. Rapid acceleration of skills acquisition at strategic level to meet the current demands for digital transformation of health and care services in Scotland.

2. Increased recognition and professional status of strategic digital lead roles within health and care organisations in Scotland.
3. Work with and support senior leaders (including executive and non-executive directors) to gain and further develop their skills to embed digital technology and literacy across their organisations
4. A flexible modular part-time approach to learning with three exit awards (PGCert, PGDip and Masters qualifications and postgraduate professional development options) to meet the needs of busy senior leaders/health and social care professionals.
5. Viable career pathways and networking opportunities for those currently operating in and those aspiring to attain these roles in Scotland.

Programme Learning Outcomes

Students on all three routes for completing the MSc programme will be able to achieve the programme learning outcomes, listed below. Further details included in Appendices A and B.

- L1. A critical understanding of the principles, methods and applications of digital transformation in health, social care and housing settings in Scotland.
- L2. The ability to identify, assess and evaluate digital solutions to solve complex problems in health, social care and housing context through appropriate use of research methodologies.
- L3. The skills and capacity to analyse facts, situations and settings and apply creative and inventive thinking to reimagine digital solutions and new capabilities to transform health and care services in Scotland.
- L4. The ability to articulate and effectively explain the processes of digital transformation and adapt communication styles for different situations and audiences, including the general public.
- L5. The ability to strategically lead, influence and implement plans for continual engagement and collaboration with stakeholders to maximize the use of digital innovations to benefit service delivery within organisations
- L6. The practical skills to devise, lead and demonstrate the application of digital technology solutions for the benefit of service users and/or staff focused on recovery, rehabilitation and new ways of working.

Progression requirements for programmes with alternative to dissertation options

Following discussion at the APRC meeting of 23 March 2023 regarding the progression hurdle for programmes with non-dissertation routes, we propose to remove the progression requirements for students continuing in to Year 3 given that Regulation 56 would no longer clearly apply to students taking the taught-only option. Regulation 56 states that “For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project or dissertation component, students must pass the assessment requirements of the taught stage at an appropriate level at the first attempt before progression to the dissertation.”

In order to achieve parity between students doing the dissertation option and students doing the taught-only option, we propose that the progression hurdle be removed. If possible, we would retain part of the progression requirements in the form of a pre-requisite for the dissertation course: “students must [...] attain an average of at least 50% for the 120 credits of study examined”.

Students will be made aware that they will still need to meet the requirements in Regulation 57 in order to complete their Masters degree.

Resource implications

5. We anticipate that we will need to recruit additional tutors and supervisors, but this will be covered through student fees. It is envisaged that all master's level dissertation supervision will be undertaken by the core programme team with additional recruited staff. New staff will be paired with more experienced staff members until they are confident to supervise independently. We will also develop detailed dissertation guidelines and support sessions for each dissertation option. Given the expanding programme team and the independent nature of the work highlighted in the two proposed routes, we don't expect the need to cap these routes.

Risk management

6. We do not envisage any risk to University reputation, compliance, or financial risk. We believe the education and student experience will be enhanced by this initiative, offering flexibility and choice. We believe this proposal will make a third year of study more attractive to students, increase our student retention and demonstrate the responsiveness of the University to market demands.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

7. This is an online programme and there will be no requirement for face-to-face meetings in the third year. This proposal contributes to the SDGs, since our MSc in Clinical Trials programme can directly impact SDG3 (Good Health and Well-Being) and SDG4 (Quality Education) by providing health professionals with world-class training in clinical trials. By using online learning as a mode of delivery, we are directly

combating the brain-drain of skilled healthcare professionals from low- and middle-income countries who may otherwise travel overseas to pursue their training and fail to return. The part-time, online delivery also promotes SDG5 (Gender Equality) since students can study in a flexible manner, irrespective of their professional and/or personal commitments.

Equality & diversity

8. The purpose of postgraduate study can no longer be seen solely as a research pipeline producing future PhD candidates. Online teaching has opened the possibilities of further opportunities for flexible studies to those previously unable to engage in class-based learning, such as working professionals in health and social care. Students and employers are increasingly seeking more flexibility in their studies that can demonstrate impact in the workplace.

This proposal brings the programme into line with several other Master's programmes in the College, which currently offer a fully taught Year 3. Students on the programme are from diverse clinical and non-clinical environments including social services and the housing sector. This proposal increases choice options and opportunities. It will encourage greater diversity of students and widen participation in postgraduate study at the University of Edinburgh.

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

9. We wish to make the alternative options for Year 3 available for AY 2023/2024. We would inform current Year 1 and Year 2 students on the programme once approval has been granted. We would also include the information on the University website for prospective applicants to the programme.

Authors

Sharon Levy / Michelle Evans
March 2023

Presenter

Freedom of Information Open

Major Change to an Existing Programme

1 OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME

Grey text has been added to provide guidance. Please delete as you add your own text, remove italics, and change the font colour to black.

1.1 ABOUT THE PROGRAMME	
Programme name (including degree award)	MSc Leading Digital Transformation in Health and Social Care for Scotland
Programme Code(s)	New programme (no codes yet)
Programme Director	Named Programme Directors: Prof Aziz Sheikh, Prof Nick Mills Programme Lead: Michelle Evans
UG/PGT/PGR	PGT
Owning School/Deanery	Deanery MGPHS
Other contributing Schools/Deaneries and any collaborative partners (if applicable)	Scottish Government funded programme and NHS Education Scotland (NES) is a collaborative, strategic partner and the sponsor of all students on the programme.
Have the other contributing departments/collaborative partners/external examiners/accrediting bodies been consulted and have they agreed to the major change? (if applicable)	Yes
Detail of any implications highlighted through discussion with any of the above (if applicable)	The proposal matches the requirements of our strategic partner, NHS Education Scotland, who wish to see learners obtaining academic credit for work that is of direct benefit to employers. See section 1.2 for further details.

1.2 REQUESTED CHANGES FOR CONSIDERATION

Major changes to be effective from:	Effective for DPTs and to be advertised on website/degree finder for 2023/24, but will not be delivered until students reach year 3 in 2025/26.
Which cohorts will the changes apply to?	As this is a new 3 year part-time programme, there are no current students on programme yet. The changes will apply to the first cohort of students, who will reach Y3 in 2025/26. This proposal is offering students more choice in Y3, rather than removing any of the current programme delivery, so we do not anticipate issues with this, i.e. students who wish to do a traditional dissertation can continue to do so.

Provide a summary explanation of amendments and what the drivers are.

This paper, approved by the MGPHS Board of Studies in March 2023, requests the College of MVM to consider permitting the MSc *Leading Digital Transformation for Health and Care in Scotland* to offer alternatives to the current 60-credit dissertation, for students in their third year of study. We plan to continue to offer a 'traditional' 60-credit dissertation that is focused on narrative relating to (empirical or desk based) research.

This paper outlines the options of offering:

- a new 60 credit dissertation as an ePortfolio that enables learners to demonstrate attainment of approved Intended Learning Outcomes.
- entirely taught third year consisting of a new Student Led Individually Created Course (SLICC) course (20 credit) + 40 elective courses (4 x 10 credit courses)

Further information about the ePortfolio and SLICC courses is available under *Appendix B Course Proposal Forms*.

The main drivers for this proposal, as outlined in the section above, are the requirements of our partner NHS Education Scotland, who wish to see learners obtaining academic credit for work that is of direct benefit to employers. SLICCs and ePortfolios are two pathways for students to showcase and demonstrate this work.

Background and context:

The newly approved part-time online programme, taught over 3 years (PgCert, PgDip and MSc) is set to enable established leaders in Scottish health, housing and social care sectors to plan and evaluate, lead and influence digital transformation in their own domain. Students will be in a role where they are required to drive and implement practical digital transformational change, within their organisation or system. Students will explore key theories and concepts relating to digital transformation and innovation, and be guided by an academic supervisor as well as a work based sponsor and mentor. They are required to progress their own practice-based project, which is likely to have national impact, using new knowledge and experience gained through the programme. It is envisaged that graduates will go on to lead and influence the transformation of health and social care in Scotland, propelling the vision articulated in Scotland's Digital Health and Care Strategy.

Discussion - Pedagogy

The proposal in this paper relates to aligning the Dissertation course to a demonstration of knowledge gains and skills acquisition, through scaffolded, incremental, dialogic and collaborative outcomes. It sets to promote learning that is developmental, authentic, personal, evidenced and reflective. It does that by providing a structured framework for learning, where students are prompted to reflect on the impact of an activity, how it connects to other experiences, and how it may inform their own leadership journey ahead. Using a purposeful digital repository of learning experiences, projects and activities, students can curate artefacts that they have collected in any environment, during their time as learners. Being able to showcase their craft, achievements and experiences, to a wider audience beyond the community of learners, may unleash learners' creativity. This will be encouraged and rewarded in the review (formative) and summative assessment of the final submission.

All MSc programmes in our Deanery offer third year students the option of undertaking empirical research or a desk-based study, to hone these skills. Yet, we envisage that the graduates of the new MSc programme will not go on to become researchers, nor will they go

	<p>on to undertake doctoral studies. In fact, we now that many of our potential students already have higher degrees, obtained before commencing their studies with us.</p> <p>Our targeted students are primarily managers or aspiring leaders who are anchored in service delivery organisations across Scotland. Their needs are better addressed by a more flexible approach to learning, than current regulations allow. This proposal would support a more flexible approach with students better able to tailor their studies to their own particular career aspirations with increased relevance to their sphere of practice.</p> <p>The options of a SLICC + elective taught courses or a Dissertation by ePortfolio, has a better pedagogical alignment for our students. We argue that this proposal addresses current university guidance on the format of the third year of taught Master’s degrees. Senate Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC) expects that any Master’s programme which does not include a dissertation or research project will nonetheless require students to “show proficiency in research and/or analytical skills relevant to advanced work in the discipline”.</p> <p>To progress to a Dissertation year, students are required to undertake a 10-credit research methods course in their second year of study. They are also encouraged to develop a critical approach to the academic literature and relevant research, throughout the programme. Core courses that fit the requirements to show such proficiency include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leading Digital Transformation 2. Evaluation for Digital Transformation Impact 3. Critical Perspectives of Digital Health & Social Care 4. Designing & Implementing Digital Strategies for Service Transformation 5. Research Design <p>The assessment of each of our courses is carefully designed to allow students to directly link their academic studies with their professional work, which takes a high degree of analytical skills required for Master’s level study. Moreover, the unique setup where students have a work based sponsor/mentor aligns each learning unit to progression of a project that they are require to progress by their sponsor.</p> <p>The ePortfolio and taught third year options will require the same notional effort (i.e. 600 hours of study), at the same level (SCQF level 11) as the research-focused Dissertation. The difference between these options is that for the ePortfolio and the SLICC students can choose the topic and the way they curate their evidence of learning to demonstrate how they addressed Intended Learning Outcomes. This choice will allow the student to best determine the content and the path that best suit their individual career aspirations and the needs of their employers or service users.</p>
<p>Name of person responsible for managing the major change to the programme (if different from Programme Director named above)</p>	<p>Michelle Evans, Sharon Levy.</p>
<p>Have the School/Deanery considered the implication, if any, to the following:</p>	<p>We anticipate that we will need to recruit additional SLICC and ePortfolio supervisors but this will be covered through student fees. The contract with NES covers the first two (diploma) years and students will need to be self-funded or get further support from their employers. It is envisaged that all Masters level dissertation supervision will be undertaken by the core</p>

<p>Staffing, Library, IT, Estates, etc.?</p>	<p>programme team with additional recruited staff. New staff will be paired with more experienced staff members until they are confident to supervise independently.</p> <p>This proposal does not involve additional staffing compared to the standard approach of offering only dissertations.</p>
<p>What discussions have taken place within the School/Deanery, with staff and students?</p>	<p>As this is a new programme, there are no current students with whom to discuss the proposal. These alternative year 3 options have been envisaged and discussed with NES since the inception of the programme and they were also supported at the College validation held in December 2022. The teaching team were encouraged to submit additional dissertation options to be considered by APRC.</p> <p>The proposal has also been widely discussed with Deanery staff at Boards of Studies meetings and more informally. There is consensus across the staff that offering more flexibility and choices is positive for students, and that this aligns with the general direction of travel for more flexible degrees across the University (e.g. Curriculum Transformation). We also already have the precedent of having a fully taught Y3 (SLICC + 40 credits of electives) in our MPH online programme, which has offered this option since it launched in 2015/16, and runs well for staff and students.</p> <p>The ePortfolio will be newer territory for the Deanery, but we have had useful and productive discussions with other schools which use ePortfolio assessments, e.g. ECA, regarding how to manage these.</p> <p><u>Equity</u></p> <p>The purpose of postgraduate study can no longer be seen solely as a research pipeline producing future PhD candidates. Online teaching has opened the possibilities of further opportunities for flexible studies to those previously unable to engage in class based learning, such as working professionals in health social care and housing. Students and employers are increasingly seeking more flexibility in their studies that can demonstrate impact in the work place.</p> <p>The taught and ePortfolio routes through the third year will be assessed equitably, with award making decisions made in the same way as the 'traditional' Dissertation. All exit awards will show MSc "Leading Digital Transformation...", with either a pass, merit or distinction. Degree classifications decisions will be made on the whole 180 credits, as for standard MSc routes. All courses in taught Masters programmes are offered at SCQF level 11 with internal progression upon completion of the first 120 credits (year 1 and year 2).</p>
<p>What discussions have taken place with External experts regarding the change?</p>	<p>The changes are supported by our strategic partners Scottish Government and NHS Education Scotland and our Advisory Committee, which also includes external experts.</p>
<p>Have the School/Deanery contacted Recruitment and Admissions regarding the changes and informing any students who have been offered a place?</p>	<p>No, given that the changes have not yet been approved.</p>

2 APPROVAL

2.1 SCHOOL/DEANERY BOARD OF STUDIES REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Date of BoS: 13 March 2023

Convener Name: Prof Sarah Wild

Comment and Approval (BoS Minute):

Initially submitted and reviewed at the MGPHS Board of Studies meeting on 26 January 2023. Subsequently amended and approved by electronic business 17 March 2023.

2.2 COLLEGE POSTGRADUATE LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Date of College PG Learning and Teaching approval:

Convener Name:

Outcome (please select as appropriate)

Proposal approved ➡ Proceed to updating DTP and all other processes

Proposal approved with conditions

Proposal rejected with recommendations

Comment:

APPENDIX A –CMVM PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

CMVM PGT Programme Specification		
<p>This programme specification template has been developed to fulfil three main functions, acting as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a source of information for students and prospective students seeking an understanding of a programme and as a basis for gaining feedback on the extent to which the opportunities for learning were successful in promoting the intended outcomes • to ensure that there is clarity concerning the aims and intended learning outcomes for the programme for the University during the approval and periodic review processes • to provide information for external examiners, professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and employers as to the skills and other transferable abilities developed by the programme 		
Section 1	ABOUT THE PROGRAMME	
1	Name of programme	MSc Leading Digital Transformation in Health and Social Care for Scotland
2	Interim awards <i>(Insert name or delete as appropriate, eg PG Dip, PG Cert)</i>	PG Cert, PG Dip
3	College	CMVM
4	School / Deanery	MGPHS
5	Programme Director <i>(at time of approval)</i>	Named Programme Directors: Prof Aziz Sheikh, Prof Nick Mills Programme Lead: Michelle Evans
6	Programme start dates	September 2023
7	SCQF level of highest award	Level 11
8	Total credit value of programme <i>(for highest award)</i>	180 credits
9	Partner institution(s) if any	Scottish Government funded the programme and NHS Education Scotland (NES) is a collaborative, strategic partner and the sponsor of all students on the programme.

10	Mode of delivery <i>(Please ü those which apply to this programme)</i>	On campus	
		Online	x
		FT	
		PT	x
		Intermittent	
11	Expected length of programme	FT	
		PT	3 years
		Intermittent	

12	Description of the programme and its structure <i>Around 150 words, written to be accessible to a lay audience, to be used for marketing purposes. Identify the programme's distinctive features (and unique selling points).</i>	
	<p>Digital technologies are developing at a rapid pace, offering opportunities to transform and improve healthcare across a range of settings. As a direct result from the global pandemic, the need to digitise health and social care services is now higher on the agenda of policy makers. Scotland's Digital Health and Care Strategy recognises that the health and wellbeing of the people of Scotland can, and should, be enhanced through the use of digital media. Digital technologies are core components of health and care services that fit a modern delivery that people in Scotland expect, demand and deserve.</p>	
13	Programme aims <i>(Programme aims are broad statements of intent. Up to 150 words.)</i>	
	<p>The University of Edinburgh's Usher Institute is a world leader in Digital Health and Medical Informatics. We have a track record in the delivery of research, teaching and knowledge exchange activities for the health and social care sectors in Scotland, across the UK and beyond. The Institute is the applied and translational arm of Edinburgh Medical School, offering a broad range of expertise in health services research, informatics, data science and social sciences. It delivers patient-centered, data-driven applied research that has improved public health, health and care provision and related outcomes across the globe. This programme will enable leaders to deliver digital transformation in the healthcare and housing sectors. The learning will anchor planned developments to evidence and provoke new ideas, strategies and approaches to fit the strategic direction of travel for Scotland.</p>	

14	<p>Programme Learning Outcomes</p> <p><i>Learning outcomes are statements of what a student is expected to understand or be able to do after completing the process of learning. No programme may have more than 5 learning outcomes.</i></p>	
	1	A critical understanding of the principles, methods and applications of digital transformation in health, social care and housing settings in Scotland.
	2	The ability to identify, assess and evaluate digital solutions to solve complex problems in health, social care and housing context through appropriate use of research methodologies.
	3	The skills and capacity to analyse facts, situations and settings and apply creative and inventive thinking to reimagine digital solutions and new capabilities to transform health and care services in Scotland.
	4	The ability to articulate and effectively explain the processes of digital transformation and adapt communication styles for different situations and audiences, including the general public.
	5	The ability to strategically lead, influence and implement plans for continual engagement and collaboration with stakeholders to maximize the use of digital innovations to benefit service delivery within organisations
	6	The practical skills to devise, lead and demonstrate the application of digital technology solutions for the benefit of service users and/or staff focused on recovery, rehabilitation and new ways of working.
15	<p>Indicative learning and teaching hours for the programme</p> <p><i>Learning hours comprise face-to-face and virtual contact hours plus directed and independent learning and time spent on assessment and placements (if appropriate). Please give an indication of the percentage of anticipated learning hours for the programme, taking into account core courses and indicative options. Students should note that these figures may change depending on the exact combination of options taken.</i></p>	
	<i>Method</i>	<i>Number and percentage of learning hours</i>
	Scheduled learning and teaching activities eg lectures, seminars, synchronous discussions and other timetabled sessions	TBC
	Directed learning	TBC
	Independent learning	

	Assessment	
	Total	180 hours / 100%
16	PSB accreditations (where relevant) <i>(Please note accreditations awarded or planned)</i>	
	n/a	
17	Admissions requirements, to be demonstrated through certificated or experiential learning <i>(around 30 words)</i>	
	<p>This programme has a closed cohort of students who work in NHS Scotland and applicants are selected and sponsored by NHS Education Scotland (NES). Applicants must meet the standard University PGT entry requirements. In addition to these, applicants should have considerable professional experience (minimum 3-5 years) in senior management and leadership roles within the NHS boards and equivalent roles in health and social care. Applications will be assessed against the entry criteria on a case-by-case basis by the UoE programme teaching team and NES representatives.</p>	
18	Details of organised work experience / work based learning opportunities available during the programme <i>(if applicable)</i>	
	See Appendix B course proposal for ePortfolio.	
19	Career, employability and opportunities for continuing professional development. <i>Around 35 words, written in language which is accessible to a lay audience, to be used for marketing purposes. Should include examples of potential career destinations and how the skills and abilities gained through the programme contribute to career development.</i>	
	<p><i>NOTE: This programme is only offered to a closed cohort of students selected by NHS Education Scotland.</i></p> <p>The aim of this Scotland-led Masters level programme is to provide students with the necessary skills and competencies to lead digital transformation across the health and care sector in Scotland.</p>	

Section 2	PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND ASSESSMENT
20	Programme Structure Diagram <i>(Please complete for all awards that will be available, entering course codes for any existing courses)</i>

PG Cert			
Course code	Course title	Couse Status (Core/compulsory/ optional)	Credit value
TBC	Leading Digital Transformation	Compulsory	20
TBC	Evaluation for Digital Transformation Impact	Compulsory	20
TBC	Critical Perspectives of Digital Health & Social Care	Compulsory	10
TBC	Designing Health & Social Care Services with Impact	Compulsory	10
PG Dip			
Course code	Course title	Couse Status Core/compulsory/ optional	Credit value
TBC	Designing & Implementing Digital Strategies for Service Transformation	Compulsory	20
TBC	Digital Strategies for Service Transformation in Rural Areas	Elective	10
TBC	AI for Health and Social Care	Elective	10
TBC	Strategic Leadership	Elective	10
TBC	Data-Led Health & Social Care	Elective	10
TBC	Research Design	Elective / Core for students taking dissertation route	10
MSc			
Course code	Course title	Couse Status (Core/compulsory/ optional)	Credit value

	TBC	Applied Digital Transformation Project (Research Dissertation)	OR	60
	TBC	A Student-led Course (SLICC 20c) and 4 other Elective Courses (40c)	OR	60
	TBC	ePortfolio	OR	60
21	Mapping matrix of courses delivering the programme learning outcomes			
	Programme LOs		<i>Met by course aim/learning outcome</i> <i>(List all relevant course titles)</i>	
	1. A critical understanding of the principles, methods and applications of digital transformation in health, social care and housing settings in Scotland.			
	2. The ability to identify, assess and evaluate digital solutions to solve complex problems in health, social care and housing context through appropriate use of research methodologies.			
	3. The skills and capacity to analyse facts, situations and settings and apply creative and inventive thinking to reimagine digital solutions and new capabilities to transform health and care services in Scotland.			
	4. The ability to articulate and effectively explain the processes of digital transformation and adapt communication styles for different situations and audiences, including the general public.			
	5. The ability to strategically lead, influence and implement plans for continual engagement and collaboration with stakeholders to maximize the use of digital innovations to benefit service delivery within organisations.			
	6. The practical skills to devise, lead and demonstrate the application of digital technology solutions for the benefit of service users and/or staff focused on recovery, rehabilitation and new ways of working.			
22	Programme assessment strategy <i>(Please explain the programme's overall approach to assessment, in no more than 100 words)</i>			

	<p>Our learning and assessment is grounded in systems in current use in the Scottish health and care sectors. We have designed content and assessment that considers the geographic, economic and demographic variation across Scotland, recognising the challenges and opportunities in both urban and rural communities. We have embedded teaching content that will enable learners to design integrated, person-centred health and care services for the future that are relevant to their local challenges. A successful postgraduate learner must exhibit the capacity for critical thinking and analysis, apply critical research and enquiry, use knowledge to solve problems and work collaboratively with people from different disciplines and cultures.</p> <p>Learners will reflect on their practice using experiential learning and capture these reflections during the course. This will cement theoretical learning for a specific context, and influence consideration of the wider workplace environment. Practice-based learning will be informed by the systems, challenges and future plans found in Scotland’s Health and Care Boards, as well as consideration of exemplars from other health systems. Core content will include case studies and other digital learning objects and artefacts, with interactive components and branching scenarios to support active learning. Courses will include a global perspective, to enable students to compare and contrast UK- wide and international approaches and their applicability to Scotland.</p>
23	<p>Mapping of assessments by type and week of semester</p> <p><i>Please append assessment timeline as per example in appendix 1</i></p>

Section 3	PROGRAMME SPECIFIC REGULATIONS	
24	<p><i>Programmes shall conform University Academic Regulations. Where a programme has programme specific regulations which are to be formally approved by the University, these should be included below.</i></p>	
25	HESA/JACS code	

The programme will consist of individual courses; each course will require a Course Proposal Form. Once approved, the initiating school will be responsible for adding the new course into EUCLID CCAM. Further information on course creation and approval can be found at: http://www.euclid.ed.ac.uk/staff/Support/User_Guides/CCAM/Course_Creation_and_Approval_Menu.html

You will be expected to have the content and assessment of the first course of your programme written by validation.

The list appears in the same order as it would when proposing a new course in EUCLID.

Course Proposal Form

Fields with an asterisk * are required fields

Have you confirmed that the appropriate resources are in place (finance, teaching staff, IT)*:	Yes
Have you confirmed that the appropriate support services are in place (library, computing services)*:	Yes

1. Owing School

Proposer*	Sharon Levy – CPD Lead
Owning School*	MGPHS: Usher Institute

2. Course descriptor

Course name*	Data-Driven Innovation (Student-Led Individually Created Course)
Summary description*	<p>This 20 credit course will provide students with an opportunity to integrate the learning gained in the Masters programme and apply it to address problems and challenges in the 'real world'. Students will create their own learning using the Student-Led Individually Created Course (SLICC) approach – a university framework for self-designed experiential learning:</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/employability/sliccs/</p> <p>The student will plan, propose, carry out, reflect on and evaluate a piece of work from their own contexts, encompassing the cross-disciplinary nature of their domain. The SLICC framework requires that students use the generic learning outcomes to articulate their learning in their own defined project, reflect frequently using a blog, collect, formulate, organise and present evidence of their learning in an e-portfolio. Students will receive relevant formative feedback on a draft final report, which is the same format as the final reflective report, which forms the summative assessment. The above will be with guidance of a mentor.</p> <p>The course will encourage critical appraisal of students' own practical experiences, and allow them to reflect on their learning in the context of the cross-disciplinary nature of the domain.</p>

	<p>Reflective Writing: Toolkit: https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit</p> <p>Gibbs' reflective cycle: https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/gibbs-reflective-cycle</p> <p>Other frameworks: https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience</p> <p>What is Pebblepad: https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/1.+What+is+PebblePadF/1_2zpdtu48</p> <p>How to Create a blog: https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/3.+How+to+Create+a+Blog/1_uioiqj6j</p>
Learning outcomes*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student will be able to demonstrate how they have developed a deep critical understanding of the cross-disciplinary nature of the domain, using their own SLICC to identify complexities, challenges and wider implications in their area. 2. The student will apply relevant skills and approaches gained during the programme teaching to effectively and critically explore their chosen SLICC question. 3. The student will self-reflect to demonstrate personal and intellectual autonomy to critically evaluate ideas, evidence and experiences from an open-minded and reasoned perspective 4. The student will draw on the quality, depth and breadth of their experiences to engage with the communities and world around them. With an informed international perspective, they seek to contribute positively, ethically and respectfully. 5. In their self-assessment, critically review, evaluate and reflect upon their knowledge, skills and practices in the domain, how they have met the learning outcomes for the SLICC course or reflect on the learning they have gained from not progressing as originally anticipated.
Components of Assessment* (for discussion at Board of Studies)	Written exam 0%, Practical exam 0%, Coursework 100%
Components of Assessment* (for publication on DRPS)	Written exam 0%, Practical exam 0%, Coursework 100%

Exam Information	NA
Feedback	<p>Students will be provided detailed formative feedback at:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The proposal stage in deciding what they wish to achieve in their SLICC project, and defining own learning outcomes 2) The draft final report to gain insight into how insightful/effective the students reflective blogging is and the structure of the report to prepare the student for the final report. 3) Summative feedback on the final report which will be in two parts. This will be a critical literature review of their chosen relevant topic and a reflective account of their learning journey and extracts from their own blogs to illustrate their reflection, development how they have achieved their SLICC goals or what they have learnt from not being able to achieve these.

4. Administrative information

Additional course information

Course availability*	- Available to all students in 3 rd year who wish to do SLICC +40 credits rather than the 60 credit dissertation
Normal year taken*	Postgraduate 3 rd year
SCQF Credit Volume*	20 credits
SCQF Credit Level*	- SCQF Level 11
Home subject area*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usher - Health Information
Other subject area	Data Science in Health and Social Care
Course organiser	TBC
Deputy course organiser	TBC
Secretary	TBC

Classification

Course type*	Online Distance Learning
Default delivery period*	Choose from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible
Default course mode of study*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distance Learning -
Marking scheme*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - APT PG Mark/Grade

Course requirements

These can be enabled or left blank. If enabled text must be entered.

Pre-requisites	none
Co-requisites	none
Prohibited combinations	
Visiting student pre-requisites	
Any costs to be met by students	Laptop and internet connection

Collaboration

% not taught by this institution	na
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Collaboration information (across Schools/across Institutions)	na
Collaboration information (within Deanery)	Once established as a TO wide course we will collaborate with other part time online MSC programme offering SLICC to share best practice, relevant teaching resources/ supervisors/ markers.

Equality and Diversity

<p>Are there any equality and diversity implications related to this course? For example, is it clear who the intended market is? Was the course designed to be accessible and adaptable to meet the needs of potential participants? Are the materials and topics inclusive, i.e. representing perspectives from a range of social and cultural backgrounds? Are there any health and safety implications, and is a risk assessment required?</p>	<p>All students on the programme are valued and respected for their individual perspectives and contributions and we work to ensure no student is treated differently or less favourably based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender or sexual orientation.</p> <p>Online etiquette and expectations are outlined in our programme handbook, page 31-2, where we outline that students are expected to treat their peers and supervisors with dignity and respect and address them in a professional and inclusive manner. All components of the assessment will be marked anonymously by an independent marker to ensure they are marked fairly. Extension and exceptional circumstances processes are also in place to support students who experience unexpected and unanticipated difficulties which adversely impact on their studies and their ability to complete any components of the dissertation.</p>
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Additional information

Taught in Gaelic (Gàidhlig)?*	No
Study Abroad	no
Special Arrangements	No
Fee Code if Invoiced at Course level	If being invoiced at course level, enter a Fee Code

Course Proposal Form

Fields with an asterisk * are required fields

Have you confirmed that the appropriate resources are in place (finance, teaching staff, IT)*:	Yes
Have you confirmed that the appropriate support services are in place (library, computing services)*:	Yes

1. Owning School

Proposer*	Sharon Levy
Owning School*	MGPHS: Usher Institute

2. Course descriptor

Course name*	ePortfolio
Summary description*	<p>The ePortfolio course is designed to enable students to hone their critical gaze and analytical skills, required for professional development and reflective practice. Offered in the final year of the part-time MSc programme, students are given an opportunity to craft and present an evidence based professional account of their learning progression.</p> <p>This course, which is an alternative to submission of a research focused 'dissertation', builds on the foundations of critical inquiry. The dissertation by ePortfolio is set to support students to adopt a more systematic, disciplined and rigorous way of thinking about both their practice and their learning. Learners will also develop a stronger, more confident sense of academic identity or 'self-authorship', using communication tools such as blogs/vlogs and other (social) media channels.</p>

	<p>Using a collection of authentic artefacts, the student should present diverse evidence to demonstrate attainment of intended learning outcomes. Artefacts can be audio and/or video files as well as written or pictorial digital assets. The rationale for and the integration of artefacts, as part of a cohesive collection, must be linked to core themes in the MSc programme as a whole.</p> <p>A framework for the final 'submission' should demonstrate learner's achievements in capturing evidence that they have gained competencies across the 7 facets of mastersness:</p> <p>Level of complexity, Degree of abstraction, Depth of learning, Research and enquiry, Degree of autonomy and responsibility, Complexity and unpredictability and Professionalism (Bamber 2013).</p>
<p>Course description*</p>	<p>Academic description</p> <p>The final stage of the MSc programme culminates in an extended, self-directed piece of work based on a project that was agreed in advance with a supervisor/mentor. The role of the supervisor, in supporting the learner, is critical and ongoing interaction is essential for the success of the course. We will have a dedicated resource and a robust plan to ensure supervisors are prepared for their role, in advance of the start of the course.</p> <p>At the heart of a dissertation project is the application of meta cognitive skills, learnt whilst on the MSc programme, and the acquisition of new Skills. This dissertation course aims to give students options and an opportunity to further develop their practice. Learners need to apply their learning by crafting a substantial and sustained independent piece of work to showcase 'Mastersness'.</p> <p>Outline Content</p> <p>The dissertation will assess the students' ability to design and complete a significant project, investigation or development. It encourages students to creatively tackle a challenge and to reflect and critically review their progress. Learners will be expected to consolidate as well as extend their knowledge, skills and practice as well as communicate outcomes and impact in an accessible and relatable way.</p> <p>Student Learning Experience</p> <p>The e-portfolio takes nine months (part-time) to complete, and is largely self-directed. The course supports students with a dedicated virtual learning environment (PebblePad), online tools, as well as interactions with a dedicated supervisor.</p> <p>Supervisor's support can take on many forms and may be provided face-to-face, or remotely, to best meet individual</p>

	<p>needs. Supervisory support will be supplemented by the detailed dissertation course handbook given to all students.</p> <p>It is advisable for learners to seek mentorship and support from their place of work, to ensure the final outcome has the desired impact on and in practice.</p>
Course level*	Postgraduate
Keywords	Research and enquiry, Learner autonomy and responsibility, Complexity and unpredictability, Professionalism, Creativity, Reflection, Communication.

3. Teaching, learning and assessment

Total contact teaching hours*	Total Hours: 600 (Feedback/Feedforward Hours 10, Programme Level Learning and Teaching Hours 20, Directed Learning and Independent Learning Hours 570)
Graduate attributes, personal and professional skills	<p>1) Mindsets:</p> <p>Enquiry and lifelong learning</p> <p>Students on this course will be encouraged to seek out ways to develop their expertise in leadership and digital transformation. They will also be encouraged to strive for excellence in their professional practice and to use established and developed approaches to share learning with peers and networks.</p> <p>Aspiration and personal development</p> <p>Students will be encouraged to draw on the quality, depth and breadth of their experiences to expand their potential and identify areas they wish to develop and grow. Students will also be encouraged to understand their responsibility within and contribute positively, ethically and respectfully to the health, housing and social care community while acknowledging that different students and community members will have other priorities and goals.</p> <p>Outlook and engagement</p> <p>Students will be expected to take responsibility for their learning. Students will be asked to use their initiative and experience, often explicitly relating to their professional, educational, geographical or cultural context, to engage with and enhance the learning of students from the diverse communities on the programme. Students will also be asked to reflect on the experience of their peers and identify opportunities to enhance their learning.</p> <p>2) Skills:</p> <p>Research and enquiry</p>

	<p>Students will use self-reflection to seek out learning opportunities. Students will also use the newly acquired knowledge and critical assessment to identify and creatively tackle challenges faced by service users and providers.</p> <p>Personal and intellectual autonomy</p> <p>Students will be encouraged to use their personal and intellectual autonomy to critically evaluate the literature and their learning. Students will be supported through their active participation in self-directed learning, discussion boards and collaborative activities to critically evaluate concepts, evidence and experiences of peers and supervisors from an open-minded and reasoned perspective.</p> <p>Personal effectiveness</p> <p>Students will need to be effective and proactive learners that can articulate what they have learned and have an awareness of their strengths and limitations and a commitment to learning and reflection to complete this course successfully.</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Effective leaders in the health, housing and social care sectors require excellent oral and written communication, presentation and interpersonal skills. The structure of the dissertation courses will reinforce and develop these skills.</p>
<p>Reading List/Learning Resources</p>	<p>Dissertation dependent.</p>
<p>Learning outcomes*</p>	<p>On completing this course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply knowledge skills and understanding to demonstrate originality and/or creativity in academic practice Exercise substantial autonomy and initiative in carrying out and completing a complex academic undertaking 2. Demonstrate critical understanding of both experiential learning, digital transformation and leadership theories, concepts and principles 3. Apply critical analysis to an issue that is at the forefront of digital transformation in the context of health, housing or social care 4. Develop effective communication to share potential solutions to addressing a challenge in the context of health, housing and the social care sectors.

<p>Components of Assessment*</p>	<p>Written Exam 0 %, Coursework 100 %, Practical Exam 0 %</p> <p>Formative assessment:</p> <p>Blogs</p> <p>Students will be asked to maintain a blog during the entire duration of their project. Supervisors will have access to these blogs and will offer feedback on 5 entries, which are predefined milestones blogs, needed to be completed at specific intervals. Students will be given guidance and examples of creative writing in a professional context and access to specific learning content, crafted by a skilful journalist focusing on ‘impact’. The blog platform itself and the dedicated technical support will be managed by the University. This will ensure security and smooth access to the platform at all times.</p> <p>Summative assessment:</p> <p>Dissertation proposal (20%; up to 3,000 words)</p> <p>The students will write a proposal outlining the aims and objectives of the project and an overview of the literature on the chosen topic; in month 4 of the course. Specific guidance and a proposal framework for submission will be included in the course handbook.</p> <p>Dissertation (80%; Maximum 12,000 words, 10,000 minimum words).</p> <p>Throughout the commissioned MSc programme (year 1&2), students are expected to collect evidence of learning and impact, within their place of work. This requirement, stipulated by NHS Education Scotland, means that learners already have core skills in structured reflections and journaling. In the dissertation year students will build on these skills, where reflection for learning informs professional practice development – for impact.</p> <p>Through discussion with their supervisor, learners will continue to collect artefacts that demonstrate learning, with an emphasis on impact. An example could be a set of slides presented to the Senior Management of a Health Board. That artefact will demonstrate how the learners used ‘white space’ in a slide, to make an impactful statement, as learnt in a self-directed course on LinkedIn Learning, about effective presentation. This specific PDF file is one element in a suite of artefacts that include a digital patient story, a draft article of meta synthesis of the evidence, a Wikipedia entry on the subject, a draft survey tool and a practice manual aimed at parent. In their ePortfolio submission is it a narrative account that binds these artefacts and provides a ‘roadmap’ to the the practice context for each. A rationale to the way artefacts are curated and linked is also required, to showcase creativity and criticality. A reflective account on how intended learning outcomes were achieved, the overall learning experience and ways the work could have</p>
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	been done differently are also expected as part of this submission.
Exam Information	Not applicable.
Feedback	A balance of formative feedback and Feedforward will be provided throughout the course, through the use of blogs. All components of summative assessment will be double marked, and feedback will be provided after the exam board has ratified marks.

4. Administrative information

Additional course information

Course availability*	Available to all students
Normal year taken*	Postgraduate
SCQF Credit Volume*	60 credits
SCQF Credit Level*	SCQF Level 11
Home subject area*	Usher / Health information
Other subject area	
Organiser	Sharon Levy
Secretary	Matt Newlands

Classification

Course type*	Online Distance Learning
Default delivery period*	Flexible
Default course mode of study*	Distance Learning
Marking scheme*	PG Mark/Grade

Course requirements

These can be enabled or left blank. If enabled text must be entered.

Pre-requisites	Core courses from the MSc Leading Digital Transformation, or equivalent.
Co-requisites	None
Prohibited combinations	
Visiting student pre-requisites	

Any costs to be met by students	Students will be responsible for their computer equipment and internet access.
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Collaboration

% not taught by this institution	Not applicable.
Collaboration information (School/Institution)	Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity

This course is ideal for students from health, housing and social care looking to further develop their academic practice and apply their learning through crafting a substantial and sustained independent piece of work. No prior knowledge of independent research, investigation or development is required. However evidence of prior learning within health, social and care service systems is required.

Through our proactive practice, we strive to ensure that all students on this course are respected and valued for their unique perspectives and contributions and that no student is treated differently or less favourably based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender or sexual orientation.

Online etiquette and expectations will be outlined and discussed with students and detailed in the course handbook to ensure students treat their peers and supervisors with dignity and respect and address them in a professional and inclusive manner. All components of the assessment will be marked anonymously by an independent marker to ensure they are marked fairly. Extension and exceptional circumstances processes are also in place to support students who experience unexpected and unanticipated difficulties which adversely impact on their studies and their ability to complete any components of the dissertation.

Additional information

Taught in Gaelic (Gàidhlig)?*	No
Study Abroad	No
Special Arrangements	This course will be taught online using the Learn virtual learning environment. All course materials are protected by secure username and password access.
Fee Code if Invoiced at Course level	Not applicable.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

25 May 2023

Proposed Changes to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures

Description of paper

1. This paper proposes changes to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures.

Action requested / recommendation

2. APRC is asked to approve the proposed amendments to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures. Appendix 1 includes a summary of the proposed amendments to the Procedures, with a rationale for the changes. Appendix 2 includes an updated version of the Procedures, highlighting the amendments.

Background and context

3. The Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures ([academicmisconductprocedures.pdf](#)) set out the process which should be followed when handling cases of suspected academic misconduct within the University. Following the approval of recent urgent and major changes to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures, further minor changes are proposed as a result of a wider review of the Procedures.
4. The College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) group have therefore proposed the changes explained in Appendix 1. The CAMO group is comprised of the CAMO's and relevant administrative staff from each of the Colleges and is led by Professor Tina Harrison (Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance).

Discussion

5. A summary of the proposed amendments to the Procedures is provided in Appendix 1. A version of the Procedures showing the proposed amendments is provided Appendix 2. **APRC is asked to approve the proposed amendments.**

Resource implications

6. The proposed amendments to the Procedures do not carry any significant resource implications.

Risk management

7. In order to ensure that cases of suspected academic misconduct are handled fairly and sensitively, it is vital that the process is conducted in an efficient but thorough manner. The proposed changes will support this.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

8. The proposals within this paper have no impact on the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

Equality & diversity

9. The proposed amendments do not raise any specific equality and diversity concerns. The proposed amendments have been suggested to ensure that the investigation process is conducted in a fair, efficient and timely manner in order to minimise delays and any potential distress to students involved.

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

10. Should APRC approve the amendments, these changes would be effective from the start of Semester 1, 2023/24.
11. Academic Services will communicate the changes in an e-mail to relevant staff in Schools, Colleges and Support Services.

Author

Roshni Hume
Academic Policy Officer
Academic Services

Presenter

Roshni Hume
Academic Policy Officer
Academic Services

**Freedom of Information
Open**

Proposals for amendments to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures

May 2023

Background

Following the approval of changes to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures by APRC on 16 January 2023, the College Academic Misconduct Officer group is seeking approval of further minor changes to the Procedures which have arisen as a result of a wider review of the Procedures. It is envisaged that, if approved, these changes would be effective from the start of Semester 1, 2023/24.

Proposed Amendments

The current Procedures are available at [academicmisconductprocedures.pdf](https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline) and the proposed amendments are as follows (amendments made after the March meeting of APRC have been highlighted in yellow within the draft procedures document):

Section(s)	Proposed Amendment(s)
1.1	<p>The following minor amendment is proposed:</p> <p><i>'Academic misconduct is defined by the University as the use of unfair means in any University assessment. This includes assisting a student to make use of unfair means, and doing anything prejudicial to the good conduct of the assessment. Examples of misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, self-plagiarism (that is, submitting one's own previously assessed work), collusion, falsification, cheating (including assisting others to cheat by sharing work and contract cheating, where a student pays for work to be written or edited by somebody else), deceit, and personation (that is impersonating another student or allowing another person to impersonate a student in an assessment).'</i></p> <p>This is to reflect the wording in relation to submitting previously assessed work within the Taught Assessment Regulations (section 30) and to include facilitating cheating by sharing work within the University's definition of academic misconduct.</p>
1.2	<p>The following amendment is proposed:</p> <p><i>'These procedures explain how the University investigates allegations of academic misconduct in relation to any work submitted for assessment. This includes instances where the alleged misconduct is found after the relevant mark has been ratified by a Board of Examiners as per Section 64.3 of the Taught assessment Regulations: taughtassessmentregulations.pdf (ed.ac.uk)</i></p> <p><i>The University may also investigate allegations of misconduct relating to work which has not been submitted for assessment at the University (e.g. a conference paper or publication) under the Code of Student Conduct, where this may represent a breach of the Code:</i></p> <p>www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline'</p> <p>This amendment is proposed to include information relating to when and the circumstances under which the University is able to proceed with an investigation.</p>

Appendix 1

<p>1.3, 2.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 5.1, 5.3, 5.4 (b), 5.4 (c), 5.4 (f), 6.1, 7.1, 9.1, 9.3 (e), 11.1, 12.1</p>	<p>References to academic misconduct ‘offences’ or to having ‘committed an academic offence have been changed to refer to ‘breaches of the Academic Misconduct Procedures’, ‘breaches’ and ‘allegations of academic misconduct’. This is to avoid the use of words such as ‘committed and offence’ which can cause students additional concern.</p>
<p>1.5</p>	<p>It is proposed that the following information is added to section 1 in relation to the handling of collusion cases:</p> <p><i>‘When investigating instances of alleged collusion or the use of another student’s work without their consent, the SAMO/CAMO can conduct a single academic misconduct investigation in relation to the incident. The SAMO/CAMO may interview each student involved in the alleged collusion case individually. In order to conduct a thorough and fair investigation, the SAMO and CAMO will provide each student with details of the identity of the other student(s) involved in order to allow each student to respond fully to the allegations. If deemed necessary by the CAMO/SAMO each student involved will be provided with a copy of the other student(s) work and will be provided with an opportunity to respond to this. Students should be informed that the information shared with them must be treated as confidential. Whilst the investigation may involve multiple students, each student’s outcome will be determined individually in light of the evidence relating directly to them.’</i></p> <p>This addition is proposed as a result of advice from Legal Services in response to a collusion case which had been escalated to the Student Conduct Team. Legal Services had explained that it would be necessary to reveal the identities of the students involved to allow each individual to fully respond to the allegation made against them. Legal Services had provide a link to UCL’s ‘Guidance on group panels and evidence sharing in cases of student collusion’ as an example of good practice (annex 6.9.3 - guidance on group panels in cases of student collusion 2022-23.pdf (ucl.ac.uk)).</p> <p>The CAMO group would be grateful for any feedback on this proposed addition.</p>
<p>1.6</p>	<p>It has been proposed that the following statement is added to section 1.6:</p> <p><i>‘The SAMO or CAMO may not draw any inference if a student chooses not to attend a meeting with them’</i></p> <p>This aligns with wording in the Code of Student Conduct in relation to student engagement with the process.</p>
<p>3.2, 4.5</p>	<p>References to ‘an adviser from the Edinburgh University Students’ Association Advice Place have been replaced with ‘a caseworker from the Edinburgh University Students’ Association Advice Place, to reflect current terminology used by the Advice Place.</p>
<p>3.3</p>	<p>It has been proposed that the following statement is removed from Section 3.3:</p> <p><i>‘The SAMO is satisfied that the case has come about through a genuine lack of understanding by the student’</i></p>

	It was noted by the CAMO group that this may cause confusion as the process does not allow SAMOs to distinguish between deliberate and inadvertent acts of misconduct and this indicates that this may be the case. Therefore, it is proposed that it is removed.
3.4	<p>The following amendment is proposed:</p> <p><i>'In cases which satisfy the criteria in 3.3, the SAMO should provide students with the opportunity to respond to the allegation and where appropriate then issue the student with a warning or penalty to the student, and direct them towards an appropriate source of support within the University. A record of the breach must be maintained by the SAMO and the student should be warned about the consequences of any further misconduct breaches. Action should be taken within 15 working days of receiving an allegation of misconduct. Alternatively, the SAMO may direct another relevant member of academic staff to address the issue with the student in assessment feedback and/or via existing mark rubrics.'</i></p> <p>It is envisaged that this amendment will refine the process further in terms of timescales and assist in reducing workload pressure for both SAMO and CAMOs, while ensuring that students have an appropriate opportunity to respond to allegations. It will be made clear to the student why they are receiving a warning or a penalty and they will be made aware of the support which is available to them to address the issue.</p>
4.2, 4.6,	References to Personal Tutors have been removed and replaced with Student Adviser.
4.3,4.4, 4.5	<p>The following amendments are proposed to section 4 of the procedures to allow the College Academic Misconduct Officer to invite a student to respond to an allegation before making a decision as to whether or not it is necessary to meet with the student. This is to reduce the number of unnecessary interviews which are currently taking place due to confusion and misunderstanding caused by the current process which appears to require students to attend a meeting if they wish to challenge an allegation.</p> <p>The following amendment is proposed at the beginning of section 4.3:</p> <p><i>'Where the student responds to the allegation and there is sufficient information for the CAMO to make a decision, the CAMO may decide to take action without meeting the student.'</i></p> <p>The following addition is proposed in section 4.4:</p> <p><i>'Where the student does not respond to the allegation, and the CAMO is satisfied that they have been given sufficient opportunity to do so, the CAMO may deal with the allegation in the absence of any further information. The student and the SAMO will be informed of the outcome and penalty decision as set out in paragraph 4.3.'</i></p> <p><i>The following amendment is proposed at the beginning of section 4.5:</i></p> <p><i>'The CAMO may decide it is necessary to invite the student to attend a formal academic misconduct interview.'</i></p>
4.10	A minor amendment is proposed to include referral to a Fitness to Practise contact, if relevant.
4.12	The following addition has been proposed to section 4.12:

Appendix 1

	<i>'Where appropriate, the SAMO or another member of academic staff, will also offer to meet with the student concerned in order to provide advice on academic best practice'</i>
5.3	An amendment has been proposed to section 5.3 to include a reference to section 6.1 in relation to the treatment of Special Circumstances.
5.3, 9.2	References to 'claims' have been replaced with 'reports'
5.4(a)	It is proposed that the wording of section 5.4(a) is amended slightly to more accurately reflect the decision making process in relation to an allegation which has not been proven. Therefore, the following wording is proposed: <i>'To decide that, on the balance of probabilities, the allegation is not proven and no penalty is therefore to be applied'.</i>
5.4 (c)	It is proposed that the CAMO has the option to impose a 50 mark penalty in addition to the option of imposing a 10, 20 or 30 mark penalty. This is to allow CAMO's to impose a more severe penalty where relevant.
5.4 (f)	The following addition is proposed to section 5.4 (f) to make provide examples of when a case may be referred for disciplinary action under the Code of Student Conduct: <i>'This may occur in serious cases where the student has a record of having a number of instances of previous academic misconduct breaches, or in cases of serious misconduct (e.g. including but not limited to serious instances of contract cheating and exam misconduct, breach of duty of care e.g. in a professional or clinical setting, and failure to meet ethical, legal or professional obligations).'</i>
6.1	An amendment has been proposed to include reference to actions resulting from Fitness to Practise cases as well as references to the relevant section of the Taught Assessment Regulations.

Next Steps

Should the proposed amendments be approved, Academic Services and the CAMOs will ensure that these are implemented at the beginning of the 2023/24 academic year.

Roshni Hume

Academic Services



Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures

Purpose of Procedure

This document sets out the University's procedures for dealing with suspected cases of academic misconduct by students or graduates of the University. These procedures apply to all types of academic misconduct including plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, falsification, cheating, deceit and personation.

The University takes very seriously any suspected incidences of academic misconduct and aims to ensure that all suspected cases are investigated efficiently and dealt with appropriately.

Scope: Mandatory Procedure

All staff and students

Contact Officer

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Academic Policy Officer

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Document control

Dates

Approved:
[30.05.19](#)
[25.05.23](#)

Starts:
[01.08.2019](#) [18.09.2023](#)

Equality impact assessment:
10.12.14

Amendments:

11.12.15
02.06.16
16.06.17
05.07.18
30.05.19
24.09.20
16.01.23

Next Review:
[2023/24](#)[2027/28](#)

Approving authority

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

Consultation undertaken

College Academic Misconduct Officers, College administrative staff dealing with academic misconduct, EUSA.

Section responsible for procedure maintenance & review

Academic Services

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

Academic Misconduct Report Form
Code of Student Conduct

UK Quality Code

UK Quality Code – Assessment

Procedures superseded by this procedure

Previous versions of the Procedures for Dealing with Suspected Academic Misconduct

Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk.

Keywords

Academic misconduct, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, falsification, cheating, deceit, personation



Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures

1. Definition of academic misconduct

1.1 Academic misconduct is defined by the University as the use of unfair means in any University assessment. This includes assisting a student to make use of unfair means, and doing anything prejudicial to the good conduct of the assessment. Examples of misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, self-plagiarism (that is, submitting one's own previously assessed work the same work for credit twice at the same or different institutions), collusion, falsification, cheating (including assisting others to cheat by sharing work and contract cheating, where a student pays for work to be written or edited by somebody else), deceit, and personation (that is, impersonating another student or allowing another person to impersonate a student in an assessment).

1.2 These procedures explain how the University investigates allegations of academic misconduct in relation to any work submitted for assessment. This includes instances where the alleged misconduct is found after the relevant mark has been ratified by a Board of Examiners as per Section 64 of the Taught assessment Regulations: [taughtassessmentregulations.pdf \(ed.ac.uk\)](#)

The University may also investigate allegations of misconduct relating to work which has not been submitted for assessment at the University (e.g. a conference paper or publication) under the Code of Student Conduct, where this may represent a breach of the Code: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline

~~1.21.3~~ Staff investigating allegations of academic misconduct will make a decision based on the balance of probabilities. This means that they will be satisfied that ~~an~~ academic misconduct has occurred ~~has been committed~~ if they consider that, on the evidence available, it is more likely than not to have occurred. ~~that an offence has been committed.~~

1.4 A School Academic Misconduct Officer (SAMO) and a College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) may nominate a deputy to hold meetings with students in cases where there is a conflict of interest or where subject specific expertise is required e.g. where there is reasonable doubt that a student's work may not be their own and further enquiry into the student's work is required in order to establish whether there is a potential case of academic misconduct.

1.5 When investigating instances of alleged collusion or the use of another student's work without their consent, the SAMO/CAMO can conduct a single academic misconduct investigation in relation to the incident. The SAMO/CAMO may interview each student involved in the alleged collusion case individually. In order to conduct a thorough and fair investigation, the SAMO and CAMO will provide each student with details of the identity of the other student(s) involved in order to allow each student to respond fully to the allegations. If deemed necessary by the CAMO/SAMO each student involved will be provided with a copy of the other student(s) work and will be provided with an opportunity to respond to this. Students should be informed that the information shared with them must be treated as confidential. Whilst the investigation may involve multiple students, each student's outcome will be determined individually in light of the evidence relating directly to them.

~~1.31.6~~ The SAMO or CAMO may not draw any inference if a student chooses not to attend a meeting with them.



Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures

A. Suspected academic misconduct in assessed work submitted for taught courses

2. Reporting of suspected academic misconduct in taught courses

2.1 Any member of staff who has evidence that a student may have ~~breached the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures~~ committed an academic misconduct offence in an assessed piece of work submitted for a taught course must complete an Academic Misconduct Report Form. They will submit the form and any other relevant documentation to the School Academic Misconduct Officer (SAMO), informing the relevant Course Organiser. The work under investigation will be assessed and awarded a face value mark prior to referral to the SAMO. The face value mark is the mark that the work is believed to merit based solely on the content as presented, assuming no academic misconduct has taken place.

2.2 The Academic Misconduct Report Form is available at:
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct

3. Investigation by the School Academic Misconduct Officer (SAMO) – suspected academic misconduct in taught courses

3.1 The SAMO is responsible for deciding whether there is a case to answer. The SAMO will discuss the case with the relevant Course Organiser and/or marker and can consult with the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) if necessary. If the SAMO decides that there are grounds for investigation, they will determine whether they are able to deal with the case or whether it needs to be referred to a CAMO.

3.2 A SAMO (or nominee) may, at their discretion, invite a student to a preliminary meeting (either online or in person) or request a written statement from students before deciding how to proceed with the case. If a meeting is requested, the student may be accompanied at that meeting by a member of the University community, e.g. their ~~Personal Tutor~~ Student Adviser or a ~~caseworker~~ ~~adviser~~ from the Edinburgh University Students' Association Advice Place.

3.3 The case will not require referral to the CAMO provided that it meets all of the following criteria:

- ~~The SAMO is satisfied that the case has come about through a genuine lack of understanding by the student; and~~
- It is a first ~~breach~~ ~~offence~~ (the relevant College can advise where it is a potential repeat offence); **and**
- The SAMO believes that the case is minor in nature and can be appropriately dealt with by issuing a warning or applying a mark penalty of no more than 10 marks in accordance with the relevant [Common Marking Scheme](#), except in cases where the component is worth 5% or less of the course mark. In these cases, if appropriate, the SAMO can apply a penalty that reduces the component to mark to zero.

In cases where the SAMO is unsure about whether the criteria above apply, the SAMO should consult the CAMO, who will determine whether the SAMO can deal with the case.

3.4 ~~In cases which satisfy the criteria in 3.3, the SAMO or another relevant member of academic staff will address the issue with the student in assessment feedback, by email, or in a meeting within 15 working days of receiving an allegation of misconduct. The student~~



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~~should be issued with a warning and/or penalty, and directed towards an appropriate source of support within the University. A record of the breach must be maintained by the SAMO and the student should be warned about the consequences of any further misconduct allegations. In cases which satisfy the criteria in 3.3, the SAMO should provide students with the opportunity to respond to the allegation and where appropriate then issue a warning or penalty to the student, and direct them towards an appropriate source of support within the University. A record of the breach must be maintained by the SAMO and the student should be warned about the consequences of any further misconduct breaches. Action should be taken within 15 working days of receiving an allegation of misconduct. Alternatively, the SAMO may direct another relevant member of academic staff to address the issue with the student in assessment feedback and/or via existing mark rubrics.~~

- 3.5 A face value mark that is appropriate for the work submitted as is should have been determined by this point. A fair estimate mark that suitably reflects the student's own contribution to the work and takes the minor misconduct or poor scholarship into account should then be established.
- 3.6 The SAMO will refer all cases which fail to meet the criteria set out at 3.3 above to the CAMO. Allegations of serious misconduct, including examination misconduct and contract cheating, will always be referred to the CAMO.
- 3.7 The SAMO must refer cases to the CAMO within 15 working days of ~~the receiving an allegation of misconduct~~ release of provisional marks for the cohort. Any allegations which arise outside of this period must also be referred to the CAMO within 15 working days of being detected.
- 3.8 When referring a case to the CAMO, the SAMO must complete the relevant section of the Academic Misconduct Report Form and submit this with any relevant documentation to the College Academic Misconduct Administrator.
- 3.9 When a case has been referred to the SAMO or the CAMO, marks for the student must not be ratified by Boards of Examiners or published until the investigation has been concluded.
- 4. Investigation by the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) - suspected academic misconduct in taught courses**
 - 4.1 The CAMO is responsible for investigating all cases of suspected academic misconduct referred to them by a SAMO and for deciding on the penalty (if any) to be applied. As part of this investigation, the CAMO should ascertain whether or not this is the student's first breach of the Academic Misconduct Procedures~~academic misconduct offence~~.
 - 4.2 If the CAMO considers there is a case to answer, they will write to the student suspected of academic misconduct describing the alleged breach~~offence~~ and inviting the student to respond to the evidence reported by the School. The CAMO will copy the initial correspondence to the student's Personal Tutor / Student Adviser and encourage the student to speak with their Personal Tutor / Student Adviser.
 - 4.3 ~~Where the student acknowledges the offence and there is sufficient information for the CAMO to make a decision, the CAMO may decide that there is no need for a formal academic misconduct interview. Where the student responds to the allegation and there is sufficient information for the CAMO to make a decision, the CAMO may decide to take action without meeting the student.~~ In such cases the CAMO will write to the student and the SAMO, to inform



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them of the outcome and any penalty decision. The SAMO will advise the Convener of the relevant Board of Examiners of the decision and any penalty to be enacted (see Section 6). If the CAMO's recommendations relate to specific staff members, the SAMO will forward each recommendation to the relevant staff member. Where appropriate, the SAMO, or another member of academic staff, will also offer to meet with the student concerned in order to provide advice on academic best practice.

4.4 Where the student does not respond to the allegation, and the CAMO is satisfied that they have been given sufficient opportunity to do so, the CAMO may deal with the alleged offense in the absence of any further information. The student and the SAMO will be informed of the outcome and penalty decision as set out in paragraph 4.3.

~~4.54~~ In all other cases, the CAMO will invite the student to attend an interview. The CAMO may decide it is necessary to invite the student to attend a formal academic misconduct interview. The interview will be conducted by a panel chaired by the CAMO (or nominee), and including at least one representative SAMO from that College (not from the same School as the student). The CAMO will be assisted by a note-taker who will take a record of the meeting.

~~4.65~~ Where the CAMO conducts an interview with the student, this should be held in person wherever possible. The student may be accompanied by a member of the University community, e.g. a caseworker n adviser from the Edinburgh University Students' Association Advice Place, or their ~~Personal Tutor /~~ Student Adviser. If the student is unable to attend in person, the CAMO will consult with the student and select one of the following options:

- To conduct the interview electronically (e.g. by video, web-camera, etc.); **or**
- To offer the student the opportunity to make a written submission.

~~4.76~~ In exceptional cases, the panel may invite an academic staff member with relevant specialist knowledge to attend the interview as an expert witness. In such cases, the expert will provide specialist knowledge to assist the panel in making a decision. However, the expert will not form part of the panel, and will not be involved in any decision making.

~~4.87~~ The purpose of the interview will be to enable the panel to obtain further relevant information about the alleged academic misconduct breachoffence and to allow the student the opportunity to put forward their response to the allegation. The panel will take this information into account when deciding on any penalty to be applied.

~~4.98~~ Following the interview, the CAMO will send a confidential report of the meeting to the student. The student will be given the opportunity to comment on the accuracy of the report. The CAMO will then approve a final version of the report.

~~4.109~~ The CAMO, in consultation with the rest of the panel, will decide on the penalty, if any, to be applied (see 5.1 below). The CAMO will inform the student of the decision as soon as possible following the outcome of the meeting.

~~4.110~~ The CAMO will send a report of the meeting, the outcome, and any recommendations arising from the case, to the reporting SAMO and the School Fitness to Practise contact if relevant.

~~4.124~~ The SAMO will forward the outcome of the case, including any penalty to be enacted, to the Convener of the relevant Board of Examiners (see section 6). If the CAMO's recommendations relate to specific staff members, the SAMO will forward each recommendation to the relevant



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staff member. **Where appropriate, the SAMO, or another member of academic staff, will also offer to meet with the student concerned in order to provide advice on academic best practice.**

4.132 If an allegation of academic misconduct is upheld in relation to a student registered on a programme with Fitness to Practise requirements, further action may be taken under the relevant College Fitness to Practise Procedure. This will not involve reinvestigating the allegation of academic misconduct.

5. Penalty decisions available to the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) - academic misconduct in taught courses

5.1 In deciding whether or not it is appropriate to apply a penalty, and which penalty to apply, the CAMO will take into account the severity, perceived intent and benefit to the student of the academic misconduct, as well as any previous [academic misconduct offences/ breaches of the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures](#).

5.2 Any penalty will apply **only** to the specific work under investigation, which in itself may represent only a part of the overall course assessment. The College will retain a record of any penalties applied by the CAMO, but this will not appear on a student's transcript. In cases where one or more students have colluded on a piece of work, penalty decisions for each student will be made on an individual basis.

5.3 Where the student [reports/claims](#) that the affected assessment was impacted by special circumstances, the CAMO will advise the student to request consideration of these by the appropriate Special Circumstances Committee. The CAMO will not take account of special circumstances in reaching a penalty decision. **Please also refer to 6.1 below.**

5.4 The following options are available to the CAMO:

- (a) To decide that [there is no case to answer on the balance of probabilities, the allegation is not proven](#) and no penalty is therefore to be applied;
- (b) In the case of a first [breach/ offence](#) which is a result of poor scholarly practice rather than any deliberate attempt to deceive, the CAMO may decide that a mark penalty will not be appropriate;
- (c) A penalty deducting 10, 20, ~~or~~ 30 [or 50](#) marks from the face value mark will be applied. The penalty applied should be proportionate to the [breach/ offence](#). The face value mark must be expressed as a percentage using the relevant [Common Marking Scheme](#) (e.g., 15/20 must be presented as 75% so that, for example, a 30 mark penalty would reduce the mark to 45%);
- (d) The mark is to be reduced to zero;
- (e) In cases where students have colluded in producing a piece of work, the face value mark may be split (not necessarily equally) between the students involved. For instance, a face value mark of 70 may be split equally between two students, so that each student receives a mark of 35;
- (f) In serious cases or where the student has a record of having [committed](#) a number of previous academic misconduct [breaches/ offences](#), the CAMO may decide to refer the case for disciplinary action under the Code of Student Conduct. **This may occur in serious cases where the student has a record of having a number of instances of previous academic misconduct breaches, or in cases of serious misconduct (e.g. including but not limited to serious instances of contract cheating and exam**



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misconduct, breach of duty of care e.g. in a professional/clinical setting, and failure to meet ethical, legal or professional obligations). In such cases, the CAMO investigation is equivalent to that of the Conduct Investigator for other student conduct cases, and no further investigation is required under the Code of Student Conduct. The CAMO may refer the case to a Student Discipline Officer, or to the Student Discipline Committee, as appropriate. If referring to the Student Discipline Committee, the CAMO should contact the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee to discuss the matter. Details of the University disciplinary procedures and of the penalties available to Student Discipline Officers and the Student Discipline Committee under the Code of Student Conduct are available at:

www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline

In addition to any actions taken under sections a-f above, the CAMO may also do the following:

- (g) Issue a formal warning and/or ask the student to attend a mandatory meeting with the SAMO to discuss good academic practice.

6. Application of penalties by the Board of Examiners - taught courses

- 6.1 The Board of Examiners is required to apply the penalty determined by the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO). It cannot apply any additional penalty for the breach of fitness to practise except in cases which involve an additional Fitness to Practise element and are referred for further consideration under the relevant College Fitness to Practise procedure. If the student has accepted Special Circumstances relating to the affected assessment the Board will take into account the recommendation of the Special Circumstances Committee when reaching its decision, in accordance with the Special Circumstances Policy and Regulation 43 of the Taught Assessment Regulations:
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/assessment/special-circumstances/
www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf

B. Suspected academic misconduct in work submitted for postgraduate research programmes (other than taught components, which are investigated in line with A)

7. Reporting of suspected academic misconduct in postgraduate research programmes

- 7.1 Any member of staff who has evidence that a student undertaking a postgraduate research programme may have breached the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures ~~committed an academic misconduct offence~~ (in the thesis or other work submitted for assessment and/or progression) must complete an Academic Misconduct Report Form in conjunction with the relevant SAMO. They must submit the form and any other relevant documentation to the CAMO.
- 7.2 The Academic Misconduct Report Form is available at:
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct
- 8. Investigation by the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) – suspected academic misconduct in postgraduate research programmes



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- 8.1 The CAMO is responsible for investigating all cases of suspected academic misconduct referred to them by a SAMO and for deciding on the penalty (if any) to be applied.
- 8.2 If the CAMO considers that there is a case to answer, the CAMO will arrange for an academic misconduct panel comprising the CAMO and one other relevant academic member of staff (for example a relevant College Dean or a Graduate School Director or School Academic Misconduct Officer from a different School in the same College) to interview the student, following the same procedure as outlined in 4.5-4.8.
- 8.3 The CAMO, in consultation with the rest of the panel, will decide on the penalty, if any, to be applied (see 9.1 below). The CAMO will inform the student of the decision as soon as possible following the outcome of the meeting. The CAMO will provide the student's principal supervisor with an outline of the decision.
- 8.4 Except in cases referred for further consideration under the Code of Student Conduct, once the CAMO has approved the report of the meeting and decided on the penalty (if any) to be applied, the CAMO will submit a written report to the SAMO for forwarding to the Convener of the relevant Board of Examiners. This will include details of any penalty which the Board must apply in light of the decision (see section 9 below).
- 9. Penalty decisions available to the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) – academic misconduct in postgraduate research programmes**
- 9.1 In deciding whether or not it is appropriate to apply a penalty, and which penalty to apply, the CAMO will take into account the severity, perceived intent and benefit to the student of the academic misconduct, as well as any previous academic misconduct [breaches/offences](#).
- 9.2 Where the student [reports/claims](#) that the affected assessment was impacted by special circumstances, the CAMO will advise the student to request consideration of these by the appropriate Special Circumstances Committee. The CAMO will not take account of special circumstances in reaching a penalty decision.
- 9.3 The following options are available to the CAMO:
- (a) Decide that [on the balance of probabilities the allegation of academic misconduct should not be upheld there is no case to answer](#) and no penalty is therefore to be applied;
 - (b) Allow the student to edit and resubmit the work having corrected the affected section(s)*;
 - (c) Instruct the examiners to reassess the work with the affected sections removed (without offering the student the chance to edit)*;
 - (d) Deem the thesis (or dissertation, or other assessment or components of assessment) to have failed and instruct the Board of Examiners accordingly;
 - (e) In serious cases or where the student has a record of having [committed](#) a number of previous academic misconduct [breaches/offences](#), the CAMO may decide to refer the case for disciplinary action under the Code of Student Conduct. In such cases, the CAMO investigation is equivalent to that of the Conduct Investigator for other student conduct cases, and no further investigation is required under the Code of Student Conduct. The CAMO may refer the case to a Student Discipline Officer, or to the Student Discipline Committee, as appropriate. If referring to the Student Discipline Committee, the CAMO should contact the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee to discuss the matter. Details of the University disciplinary procedures and of the penalties available to Student



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Discipline Officers and the Student Discipline Committee under the Code of Student Conduct are available at:

www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline

*Options (b) and (c) may involve the thesis no longer being fit for a specific award.

- 9.4 Where the work affected has been submitted for annual review the CAMO will submit a report, including a recommendation, to the student's annual review panel.
- 9.5 The relevant College will keep a record of any penalties applied by the CAMO, but this will not appear on a student's transcript.

10. Application of penalties by the Board of Examiners – postgraduate programmes

- 10.1 The Board of Examiners is required to apply the penalty determined by the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO). It cannot apply any additional penalty for the [breach offence](#). If the student has submitted Special Circumstances relating to the affected assessment the Board will take into account the decision of the Special Circumstances Committee when reaching its decision, in accordance with the Special Circumstances Policy:
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/assessment/special-circumstances/

11. Students funded by UK Research Councils

- 11.1 Where there is evidence that a student who is receiving funding from one of the UK Research Councils may have [breached the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures](#) ~~committed an act of academic misconduct~~ in their research, the University is required to report this to the relevant Research Council. Staff reporting suspected academic misconduct to the relevant CAMO should indicate on the Academic Misconduct Report form where a student is funded by a UK Research Council. Should the CAMO decide that there is a case to answer, they will notify the School, who will inform the relevant Research Council of the allegations against the student, and provide updates on the outcome of the case.
- 11.2 Policies and guidance relating to research integrity for students funded through UK research councils are published by UK Research and Innovation (formerly known as Research Councils UK), and can be found online at:
www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-and-standards/research-integrity/

C. Suspected academic misconduct by graduates of the University

12. Reporting of suspected academic misconduct – graduates

- 12.1 Any member of staff who has evidence that a graduate of the University may have [breached the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures](#) ~~committed an academic misconduct offence~~ that could impact upon the award, or classification of award, including the award of postgraduate Merit or Distinction, must complete an Academic Misconduct Report Form in conjunction with the relevant SAMO. They should submit the form and any other relevant documentation to the CAMO.

13. Investigation by College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) - graduates



Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures

- 13.1 If the CAMO considers there is a case to answer, the CAMO will write to the graduate notifying them of the allegations and inviting them to attend an interview. The interview procedures for graduates are identical to the investigation and interview procedures for enrolled students (sections 4.2 to 5.4 for taught courses, and 8.2 to 9.6 for research programmes).
- 13.2 Following investigation the following options are open to the CAMO:
- (a) If there is no case to answer, or if it is concluded that academic misconduct is proven but was taken into account at the time of the original award, the CAMO will report the case and the outcome of the investigation to the Convener of the relevant Board of Examiners. No further action will be taken;
 - (b) If the allegation is found to be proven, but is unlikely to have impacted on the award or classification of award (including the award of postgraduate Merit or Distinction) made to the graduate, the CAMO will report the case and the outcome of the investigation to the Convener of the relevant Board of Examiners. No further action will be taken;
 - (c) If the allegation is found to be proven, and is likely to have impacted on the award or class of award made to the graduate, the CAMO will refer the case for disciplinary action under the Code of Student Conduct. In such cases, the CAMO investigation is equivalent to that of the Conduct Investigator for other student conduct cases, and no further investigation is required under the Code of Student Conduct. The CAMO may refer the case to a Student Discipline Officer, or to the Student Discipline Committee, as appropriate. If referring to the Student Discipline Committee, the CAMO should contact the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee to discuss the matter. Details of the University disciplinary procedures and of the penalties available to Student Discipline Officers and the Student Discipline Committee under the Code of Student Conduct are available at: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline

D. Review of a College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) decision

14. Request for a review by the Board of Examiners

- 14.1 If the Board of Examiners believes that there is a justifiable reason to challenge the CAMO's decision about the penalty to be applied, the Convener may request that the decision be referred for review by the CAMOs of the University's other two Colleges jointly. The relevant Convener will submit a request in writing to the relevant contact in Academic Services, outlining the reasons for challenging the decision. The Convener will write to the student to inform them that their case has been referred for review, explaining that the final course result has therefore not yet been agreed.
- 14.2 Academic Services will arrange for the case to be reviewed by the CAMOs of the other two Colleges. The original investigating CAMO will be required to submit a copy of all of the case documentation which was considered by the CAMO along with copies of the report and decision letter. Each CAMO will be sent the documentation and will be asked to come to a decision separately before meeting to discuss the case; this meeting may be held by correspondence. The CAMOs may decide to invite the student to a further academic misconduct interview, following the same procedure as outlined in section 4.5. The CAMOs may be assisted by a note-taker who will take a record of the meeting.
- 14.3 Once the meeting and any further academic misconduct interview has been held, the two reviewing CAMOs will make a joint decision about whether or not to uphold the original investigating CAMO's decision, to rescind a penalty or to apply an alternative penalty. In



Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures

determining an alternative penalty, the reviewing CAMOs may only choose from those penalties listed in 5.4 (for work submitted as part of a taught course), 9.3 (for students undertaking postgraduate research programmes) and 13.2 (for graduates).

- 14.4 Academic Services will notify the Convener of the Board of Examiners and the student in writing of the joint CAMO decision. The original investigating CAMO will be informed of the outcome of the review. The Board will be required to adhere to that decision and cannot request a further review. The Convener of the Board of Examiners will write to the student to inform them of the final course result agreed by the Board.

15. Student right of appeal

- 15.1 CAMO decisions resulting in mark penalties are ratified by Boards of Examiners. Students have a right to appeal decisions made by Boards of Examiners, including decisions affected by the outcome of an academic misconduct investigation. Students wishing to submit an academic appeal should refer to the University's Student Appeal Regulations and related guidance at:
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/appeals

16 January 2023

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**25 May 2023****Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy Update****Description of paper**

1. Presents minor updates to the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy and outlines plans for future developments.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval.

Background and context

3. Academic Services conduct cyclical reviews of policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

Discussion

4. Minor changes have been made as requested, content updated to reflect known changes, and hyperlinks have been added/updated. Notable updates are:
 - Updating the business case information under 'Documentation for Proposals';
 - Removing sentences which duplicate information relating to business cases and the composition of Boards of Studies;
 - Correcting a reference to the relevant Court Resolution (page 6);
 - Correcting student representative nomenclature;
 - Removing "well" from the first line of paragraph 2 on page 11 as the timescales are detailed within the Policy; and
 - Future-proofing by referring to "the DRPS publication date" rather than including the current date.
5. The Committee is asked to approve the minor changes to the Policy.
6. In terms of further development of the Policy, there is a recognition that there are currently challenges in making changes in a timely manner in response to (for example) student feedback, external examiners reports, PSRB requirements, outcomes of quality processes, and aligning with priorities such as assessment and feedback. The concept of having two specific DRPS publication dates has been proposed. An April date for 'headline' information and a later date for confirming final content with information outlining this approach added to the DRPS. In practice, changes are made after the April DPRS date due to a variety of reasons (staff leaving, course numbers not viable, etc.) and we would be seeking to make this process explicit and more transparent. Changes to courses and programmes need to be able to be made with the student experience as a focus whilst also meeting requirements and we are seeking to develop the Policy in line with this approach.

7. In addition, the following proposed enhancements to the policy have been identified:

- More guidance on what constitutes major and minor programme and course changes, the reasons why (including examples), associated timescales, and responsibilities, and presenting this information in a more user-friendly way;
- Confirming the interaction between the Policy and the Assessment and Feedback Principles; and
- Further clarification on what constitutes a non-credit bearing CPD course.

Resource implications

8. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed minor amendments to the Policy being presented for approval. The proposed further developments would require resources from Academic Services to co-ordinate and from stakeholders to contribute to. The proposed future developments are anticipated to assist those developing courses and programmes.

Risk management

9. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

10. Not applicable.

Equality & diversity

11. None identified, no proposed change in policy or procedure.

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

12. Academic Services will communicate changes in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies.

Author

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Presenter

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Freedom of Information

The paper is open.



Programme and Course Approval and Management

Purpose of Policy

Policy outlines for staff and students the University's approach to programme and course approval and management (including design, development, approval, changes and closure, but not monitoring) and how Boards of Studies operate.

Review

Policy was initially developed following the publication of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Chapter B1: Programme design, development and approval.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

Applies to staff and students who are involved in programme and course design, development, approval, changes and closure and to both taught and research programmes and all Boards of Studies and the staff and student members in every School/Deanery. This Policy covers all credit bearing provision, non-credit bearing online courses for external release, and non-credit bearing continuing professional development courses, including postgraduate research as well as taught courses and programmes, and online learning as well as on-campus provision.

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Document control

Approved:	Starts:	Equality impact assessment:	Amendments:	Next Review:
24.11.16	22.09.16	03.09.18	256 .05.232	2024/2025

Approving authority

Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee and University Court for the associated resolution

Consultation undertaken

Department responsible for policy maintenance & review

Academic Services

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

[Curriculum webpages](#) (Academic Services)
[Course Descriptor Guidance](#)
[Board of Studies Terms of Reference](#)
[Assessment and Feedback Principles](#)

Quality Code

Advice and guidance: Course design and development

Policies superseded by this policy

Draft University Level Principles for Programme and Course Design, Development, Approval, Changes and Closure
Non-Credit Bearing Online Course Approval: Procedure for External Release

Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 650 2138.

Keywords

Programme, course, design, development, approval, changes, closure, Board of Studies



Programme and Course Approval and Management

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Programme and Course Approval and Management

Introduction

The University is required to have strategic oversight of and to consistently apply effective processes for the design, development, approval, changes and closure of programmes and courses. Programmes and courses are defined in the University's [glossary of terms](#).

This Policy, and the [curriculum](#) pages of the Academic Services website, constitute the University's approach to and management of the processes for design, development, approval, changes and closure of programmes and courses. Supplementary College level guidance provides additional information on local practice such as timescales, specific roles and responsibilities, and templates.

Programme and Course Design and Development

Programme and course **design** is a creative activity which may result in innovative ideas for higher education provision. It is followed by a process of **development** which leads to the creation of a programme or course. This is where the content, modes of delivery, structure and components of the programme or course (including assessment and feedback methods and the means by which students will be engaged with the curriculum) are considered and, for programmes, developed into a coherent programme of study. This development process may also be used to enhance an existing programme, for example in response to the outcomes of programme monitoring and review. Programme and course design and development is carried out at the School or subject area level.

Key Issues to Address in proposals for Credit-Bearing Courses and Programmes

Programme and course proposals must demonstrate the following (please note: some aspects are not directly relevant for postgraduate research programmes):

Programmes	Courses
Purpose	
Learning outcomes (LOs) necessary to meet that purpose.	
Mechanisms by which students demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the LOs.	
Organisational aspects such as workload, volume and nature of assessment in order for students to meet LOs.	
Details of the level of award and credits	Details of the credit level and credits
The programme as a whole is coherent	The relationship of the course to programme(s) and how the course delivers and assesses the learning outcomes set out in the Degree Programme Specification (not applicable for standalone courses).
Minimum entry requirements for entry to the programme	
Where other Schools are involved and/or impacted: evidence of consultation; consideration; communication of impact; and support for the proposal. Confirmation of primary responsibility should be defined at the outset (there can only be one owning School).	
Consultation with relevant support services (e.g. Library, Information Services Group) and (where relevant) any external providers/contacts (e.g. employers, alumni, business, industry or professional contacts)	



Programme and Course Approval and Management

Programmes	Courses
<p>Evidence of consideration of Internal Reference Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course and programme proposals should take account of the relevant internal strategic context. This may include: a School strategy; a College strategy; and/or University strategy including Strategy 2030. Degree and Assessment Regulations The Curriculum Framework The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy The Graduate Attributes Framework Work-based and Placement Learning Policy (as appropriate) 	
<p>Evidence of consideration of External Reference Points (as appropriate for courses):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QAA Subject Benchmark Statements Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements Employers and Industry 	
<p>Accessibility Design courses and programmes to be accessible to all students and to avoid any unnecessary barriers to students with protected characteristics</p>	
<p>Student involvement Students must be proactively involved at the earliest practicable point in programme and course design, development, approval, changes and closure processes. Their involvement should be proportional to the activity taking place and representative and could include student feedback from the quality assurance processes (course evaluations, student surveys, Staff Student Liaison Committee minutes etc.). The opportunity to be involved must allow for representation of students with a range of backgrounds and characteristics. Consultation should involve students academically closest to the proposed changes.</p>	
<p>Evidence of expertise from outside the programme In programme approval, the involvement of individuals external to the University is required to offer independence and objectivity to the decisions taken.</p>	

Documentation for Proposals

Programme and course proposals must ensure a transparent and auditable 'paper-trail' providing a rationale for decisions. Documentary evidence must include the following:

Programmes	Courses
For taught programmes: Degree Programme Specification (the final version is posted on the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study)	Course creation, approval and maintenance information (EUCLID)
Details of the structure of the programme (informs the Degree Programme Table once the programme is approved)	More detailed documentation requirements will be in College Guidance.
Business case – Fee Strategy Group programme proposal template . Student Recruitment and Fees Strategy Group costings template Also needs to be submitted for approval to Student Recruitment and Fees Strategy Group for proposals for non-standard tuition fee arrangements and all taught postgraduate programmes	
More detailed documentation requirements will be in College Guidance	



Programme and Course Approval and Management

Following approval of a programme: (1) complete [New Programme Request Form](#) and (2) create [Degree Programme Table](#).

Business Case for New Programmes

All proposals for a new programme, at all levels of study, must be accompanied by a business case.

~~A Business Case should include all forecast student numbers, costs and income for the first year of the programme and four subsequent years.~~

The Business Case should include:

- Projected student enrolments for year one and four subsequent years
- Projected costs and income for these years, including proposed tuition fee arrangements (tuition fee arrangements not applicable for undergraduate programmes)

Factors to consider in preparing your Business Plan include:

- How the programme contributes to School(s)/ College(s) or University strategic Plans
- How does the programme fit within any existing School or College suite of programmes and how does it relate to active areas of research work?
- How many programmes have been launched within the school in the past 5 years within your subject area and how many existing programmes have been closed?
- Can any existing courses from current programmes be used and if so are there sufficient spaces to accommodate additional students?
- How do you intend on growing the programme over the coming years?
- How will the programme be sustainably resourced (e.g. staffing such as tutors including new and reallocation of existing staff (academic or professional services), additional teaching, laboratory facilities, Library and Computing service provision etc.?)
- Would students on the programme be eligible for any scholarships?
- Does the number of FTE staff per student ratio look realistic given the forecast student numbers?
- If the programme is shared across Schools/Colleges what mechanisms will be put in place to ensure suitable programme management (both academic and administrative)
- If the programme is a joint or collaborative programme with an external institution the case must include all relevant documentation such as the memorandum of understanding. Further advice for such partnerships can be sought from contacts on the [Academic Collaborations intranet site](#).

The Business Case should incorporate the outcomes of market insight, which should address at least some of the following:

- Who is the target market and how will the University specifically market the programme to them?
- What is the forecast market size - how many new students would this programme attract and on what basis are you estimating this?
- Where are these students likely to come from? UK/ EU / Overseas?
- What is the demand for graduates with the qualification?
- What competitor programmes exist, what is the going rate for their fees, what are their unique selling points, and what is the unique selling point of the proposed programme?

The Business Case should also incorporate a marketing strategy. Factors to consider when writing your marketing strategy include:



Programme and Course Approval and Management

- Which global and local markets do you think this programme will appeal to?
- What are the proposed tuition fees for both home and overseas students and how does this compare with your competitors?
- What are the possible career destinations for your graduates?
- Would employers be receptive to employing students who have completed this programme? Are there any opportunities for employer endorsements?

Communications and Marketing can provide assistance and support for conducting market research (market pulse and competitor analysis). <http://www.ed.ac.uk/communications-marketing/market-insight>

For the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS) the point of contact for market research is the College Markets Insights Service: CAHSS Recruitment and Admissions Insights CAHSSinsights@ed.ac.uk

Colleges may provide additional guidance and support for developing business cases and conducting market research, and about how the review of Business Cases relates to the academic approval processes for new programmes.

Key Committees Responsible for Programme and Course Approval, Changes and Closure

School Boards of Studies

See below for information regarding the membership, remit and operation of Boards of Studies

College Committee

Each College should produce a clear Terms of Reference setting out the remit, membership and operation of their Committee(s) responsible for programme and course approval and management.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

The membership, remit and operation of APRC are detailed in the [Committee's Terms of Reference](#).

School Boards of Studies

The constitution, composition, and number of Boards of Studies are regulated by Court Resolution No [05/201918/2015](#). The following are the key points:

Remit

- Each School has at least one Board of Studies which considers proposals for new, changes to, and/or closure of existing courses, programmes and awards. They cover all credit-bearing provisions, non-credit bearing online courses for external release, and non-credit bearing continuing professional development courses. They also keep teaching, learning and assessment methodologies under review and offer advice on the School's portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
- Boards of Studies ensure that proposals are academically appropriate and supported by evidence and documentation. They ensure that all interested parties in the University are aware of proposals.
- Boards of Studies annually approve UNISTATS (formerly Key Information Set) Learning, Teaching and Assessment course information and Degree Programme Accreditation information, recording this approval in the Board of Studies' minutes.



Programme and Course Approval and Management

- Boards of Studies have responsibility for the formal oversight of programme and course handbooks. In practice the approval of handbooks can be delegated to members of staff within a School as part of an approvals process that ensures accuracy of information and all handbooks are approved prior to the commencement of a course or programme. Boards of Studies need to have formal oversight of the approvals process and would be expected to record that handbooks had been approved at the relevant Board of Studies meeting.
- Boards of Studies consider and report their views on any other academic matter to the appropriate College(s) and/or Colleges committee(s), whether independently or in response to a College or University request.

Composition

- The Head of the relevant School appoints a Convener and Deputy Convener, who must both be academic members of staff, for each Board of Studies in the School. The Convener and Deputy Convener are eligible for appointment for a period of three years and may be re-appointed. In the absence of the Convener at any meeting, the Board of Studies is chaired by the Deputy Convener. The Convener or Chair of the meeting shall have both a deliberative and a casting vote. The Convener of a Board of Studies cannot also convene the College committee to which the Board reports.
- Boards of Studies consist of academic and administrative staff in the University and other people appointed by the relevant College(s). All staff involved in the teaching of a degree programme should be a member of the relevant Board of Studies.
- ~~Each Board of Studies is composed of the teaching members and student representatives of the relevant discipline areas.~~
- Each Board of Studies has at least one student member from a relevant discipline. Student members need to represent the range of subjects covered by the Board and to be linked to the appropriate School Representation structure. If student members are unable to attend, it is appropriate for them to send an alternate student representative or provide comments to the Board of Studies in advance. For student members, the School can invite the Undergraduate, Postgraduate Taught and/or Postgraduate Research School Representative School Convener, School Undergraduate Vice Convener, and/or School Postgraduate Vice Convener who was elected in the Edinburgh University Students Association (the Students' Association) elections in the first instance. If they are unable to attend, other possible student members are other Student Representatives who have attended the Students' Association's representation training, for example, Programme Representatives.
- Each Board of Studies has at least one external member from another Board of Studies within the University. This may be a representative or representatives from other Schools with subject areas with strong links to the Board of Studies' discipline areas.
- The Head of School and the Director of Teaching or equivalent in a School, are members of each Board of Studies in their School.
- The Head of College has the right to appoint an ex officio College member to every Board of Studies in the College.
- Boards of Studies can include members from other areas of the University, for example from other Schools or from relevant support services.
- At the beginning of each academic session each School produces an agreed list of the members of its Board(s).
- There is no formal quorum for the Board of Studies, but the minimum composition of Board of Studies meetings needs to provide effective academic oversight of the decisions made by the Board and therefore some roles may have to be represented for the Board to be considered robust.



Programme and Course Approval and Management

Governance

- Boards of Studies may make nominations for representation of their members on relevant College committees.
- Boards of Studies shall report direct to the relevant College committee(s) as necessary, but at least annually.
- Boards of Studies shall liaise with relevant School and College committees and with specific managers and offices in respect of issues or instances where matters of academic policy intersect with management issues.

Operation

- Boards of Studies must meet at least once in each academic year.
- The timing of Board of Studies meetings should align with the School and College committees to which the Board reports, and any other key dates. Boards of Studies shall hold such meetings as the Convener may call, including electronic or virtual meetings.
- The Convener must call a meeting of the Board when at least one-fifth of its members request this meeting in writing.
- Boards of Studies may appoint sub-committees which at the discretion of the Board may report either to the Board or direct to the relevant College(s) or College committee(s).
- A College may nominate another committee to operate as a Board of Studies. All provisions of these Terms of Reference apply to that committee when it is functioning as a Board of Studies.
- The Head of School or their nominee will be responsible for ensuring the provision of secretariat support for the Board of Studies.

Key Issues to Consider when Scrutinising Proposals for Credit-bearing Courses and Programmes

When reviewing proposals, Boards of Studies and College Committees should consider:

- Whether the proposals adequately address the Key Issues set out above;
- Whether the proposals are academically rigorous and would lead to a high quality student experience;
- Whether the documentation is complete;
- Whether the business case is robust (Note that in some cases Schools / Colleges will consider the business case via a separate route to the Board of Studies / Committee).

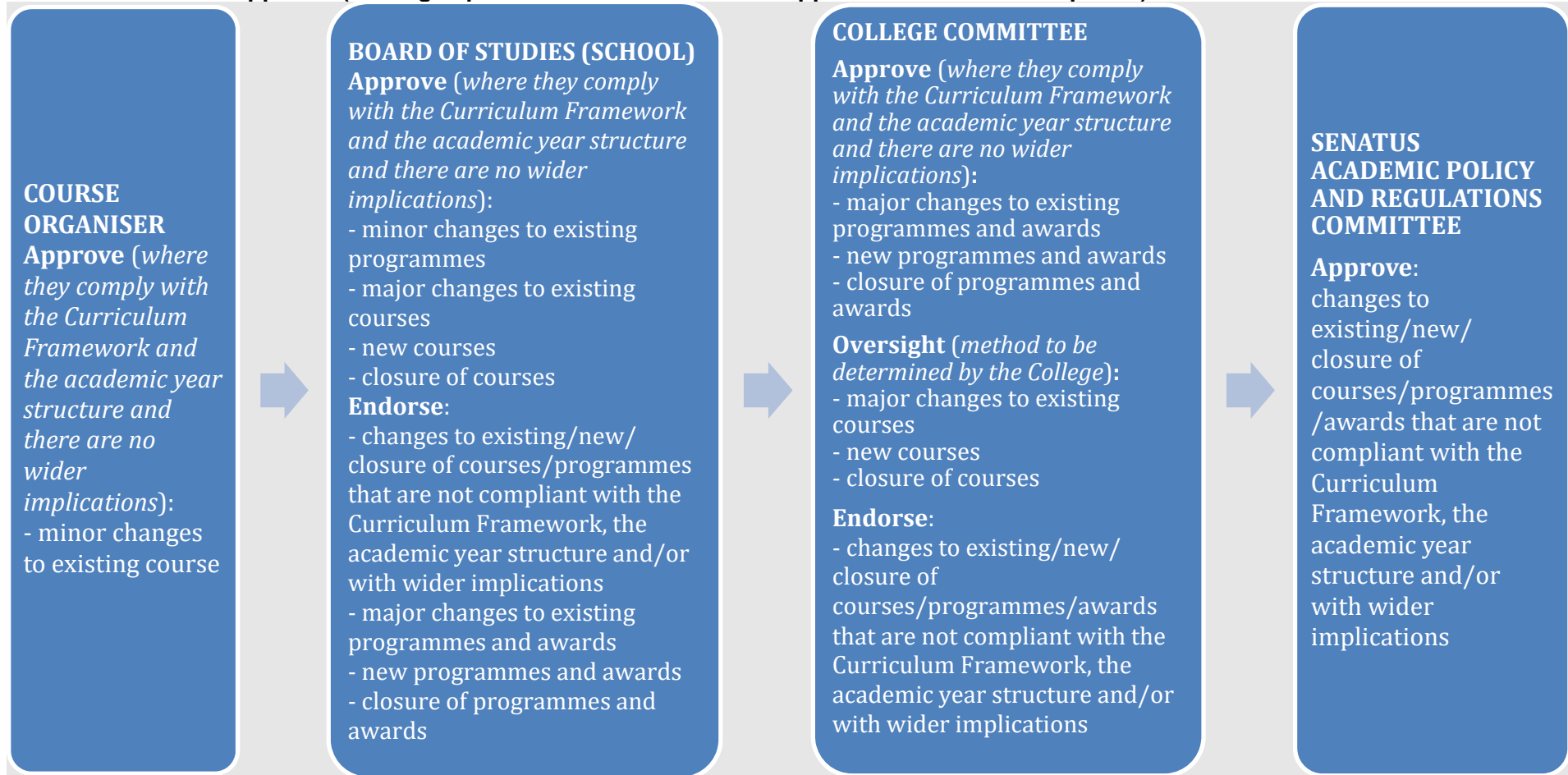
Credit-Bearing Programme and Course Approval, Changes and Closure – Levels of approval

The University programme and course approval, changes and closure processes ensure institutional oversight of standards and quality. Authority is delegated by the University, via the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC), to Colleges and, where appropriate, to School Boards of Studies. Colleges may elect to wholly delegate the authority to approve all major changes to existing credit-bearing courses, proposals for new courses, and closure of courses to Schools but must retain a method of oversight, particularly to ensure that decisions are taken independently of the home subject area of the course. Colleges must retain authority to approve major changes to existing programmes and new programmes, and the closure of programmes. All programmes and courses are approved indefinitely unless otherwise stated.



Programme and Course Approval and Management

Minimum Levels of Approval (all stages prior to where a decision is approved should be completed)



Minor and Major Changes to Existing Programmes

Changes to any of the following are **major** and require College approval:

- The name of the programme: any change made to the name of a programme, other than to correct spelling or syntax, is considered a 'major change' and requires a new programme to be proposed and approved.
- The overall content of the programme: major change to the content of a programme is defined as the addition or closure of courses or major changes to existing courses (see below 'Minor and Major Changes to Existing Courses') comprising 20% of the total credit volume of the programme, or at least 50% of the credit volume in any single year of the programme.
- The overall approach to assessment for the programme.
- The structure of a programme: major change to the structure of a programme is defined as a change in the balance of credits between different components of the programme (e.g. between core/option courses or dissertation/taught courses) comprising 20% of the total credits of the programme, or at least 50% of the credits in any single year of the programme.
- The mode of study – part time, full time or intermittent
- The place of study - on campus or distance learning
- The period of study
- Collaboration or change of partner
- The home School or College

All other categories are regarded as **minor** change and therefore can be approved at School level.

Minor and Major Changes to Existing Courses

The categories outlined below are regarded as **major** changes:

- Name of the course*
- Level of the course*
- Credit value*
- Learning outcomes
- Balance of assessment types and their weightings (components of assessment)
- Home subject area*

* Will result in a new course being created

Changes to all other categories, which generally cover course content and administrative aspects, (e.g. course descriptions, transferable skills, reading lists/learning resources, Course Organiser and Secretary, and delivery information) are regarded as **minor**. As a minimum, Course Organisers can approve these changes (with the exception of changes to the Course Organiser and Course Secretary) although Schools may choose to add an additional level of approval for these changes, for example, to ensure programme coherence. Decisions regarding changes of Course Organiser and Course Secretary are management decisions made by the School in line with normal practices.

Timescales for approval of proposals for new/changes to existing for-credit courses and programmes

It is important that accurate information regarding programmes is available to applicants when they submit their applications, and to offer-holders when they decide whether to accept offers. As such, Colleges need to approve new programmes and significant changes to existing programmes sufficiently early that accurate and complete information can be included in the relevant corporate publications. Failure to meet these timescales will result in Schools / Colleges having to undertake

additional communications with applicants and offer-holders. It may also create additional obligations towards those applicants and offer-holders, and expose the University to reputational and financial risk.

It is also important that accurate information regarding courses is available ~~well~~ in advance of the academic session, to enable students to make informed decisions regarding their choices of courses and to prepare for their studies.

Schools / Colleges should therefore normally approve proposals within the following timescales (see Student Systems Key Dates for the DRPS publication date).

	Undergraduate	Postgraduate
New programmes	November, for the admissions cycle starting the following September (ie 21 months in advance of entry of students onto the programme)	By April, for the admissions cycle starting in October, for entry the following September (ie 16 months in advance of entry of students onto the programme) – to allow for inclusion in Print School-level Brochures. In principle, if the programme is not to be included in the Print School Brochures, Schools could approve new programmes later than this (eg as late as July for programmes opening for applications in October). However, in practice, this is rarely advisable since it leaves little time for recruitment.
Major changes to existing programmes	Aim for same timescales as for new programmes, although it can be possible to approve changes as late as August, for the admissions cycle starting in September, as long as the Print Prospectus entry has anticipated these changes.	Aim for same timescales as for new programmes, although it can be possible to approve changes as late as September for the admissions cycle starting in October, as long as the entry in the Print School Brochure has anticipated these changes.
Programme closure to new entrants	Timescales as for new programmes. In exceptional circumstances, a programme may be closed later, providing no applications have been received.	Timescales as for new programmes. In exceptional circumstances, a programme may be closed later, providing no applications have been received.
New courses	By the end-of-March <u>DRPS publication date</u> for the following session unless in exceptional circumstances and providing that students are able to take the course	By the end-of-March <u>DRPS publication date</u> for the following session unless in exceptional circumstances and providing that students are able to take the course

	(e.g. the course can be resourced, timetabled and students are able to sign up), in which case prior to the Semester in which they are to run.	(e.g. the course can be resourced, timetabled and students are able to sign up), in which case prior to the Semester in which they are to run.
Changes to or closure of existing courses	<p>Where this would constitute a major change to published information about the future structure and content of a programme, the same timescales apply as for major changes to existing programmes</p> <p>Otherwise, Schools should aim to make changes by the <u>end of March DRPS publication date</u>, for the following session (although minor amendments to the published course descriptors could be made subsequently between April and August, for example to take account of issues raised during the course review and monitoring)</p>	<p>Where this would constitute a major change to published information about the future structure and content of a programme, the same timescales apply as for major changes to existing programmes</p> <p>Otherwise, Schools should aim to make changes by the <u>end of March DRPS publication date</u>, for the following session (although minor amendments to the published course descriptors could be made subsequently between April and August, for example to take account of issues raised during the course review and monitoring)</p>

Arrangements for publishing information on approved courses and programmes

Programme and course information is entered into EUCLID, which feeds information to the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS), and forms the definitive record of programmes and courses. In addition to these publications, Schools / Colleges are responsible for publishing accurate, complete and up to date information on approved courses and programmes in other corporate publications for recruitment purposes. The timescales for publication are as follows:

Publication	Type of information	Timescales
EUCLID Course Descriptor	Detailed information regarding the course	Annual update to be complete by <u>end of March the DPRS publication date</u> , prior to publication of the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS) for the next session. Minor amendments to the published course descriptors could be made subsequently between April and August.
Degree Programme Specification	Summary information including programme learning aims and objectives and how they are demonstrated and achieved	Annual update to be complete by <u>end of March the DPRS publication date</u> , prior to publication of the Degree Regulations and Programmes

		of Study (DRPS) for the next session.
Degree Programme Table	Information regarding the curriculum structure for the programme	Annual update to be complete by end of March <u>the DRPS publication date</u> , prior to publication of the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS) for the next session.
UniStats Key Information Sets (UG only)	Information regarding aspects of programmes including types of assessment and contact time.	End June, for the UCAS applications opening in September that year with entry the following September
Undergraduate Prospectus (Print)	<p>General subject/discipline overview, year by year breakdown of courses studied (relevant to the whole subject area), additional costs, and approach to learning and assessment, along with careers outcomes.</p> <p>Details of any professional accreditation, placements and careers opportunities.</p> <p>Location of study.</p> <p>Any significant changes to programmes anticipated, the details of which cannot yet be confirmed.</p>	Annual update to be complete and returned to Communications and Marketing by December for publication in March – for UCAS applications opening in September that year with entry the following September
Undergraduate Degree Finder (Online)	<p>Subject information as above for print prospectus.</p> <p>In addition, for programmes:</p> <p>Overview of the programme.</p> <p>Details of courses studied each year.</p> <p>Details of any professional accreditations, placements and careers opportunities.</p> <p>Location of study.</p> <p>Approach to learning and assessment.</p> <p>Any significant changes to programmes anticipated, the</p>	Timescales in line with Undergraduate (Print) Prospectus. Amendments approved after the December deadline can be made up to early August, before UCAS applications open.

	<p>details of which cannot yet be confirmed.</p> <p>Entry requirements.</p> <p>Additional costs.</p>	
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)	Brief summary regarding the reasons for studying the programme, along with brief information about career opportunities	Annual update to be undertaken by end of March for UCAS applications opening in September that year with entry the following September
Postgraduate School-Level Brochures (Print)	Programme level information including: summary description and structure; breakdown of compulsory and optional courses offered. Careers opportunities and additional costs Entry requirements	Annual update to be complete by July for publication in September to apply to applications for entry the following September.
Postgraduate Degree Finder (Online)	<p>Programme title, award and study modes.</p> <p>Programme description (PGT only)</p> <p>Programme structure (PGT and PGR)</p> <p>Learning outcomes (PGT only)</p> <p>Career opportunities (PGT only)</p> <p>Online learning (PGT only)</p> <p>Work placements / internships (PGT and PGR)</p> <p>Research profile (PGR only)</p> <p>Training and support (PGR only)</p> <p>Facilities (PGR only)</p> <p>Entry requirements</p> <p>Additional costs</p> <p>Scholarships and funding</p>	Annual update to be complete by the end of September for applications opening on the first Monday in October for entry the following September (note however that agreement for any changes to entry requirements must be secured early in line with Student Recruitment and Admissions policy)

Changes to programmes – responsibilities to students, offer-holders and applicants

If, after starting to accept applications for a programme of study, a School or College approves any changes to the programme or to courses within it which lead to a divergence from that described in the published information regarding the programme, the School or College owning the programme is responsible for amending the published information at the earliest possible opportunity. This applies irrespective of the School which owns the individual courses that are changing.

If the approved changes are significant the School or College is also responsible for:

- Informing all students, applicants and offer-holders about the changes at the earliest possible opportunity;

- Where students / applicants / offer-holders request this, seeking to offer a suitable replacement programme for which they are qualified at the University, or, if the University is unable to offer a suitable replacement programme, seeking to refer students / applicants / offer-holders to a comparable higher education institution offering a suitable replacement programme;

While it is not possible to provide a comprehensive definition of what may constitute a 'significant' change in a programme of study for these purposes, the following are examples of significant changes:

- 'Major' changes to the programme (in the terms set out in the section above)
- Any removal from the programme of courses that published information had indicated would definitely be available, and any introduction of new mandatory courses which reduces a student's choice
- The professional accreditation / recognition status of the programme changes
- The location at which the programme is taught changes significantly (for example, the location of the owning School changes from one campus to another)

In the event that students, offer-holders or applicants choose to withdraw as a result of significant changes to a programme, the University may also consider making an appropriate refund of tuition fees and deposits paid prior to notification of the change.

Student Recruitment and Admissions and Academic Services are able to provide Schools and Colleges with advice regarding whether any changes to a programme should be treated as 'significant' for these purposes.

Programme Closure – Responsibilities to Students

Only in the most exceptional circumstances may a programme on which students have applied for, been offered a place on, have been accepted on, or are matriculated on be closed. In the event of such a decision the situation must be resolved in line with the University's admissions [Terms and Conditions](#). No programme may be withdrawn until the University's obligations to those students have been reasonably and fairly fulfilled. In addition, the University can have obligations to applicants to programmes even if no offer has been made. These obligations should also be considered before making a decision regarding programme closure.

In the event of closure of a programme, Schools must ensure appropriate management and resourcing of the final student cohorts in the programme to be closed. Collaborative partners must also be informed in a timely manner.

Collaboration/Partnerships

In addition to following the normal development and approval processes for for-credit courses and programmes, all for-credit courses and programmes that involve collaboration with another institution require additional development and approval stages.

Details about the University's collaborative agreements and arrangements, and guidelines for developing and approving collaborative provision, are available from the [collaborations SharePoint site](#)

Introducing New Degree Qualifications and deleting Degree Qualifications

New degree qualifications, with degree titles not already used by the University, need to be approved by APRC, on the basis of a proposal from the relevant College committee. APRC asks the University Court for any necessary degree Resolution and adds the degree qualification title to

the list of degrees in the annual Court Resolution on undergraduate or postgraduate degree regulations. The Resolution to create the degree qualification needs to come into effect before the University opens the programme for applications. The Secretary to APRC can advise on whether a degree needs a Court Resolution. For example, an MA or BSc for a new discipline does not need a Resolution. Colleges report the closure of degree qualifications to APRC for approval and reporting to the University Court, for the annual degree regulations Resolution.

Distance / Flexible PhDs

Guidance on what Schools can consider when developing proposals for Distance / Flexible PhDs is available at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/curriculum>

Non-credit Bearing Provision – General Points

Boards of Studies are responsible for approving all new or revised non-credit bearing courses for external release and non-credit bearing continuing professional development courses. Approval processes are different to those for credit-bearing provision and are detailed below.

While the standard requirements and processes for credit-bearing courses and programmes do not all apply to non-credit provision, many of the principles do.

Non-credit Bearing Online Courses for External Release (including Massive Open Online Courses, MOOCs)

Course proposers must design and plan courses in consultation with Information Services Group, taking account of resourcing and establishing an appropriate timeframe.

Course proposers must complete documentation which includes course aims, purpose and estimates of teaching support required for each course instance. Course documentation must be signed off by the appropriate Head(s) of School to provide confirmation that adequate resources are in place for delivery. Applications must include a letter of support from the relevant strategy owner (usually an Assistant or Vice Principal) and proposals should clearly link to the University Strategy 2030.

Academic aspects of the course are considered by the appropriate Board(s) of Studies for approval. Timely consideration by the Board may be required to meet the established timeframe for release.

For Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) only: a MOOC proposal form [Submit a MOOC Proposal | The University of Edinburgh](#) is also required for any new MOOC. The proposal form and course documentation is considered by the MOOC Strategy Group who must be assured that the School has adequate resources in place for the creation and delivery of the course, that adequate risk analysis has been carried out and that the relevant statutory requirements are met. The MOOC Strategy Group is authorised to trigger the release of the course, once all course materials have been developed and the appropriate Board(s) of Studies has approved the academic aspects of the course.

Non-credit Bearing Continuing Professional Development Courses

Boards of Studies are responsible for considering and approving proposals for new or revised non-credit bearing continuing professional development courses. Proposals should detail the course aims, purpose and resourcing requirements as a minimum.

Programme and Course Management – Responsibilities

Programmes

The Head of College is formally responsible for degree programmes. Within this overall responsibility each programme, and course within it, is owned by a particular School which ensures its management. The Head of School or Director of Teaching delegates responsibility for the management of a degree programme to a Programme Co-ordinator or Director (or equivalent).

Courses

Course Organisers are responsible for individual courses within a School. The Head of School or Director of Teaching appoints Course Organisers to take responsibility for individual courses. The scope of the Course Organiser's remit varies according to local School organisation, but in outline the Course Organiser is responsible for:

- general course management
- assessment and feedback
- advising and supporting students on course-related matters
- monitoring and reviewing courses
- agreeing minor changes to courses

[Course Organiser: Outline of Role](#)

Staff Support and Development

Training and support is available for those involved in programme and course design, development, approval, changes, and closure from the [Institute for Academic Development](#).

256 May 20232

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

25 May 2023

Programme and Course Handbooks Policy Update

Description of paper

1. Presents minor updates to the Programme and Course Handbooks Policy.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval.

Background and context

3. Academic Services conduct cyclical reviews of policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose. This Policy is reviewed annual to ensure that information remains up-to-date.

Discussion

4. Only essential updates were sought from content owners, for example, to correct factual inaccuracies, broken links, and/or to align with changes to other policies or external requirements. Minor changes have been made to the Policy marked in tracked changes.
5. The Committee is asked to approve the minor changes to the Policy.

Resource implications

6. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed minor amendments to the Policy.

Risk management

7. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

8. Not applicable.

Equality & diversity

9. None identified, no proposed change in policy or procedure.

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

10. Academic Services will communicate changes in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies.

Author

Nichola Kett, Academic Services

Presenter

Dr Kate Nicol, Academic Services

Freedom of Information

The paper is open.



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Purpose of Policy

To confirm the status, purpose and core content of programme and course handbooks.

Overview

The main aim of this policy is to ensure that students know where to find particular information on their programmes and courses through the provision of core content in handbooks. Programme and course handbooks are part of the academic governance framework of the University. Additionally, there are external requirements in relation to the provision of information for students that the University must follow.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

This policy applies to all staff who are producing programme and course handbooks and applies to both taught and research programmes.

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Document control

Dates	Approved:	Starts:	Equality impact assessment:	Amendments:	Next Review:
	14.04.16	01.08.16	25.05.15	25.05.23	2023/2024

Approving authority

Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

Section responsible for policy maintenance & review

Academic Services

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

[Creating Accessible Handbooks Guidance](#)

Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.

Keywords

Programme, course, handbook



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Status of Programme and Course Handbooks

Programme and course handbooks are part of the academic governance framework of the University and are referenced in the Degree Programme Regulations. Therefore, as well as providing information for students on their programme and courses, they can be used to stipulate requirements. Once approved and published, the details set out in programme and course handbooks must be adhered to by students and staff for the academic session to which it applies.

A **programme** of study is the sum of all the elements leading to a defined graduating curriculum. A **course** is a unit of teaching and learning formally offered within the University, which carries credit expressed in credit points and which may contribute to a University award.¹

Requirements

It is the responsibility of Schools to determine how best to provide students with programme and course information. The “home” School must ensure that students are provided with all the necessary information to cover their programme and courses (of particular importance for joint awards). Additionally, consideration should be given to ensuring that students who are taking outside courses are provided with all necessary information. It is not a requirement that handbooks are created for all programmes and courses, but students must be provided with the core content detailed below using an appropriate combination of programme and course handbooks. It is of particular importance that formal agreed assessment and feedback activities (as detailed in the course descriptor) and any related requirements are explicitly communicated in written form at the outset of each programme or course. This does not preclude additional formative assessment and feedback opportunities.

Other types of handbooks are not part of the academic governance framework of the University and are not required to adhere to this policy. Additionally, other types of handbooks (e.g. School or year level handbooks) should not contain any regulatory or academic compliance requirements.

Programme or course handbooks do not need to be physical documents. It may be that information is held on a website, wiki or virtual learning environment and forms the equivalent of a programme or course handbook. Students should be made aware of which form(s) of media their course and/or programme handbooks are held. This policy applies to all forms of media.

The [Creating Accessible Handbooks guidance](#) should be followed for programme and course handbooks. There are no other design requirements in relation to programme and course handbooks.

The core content listed below must be included in programme and course handbooks and can be presented in any order. Core content can be supplemented with any other information the School wishes to provide.

Where information is owned and maintained by another area, links should be provided rather than cutting and pasting it into handbooks. This approach aims to reduce the risk of misinforming students and also to reduce the time taken by staff to produce handbooks. Particular examples include course and programme information on the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS) and academic regulations, policies and guidance.

¹ [University Glossary of Terms](#)



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Programme and course handbook content must align with the information on the DRPS (including the Degree Programme Specification, the Degree Programme Table and the course descriptor) which forms the definitive record of programme and course information.

Final versions of programme and course handbooks must be made available to students at the start of a programme or course. The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy requires reading lists (at minimum indicative core texts) be made available at least four weeks before the start of the course (with additional reading that indicates priority/relevance provided nearer to the start date of the course). Therefore, if reading lists are only contained within handbooks, these need to be made available to students within this timeframe. Arrangements should be made to provide handbooks in an alternative format upon request.

Approval Process

Boards of Studies have responsibility for the formal oversight of programme and course handbooks. In practice the approval of handbooks can be delegated to members of staff within a School as part of an approvals process that ensures accuracy of information and all handbooks are approved prior to the commencement of a course or programme. Boards of Studies need to have formal oversight of the approvals process and would be expected to record that handbooks had been approved at the relevant Board of Studies meeting.

Changes

Exceptionally, changes may need to be made to a programme or course handbook after publication. In this case, all students who are affected by the change must be informed as soon as possible. Changes which differ from the approved programme and course information in the DRPS (including the statement of assessment) are not permitted.

Purpose

Programme Handbooks

- A source of information and guidance for students on a specific programme or group of programmes.
- Work in conjunction with degree programme tables, degree programme specifications, degree programme regulations, and assessment regulations to provide students with all the information they require for their studies.
- A collection of information and “signposts” to information that exists elsewhere.
- Contain core content.
- An information resource for staff, external examiners, and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

Course Handbooks

- A source of information and guidance for students on a specific course or group of courses.
- Work in conjunction with the course descriptor to provide students with all the information they require for a specific course.
- A collection of information and “signposts” to information that exists elsewhere.
- Contain core content.



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

- An information resource for staff, external examiners, and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

Core Content

Core Content	Description/further information		Reference/Source
Session that the Handbook applies to	State the session that the handbook applies to and make it clear that the University may make changes to the course / programme for future sessions.		
Organisation (for accessibility)	Contents page Glossary ² Standard text (in Arial 14 bold): "If you require this document or any of the internal University Of Edinburgh online resources mentioned in this document in an alternative format please contact [name and contact details]" It is good practice to provide two methods of contact e.g. phone number and email or email and postal address		
Details	Programme Name, date of publication	Course Name, code, level and credits, date of publication	Path Course descriptor in the DRPS
Overview*	Programme Structure and core courses, aims, learning outcomes and graduate attributes	Course Timeline of activities: lectures; tutorials; laboratories; placements; syllabus; learning outcomes	Degree Programme Tables and Degree Programme Specifications in the DRPS Course descriptor in the DRPS
Assessment and feedback information[^]	To include: submission and feedback deadlines, extensions procedures, late penalties, word count, submission procedures, dissertation (or equivalent) arrangements (including supervision), information on good academic practice, and exam diet dates		Statement of Assessment in Taught Assessment Regulations

² Can assist with the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy requirement: Key technical words and/or formulae shall be provided to students at least 24 hours in advance of the class.



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
PGT handbooks only Dissertation or research project supervision	<p>Standard text: “The dissertation/research project is an independent piece of work. You will be allocated a supervisor, who will provide you with advice and guidance in relation to the dissertation/research project, but you should remember that the sole responsibility for the academic quality of your dissertation/research project lies with you. You should research and develop your own ideas, and discuss your proposed approaches with your supervisor. Feedback you receive from your supervisor is intended as guidance, and must not be interpreted as an indication that your work will receive a particular final mark/outcome.</p> <p>You may be allocated a supervisor whose area of expertise is not a precise match for your chosen area of research, but who has the required expertise to supervise a dissertation/research project. All supervisors are experienced and knowledgeable regarding academic writing.”</p> <p>Provide information regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected timelines relating to supervision, e.g. when supervision starts and ends; • The number of meetings students can expect with their supervisor; • Expectations regarding email contact with the supervisor; • How many draft chapters the supervisor will review and comment upon; • Whom students should contact if they experience problems with their supervision. 	
Referencing guidance	Add referencing guidance	
Marking scheme[^]		Extended Common Marking Scheme
Prioritised reading list^{3^}	<p>Or learning resources</p> <p>It is a requirement of the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy that reading lists shall indicate priority and/or relevance.</p>	Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy
Contacts	<p>Key programme staff contact details</p> <p>It is good practice to provide two methods of contact e.g. phone number and email or email and postal address</p>	
Dates⁺	Important dates not detailed elsewhere (including timescales for online distance learning students)	
Timetable[^]	Link to student-facing timetabling service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Timetable • Course Timetable Browser

³ Please note the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy requirement: Course outlines and reading lists shall be made available at least 4 weeks before the start of the course. Reading lists at this stage may focus on the core texts only (where they are used). Additional reading may be provided nearer to the start date of the course.



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Lecture recording	If the course involves lectures, inform students which of their lectures will be recorded or not. An appropriate explanation should be provided to students where a lecture will not be recorded.	Lecture Recording Policy Virtual Classroom Policy
Key locations	Teaching Office, laboratories, online environments (VLE, etc.), etc.	
Progression requirements and award criteria		Degree Programme Regulations in the DRPS
“Local” requirements+	College, School, programme, or course-specific requirements	
Attendance requirements	Please note there are particular requirements for UKVI sponsored students: Schools should ensure that students are made aware of their attendance, engagement and on-campus obligations. Handbooks should include this information, together with guidance on how all students should submit requests for absences (special circumstances, interruptions of study, leave of absence, etc.). Immigration information for staff	Student Immigration Service
Reference to relevant University regulations	Add links to University regulations, policies and procedures	Academic Regulations Complaints Handling Procedure Academic Appeals Academic Misconduct (including plagiarism) Special Circumstances Dignity and Respect For general information on rules, regulations and policies: Student Contract webpage
Student Support	Including what happens when things go wrong	For students who have a Student Advisor: information on the new Student Support model Academic Life and Student Support Statements For students who have a Personal Tutor: School Personal Tutoring Statements



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Student Wellbeing	<p>Standard text: “As with all transitions in life studying at university can be both exciting and challenging. <u>W</u>—whether it is your first time at university or you are returning to higher education, and whether you have a pre-existing mental health condition or not, it is important to look after yourself. University <u>life</u> can be busy and stressful at times, this can in turn cause our state of wellbeing to fluctuate. We all have strategies for coping with life and it is important to continue using and revising these skills, to help support and maintain your wellbeing, which This is crucial to allow you to experience a positive and happy university journey. The University provides a range of <u>support</u>, evidence-based resources, <u>and</u> workshops and support which are available to you. These are provided by a number of different services, including the Centre for Sport and Exercise, Chaplaincy, Student Counselling, <u>& Disability and Learning Support Services</u>, <u>the Student Wellbeing Service</u>, <u>the Institute for Academic Development</u>, <u>the Equally Safe team</u>, <u>Report + Support platform</u> and the Edinburgh University Students' Association. We also have the Student Wellbeing Service which will provide wellbeing support, the Equally Safe team to provide support for survivors of gender based violence, and our online reporting platform Report + Support.”</p>	<p>Health and wellbeing student webpages</p>
Student Feedback	<p>Detail the opportunities available for students to provide feedback on their experiences and how they will be informed of action taken in response to feedback provided</p>	<p>Student Voice Policy</p>
Student representative structure	<p>Standard text: “Student representatives – both Programme and Elected Representatives – work closely with staff to ensure your voice is heard on the issues that matter to you, from teaching and learning, to student support, key services, and your sense of belonging to the University community. Throughout the year, representatives will gather feedback from you, share that feedback with relevant staff and other student representatives including the five full-time Sabbatical Officers, and work to enhance your student experience. Your School will facilitate communication between you and your representatives, in-line with this guidance. Student representatives are trained and supported by staff within the Students' Association.”</p> <p>Include the name only of the School Representative(s) as appropriate.</p>	<p>Students' Association Your Voice</p>



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Peer Support+	<p>Standard text (edit as appropriate to course/programme): “Peer Learning and Support in the context of the University means a student with more experience sharing their knowledge, skills, abilities and expertise with a new or less experienced student. Peer Learning and Support Schemes may focus around advancing your academic work, providing 1-2-1 mentoring, or opportunities to socialise with other students within your School or offering additional support to ensure your wellbeing while at University. The Students’ Association, in partnership with Schools and University Services, provide some of these opportunities, facilitated by trained student volunteers, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level of study at Edinburgh. Other peer support opportunities are also provided by the University. Peer Assisted Learning Schemes (more commonly known as PALS), involve trained volunteers in second year and above who plan and facilitate structured study sessions for other students. These academic sessions cover a variety of topics, including settling into university life, study skills, course content, module choices, assessment and the skills students need to excel in their degrees. Peer Support Schemes (e.g. academic families, buddies, clans or similar) aim to building a sense of community for students, enhance student well-being and enrich the university experience. Peer Support Schemes are based on a model where higher year’s students plan and run regular sessions to foster a sense of community and belonging through the integration of the year groups. Sessions can vary depending on the Scheme, but sessions usually have a specific well-being or academic focus, while others provide more social opportunities to facilitate meeting new people. Peer Mentoring Schemes are a form of peer support that take place in a 1-2-1 environment, whether this is in person or online. Peer Mentoring Schemes usually have a pastoral/welfare or academic focus, however we do also have some identity based Schemes available for example our LGBTQ+ Peer Mentoring Scheme.”</p> <p>Detail available Peer Support opportunities</p>	<p>Peer Learning and Support</p> <p>Peer Learning and Support schemes</p>
Reference to University and Students’ Association Support Services	Provide information via the thematic student website	<p>Students Students’ Association – Advice Place</p> <p>Link to Support and professional services A to Z of University Student Services</p>



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Accreditation to external bodies, discipline-specific career/industry information+	Detail here as appropriate	
Name, position and institution of External Examiner(s)^	Where an External Examiner is appointed to fulfil a role on behalf of a professional body, this will also be stated. Students must be informed in the handbook that they must not make direct contact with External Examiners, and that other routes exist for queries about the assessment process.	External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy
Health and safety	<p>Standard text: “The University has a duty, so far as reasonably practicable, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees and students while at work, and the safety of all authorised visitors and members of the public entering the precincts of the University. The University Health and Safety Policy is issued upon the authority of the University Court and contains the Health and Safety Policy statement and summary of the organisation and arrangements of health and safety within the University. The successful implementation of the University Policy requires the support and co-operation of all employees and students - no person shall intentionally interfere with, or misuse anything provided by the University in the interest of health, safety or welfare.</p> <p>The University Health and Safety Policy The University Health and Safety Policy is supported by a Framework document published in two parts on the Organisation and Arrangements of health and safety within the University. Individuals are required to comply with any procedures or arrangements formulated under the authority of this Policy. Any questions or problems about matters of health and safety can be taken up initially with the School Safety Adviser. Further guidance on health and safety matters can be found on the Health and Safety Department website at http://www.ed.ac.uk/health-safety including contact details for all professional staff within the corporate Health and Safety Department.”</p> <p>Provide information on local health and safety arrangements (including for online distance learning students).</p>	Health and Safety Policy



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Data Protection <u>Ye</u>	<p>Standard text: “Under Data Protection Law, personal data includes all information about a living, identifiable individual. Students using personal data as part of their studies must comply with the University's data protection policy and the related responsibilities as outlined in the linked guidance. Before using personal data as part of their studies students must become familiar with the linked guidance, discuss implications with their supervisor and seek appropriate ethics approval. They must also obtain consent from the data subjects to take part in the studies. Failure to comply with the responsibilities under the policy is an offence against University discipline. A breach of the University policy can cause distress to the people the information is about, and can harm relationships with research partners, stakeholders, and funding organisations. In severe circumstances the University could be sued, fined up to £20,000,000, and experience reputational damage.”</p> <p>Provide information on local data protection arrangements (including for online distance learning students).</p>	Student responsibilities when using personal data
<i>PGR handbooks only</i>		
Supervision	Information on supervisory arrangements and expectations, including annual progression review.	
Thesis (or equivalent) requirements	To include local context on expected thesis length	
Training and development	To cover: research culture; professional development; research skills training; and teaching.	Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators
Code of Practice	Provide a link to the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students	Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students

+ If applicable

* As applicable for research programmes

^ Taught programmes only

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**25 May 2023****Proposed Regulation, Policy and Procedure Changes related to
Implementation of Student Support Model****Description of paper**

Submitting draft proposed Student Support Project related changes for APRC **review and approval** on the following regulations and policies in May 2023 APRC meeting:

Policies

- a) Special Circumstances Policy
- b) Student Maternity and Family Leave Policy
- c) Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy
- d) Shared Academic Timetabling Policy

Action requested / recommendation

1. Review proposed minor changes to the 4 policies documents, identified in the "APRC May 2023 - Appendix to Student Support Policies", as appropriate for each document so committee can approve proposed changes.
2. Minor changes to the Taught Assessment Regulations and Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures have been incorporated into the relevant documents presented to the May meeting of APRC.

Background and context

3. Court and the University Executive have approved the full implementation of the new student support from 2023-24, following the first phase in 2022-23.
4. The Student Support model is being introduced through a phased approach, with some students moved to the new model of support in September 2022 and the remaining coming on board for September 2023.
5. The Project Board has kept Senate, the Senate Education Committee, and the Senate Quality Assurance Committee, informed of the direction of travel. At its meeting in May 2023, SEC will consider the formal policy framework for the new model (to replace the current Academic and Pastoral Support Policy), and SQAC is feeding into the monitoring and evaluation framework.
6. In May 2022, APRC approved a set of technical changes to a range of policies and regulations in order to incorporate the new model for 2022-23 (primarily by inserting references to Student Advisers alongside Personal Tutors), and we are now inviting it to approve a second phase of consequential amendments to remove references to Personal Tutors (who will no longer exist in 23-24).
7. The majority of policies have been updated to include reference to the new support roles of Student Adviser or Wellbeing Adviser and the new academic role of Cohort Lead or Student Support Teams, or to remove reference to Personal Tutors.

Discussion

8. The “APRC May 2023 - Appendix to Student Support Policy” document highlights all proposed changes in associated policy documents.

Resource implications

9. N/A - While implementation of the model requires resources, the policy changes do not in themselves add any further resource requirements

Risk management

10. Provides regulatory framework for Schools/Deaneries to base processes and ways of working, in line with the implementation of the new model of student support and guidance that will be provided by the Project Team. Responsibility for implementation of the policies will lie within the Colleges and Schools/Deaneries.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

11. N/A

Equality & diversity

12. The proposed changes do not directly affect EDI considerations. However, these policy changes are prerequisites for full implementation of the model of Student Support, which will enhance student experience, including EDI considerations when students are seeking support.

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

13. Academic Services will also include these changes in their annual updates on policies and regulations, and related newsletter.
14. Responsibility for implementation of the policies will lie within the College and Schools/Deaneries Evaluation of the model is ongoing through local quality assurances and by the Student Analytics service.

Author

Rosie Edwards (Senior Design Lead)

18 May 2023

Presenter

Freedom of Information – *Open*

Appendix covering:

- APRC May 2023 - Appendix to Student Support Policy

APRC May 2023 - Appendix to Student Support Policies Cover Sheet

Policies

1. Special Circumstances Policy
2. Student Maternity and Family Leave Policy
3. Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy
4. Shared Academic Timetabling Policy

1. Special Circumstances Policy

- 3 sections changed (and noted other change required not result of student support model implementation)

Section 3.2 - In their application, students should describe the circumstances, state when the circumstances affected them, and all assessments and courses affected. Students should ensure that they provide sufficient documentary evidence (see Section 6 below). It is advised that students consult their **Student Advisers, Personal Tutors, Programme Directors** or Student Support Team when completing the application.

Section 6.2 - “Greater weight” subsection; 3rd bullet point - Written accounts from University staff who have directly witnessed the circumstances, or their impact on the student’s wellbeing or ability to perform in assessment, **e.g. Student Advisers, Wellbeing Advisers, Personal Tutors, Student Support Officers**, Residence Life Wardens;

Section 12.1 - The ESC service will notify students of the decision regarding whether or not their special circumstances application has been accepted using the online system within five working days. The School will notify students of any action taken by the Board of Examiners in relation to their special circumstances application using the online system no later than five working days after the publication of ratified marks as noted in the University Key Dates. The School will also inform the student’s Student Adviser/**Personal Tutor** of the decision.

SDS – Throughout policy, references to Student Disability Service (SDS) should be amended to Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS). Occurrences in section 5

2. Student Maternity and Family Leave Policy

- 9 sections changed (and noted other change required not result of student support model implementation)

Section 2 - Any student or applicant who has their pregnancy confirmed by a GP or midwife, is to become a parent or guardian, or is to adopt a child, is encouraged to report this to their **Student Adviser, Personal Tutor**, Postgraduate Director, Research Supervisor, School Student Support Office or person nominated by their School so that they can provide appropriate academic advice.

Section 5 - The student will meet with their **Student Adviser, Personal Tutor**, Postgraduate Director, Research Supervisor or person nominated by their School where the following issues should be addressed:

- Whether an authorised interruption of studies will be required and, if so, for how long (an interruption would not normally exceed one academic year);
- If assessments are pending, whether the student is fit to attempt the assessments, and;
- Any time off or possible modifications to attendance that might be required so that the student can attend medical appointments or antenatal classes;
- Any relevant health and safety issues (see section 11)

Section 7 - A written record of the agreed adjustments should be produced and retained by the **Student Adviser, Personal Tutor** or Research Supervisor, student and the relevant administrator with responsibility for the student's programme of study.

Section 8 – **Student Adviser/Personal Tutors** or Research Supervisors would not be responsible for granting interruption of studies to Postgraduate Students. In these instances, the normal interruption of studies procedure for Postgraduate Students should be followed.

Section 9 - Where a student intends to take an interruption of studies, the **Student Adviser, Personal Tutor**, Postgraduate Director, or Research supervisor will discuss with the student any steps which may be taken to support a smooth return to study following the period of interruption. This may include offering advice on self-guided study where the student requests this, and discussing what academic support will be offered on the student's return to study.

Section 10 - Where a student has their pregnancy confirmed whilst studying abroad, they are encouraged to contact their **Student Adviser, Personal Tutor**, Postgraduate Director, Research Supervisor or person nominated by their School to ensure that adequate steps are taken to make necessary adjustments.

Section 11 - Where a student informs the University of their pregnancy, there are health and safety issues that the University must take into consideration in order to protect the mother and unborn baby:

- The **Student Adviser, Personal Tutor**, Postgraduate Director, Research Supervisor or person nominated by the School must ensure that the relevant health and safety staff within the School/College are informed so that, where necessary, a risk assessment can be carried out; the risk assessment will take account of the requirements for the student's programme of study and determine whether any adjustments need to be made;
- If the student is resident in University accommodation whilst pregnant, in order for appropriate adjustments to be made, informing Accommodation Services of their pregnancy can ensure that the accommodation provided to the student is appropriate;

- Accommodation Services consider a student who has given birth to a child to have 'Exceptional Circumstances', and as such would seek to re-house a student staying in unsuitable University accommodation to a more suitable arrangement. Should this prove impossible, the student will be released from their lease and will not incur any penalties for non-fulfilment of the term of the lease, in order that the student may move to or seek other more suitable accommodation;
- If the student requires, **the Student Adviser, Personal Tutor,** Postgraduate Supervisor or person nominated by their School will advise on appropriate adjustments and provisions to allow the student to breastfeed or express milk. The University must provide space to accommodate breastfeeding.

Section 13 - The student will be responsible for confirming that they are ready to resume their studies at the end of their agreed period of interruption. They should inform their **Student Adviser, Personal Tutor,** Postgraduate Director, or Research Supervisor that they are to return so that the appropriate arrangements can be made in terms of course enrolments, etc.

Section 14 - Directly before, or as soon as practical after their return, the student should meet with their **Student Adviser, Personal Tutor,** Postgraduate Director, or Research Supervisor to ensure that appropriate academic support is provided, and any necessary adjustments are made to facilitate a smooth return to their programme of study. Students are reminded that it is not permitted to bring children into classes.

Tier 4 – Throughout policy, references to Tier 4 Visa should be amended to Student Visa. Multiple occurrences in Sections 24 and 25

3. Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy

- 2 sections changed (and noted other change required not result of student support model implementation)

Section 14 - Unless there is progression to a further stage of a programme, Progression Boards are not held after the semester 1 examination diet. Schools need to have mechanisms to identify students for whom failure in semester 1 courses place them at risk of failure to progress irrespective of the student's performance in semester 2. Follow-up action can then be taken forward by **Student Advisers Personal Tutors** and others.

Section 18 - Where a student cannot progress to the next stage of study for their current degree programme, and when they can progress but still need to meet additional requirements, for example taking additional credit in the following year, Schools will have arrangements to consider how the student should proceed. This could include a meeting between the student and **Student Adviser Personal Tutor or Senior Tutor or relevant academic lead.** Schools will include information about their

process for this on their website. Some options, e.g. transfer to another degree programme, require approval by the appropriate authority specified in the degree regulations.

4. Shared Academic Timetabling Policy

- 1 section changed

Appendix 1 - Subsection: Students

Student responsibilities include:

- Providing details of accessibility requirements as soon as possible. If a student is being supported by the Student Disability Service, these may be communicated via the student's learning profile. The School and the Coordinator of Adjustments have associated responsibilities;
- Reviewing their published learning and taught timetable as soon as possible and alerting their **Personal Tutor/Student Adviser** to review course registrations;
- Adhering to centrally defined procedures for requesting a change to a timetable allocation;
- Making appropriate use of any student study spaces bookable through the shared timetabling system.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

25 May 2023

Provisional Academic Year Dates 2026/27

Description of paper

1. This paper provides the revised provisional academic year dates 2026/27 for Committee approval (see Appendix 1).

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is invited to approve the revised provisional academic year dates for 2026/27.

Background and context

3. The academic year dates are presented to APRC annually for approval.
4. At its January 2023 meeting, APRC approved the proposed academic year dates for 2024/25 and provisional academic year dates for 2025/26 and 2026/27 noting that the dates for 2026/27 may be returned to the Committee pending a response from ResLife.

Discussion

5. APRC received the provisional dates for 2026/27 at its January 2023 meeting. The Committee noted that the calendar for 2026/27 meant that Induction Week would be scheduled earlier than in previous years and close to the end of the Edinburgh Festival. Academic Services contacted ResLife to confirm if there is sufficient time between the end of the Edinburgh Festival and before Induction Week however confirmation was not received in time for APRC's January meeting and Academic Services agreed to update APRC and return the 2026/27 dates if the provisional schedule was problematic.
6. ResLife confirmed that the 2026/27 provisional dates presented would not allow sufficient time for ResLife to prepare for Induction following the end of the Edinburgh Festival and the dates should be revised and Induction to take place in the week commencing 14 September 2026.
7. The December exam period requires a minimum of 11 days be allocated to the December exam diet (including Saturdays) and that the diet conclude by 21 December.
8. As a consequence of the later Induction Week and due to the scheduling constraints associated with the December exam diet, the Revision period in December 2026 will be reduced to 2 days. This aligns with the approach taken in 2015 when the calendar followed the same structure except that the 2015 exam diet only required 10 days and therefore 3 revision days were possible.
9. The academic year dates are drafted following the academic structure approved by Senate and published at [Academic year structure](#).

Resource implications

10. No resource implications

Risk management

11. The reduction of the revision period to 2 days may present a risk to the student experience. It is recommended that the Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group be asked to consider what mitigation may be necessary.

Equality and diversity

12. It is recommended that the Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group give consideration to whether the reduced revision period represents specific risks to specific student groups and what mitigation may be necessary.

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

13. The information will be conveyed to Communications and Marketing who will re-format and formally publish at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/semester-dates>

Author

Olivia Hayes
Academic Policy Officer
Academic Services
May 2023

Freedom of Information Open

Appendix 1: Provisional Academic Year Dates 2026/27

1	14-Sep-26	Induction
2	21-Sep-26	T1
3	28-Sep-26	T2
4	05-Oct-26	T3
5	12-Oct-26	T4
6	19-Oct-26	T5
7	26-Oct-26	T6
8	02-Nov-26	T7
9	09-Nov-26	T8
10	16-Nov-26	T9
11	23-Nov-26	T10
12	30-Nov-26	T11
13	07-Dec-26	Revision
14	09-Dec-26	Exams
15	21-Dec-26	Exams
16	28-Dec-26	Winter vac 1
17	04-Jan-27	Winter vac 2
18	11-Jan-27	Winter vac 3
19	18-Jan-27	T1
20	25-Jan-27	T2
21	01-Feb-27	T3
22	08-Feb-27	T4
23	15-Feb-27	T5
24	22-Feb-27	Flexible Learning Week
25	01-Mar-27	T6
26	08-Mar-27	T7
27	15-Mar-27	T8
28	22-Mar-27	T9
29	29-Mar-27	T10
30	05-Apr-27	T11
31	12-Apr-27	Spring vac 1
32	19-Apr-27	Spring vac 2
33	26-Apr-27	Revision
34	03-May-27	Exams
35	10-May-27	Exams
36	17-May-27	Exams
37	24-May-27	Exams
38	31-May-27	Summer vac 1
39	07-Jun-27	Summer vac 2
40	14-Jun-27	Summer vac 3
41	21-Jun-27	Summer vac 4
42	28-Jun-27	Summer vac 5
43	05-Jul-27	Summer vac 6
44	12-Jul-27	Summer vac 7
45	19-Jul-27	Summer vac 8
46	26-Jul-27	Summer vac 9
47	02-Aug-27	Summer vac 10
48	09-Aug-27	Summer vac 11
49	16-Aug-27	Summer vac 12
50	23-Aug-27	Summer vac 13
51	30-Aug-27	Summer vac 14
52	06-Sep-27	Summer vac 15

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

25 May 2023

Student Discipline Committee 2022/23

Description of paper

1. This paper contains nominations for new student members of the Student Discipline Committee, following the departure of a number of student members upon completion of their studies.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval

Background and context

3. The Student Discipline Committee membership is approved by APRC on behalf of Senate, in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct.
4. The nominations within this paper are for new student members of the Committee. There are a number of continuing student members who remain on the Committee.
5. The Student Discipline Committee membership can be found at: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/discipline-committee

Discussion

6. All six nominated persons are current students of the University and have been recommended by the Students' Association following an online recruitment process. Applications were invited from Programme and Elected Representatives.
7. If the nominations are approved, then the new members will be contacted by the Student Conduct Team (with all new student members expected to be in place from 31 May 2023, for the remainder of the 2022/23 academic year).
8. The nominated students are:

Name	College	Current role
Andrew Chen	CAHSS	Economics with Finance Course representative
Richard Zhang	CAHSS	MA Finance and Business Programme Representative
Jamie Harnett	CSE	Mechanical Engineering Programme Representative
Saumya Jindal	CSE	Ecology and Environmental Sciences with Management Course Representative
Navi Johal	CMVM	Critical Care Programme Representative
Haolan Tu	CMVM	PhD Precision Medicine Programme Representative

Resource implications

9. There are resource implications for the Student Conduct Team with regard to recruitment and training of new members.

Risk management

10. The Student Discipline Committee is a key element of the University student conduct process and supports the University in meeting legislative responsibilities to manage University discipline. Approving new student members of the Student Discipline Committee enables the Committee to carry out its role under the Code of Student Conduct.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

11. Not applicable.

Equality & diversity

12. In advertising the opportunity to students and making nominations, we asked the Students' Association to take into consideration the value of diversity among committee members.

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

13. The Student Discipline Committee membership will be updated and contact made with the new members to invite them to relevant training www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/discipline-committee

Author

Student Conduct Team
15 May 2023

Freedom of Information

The paper is open.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

25 May 2023

APRC Membership and Terms of Reference

Description of paper

1. Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) Membership and Terms of Reference for 2023/24

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Membership and Terms of Reference are presented to APRC to note.

Background and context

3. The membership for APRC is presented to Senate annually for approval. Due to the timing of the May Senate and APRC meetings, Senate receive the draft membership subject to any amendments following APRC's May meeting. Any amendments to the membership are reported to Senate at the next Ordinary meeting, usually held in October.
4. Senate Standing Committees report to Senate annually. These committees feed into and out of College level committees (Undergraduate Education, Postgraduate Education, Quality Assurance) and specialist Support Services (the Institute for Academic Development, Careers Service, Student Recruitment and Admissions, Student Systems) via committee membership. Therefore, a number of committee roles are ex officio, to ensure that committee members have the appropriate knowledge, expertise, responsibility and accountability to fulfil the committee remit. All committees include student representation.
5. In October 2022, Senate agreed to expand the membership of each Standing Committee to include three elected Senate members. An election is held annually in February/March to fill the three positions.
6. University staff who are not included in APRC's membership may have opportunities to contribute to the work of these committees as co-opted members or as members of working groups. The membership of groups are formulated based on the expertise required and following approval from the relevant Standing Committee responsible for setting up the Group.
7. The wider Senate membership are notified via email when papers for Senate Standing Committees are published online. Senate members are invited to provide comments or feedback on Standing Committee business with either elected Senate representatives, or in their absence their College representative or the Standing Committee Convener.

Discussion

8. The draft Committee membership for Senate Academic and Policy Regulations Committee (APRC) will be presented to Senate at its meeting on 24 May 2023. The membership of APRC, including the election of the Convener and Vice-

Convener, will be confirmed at the final meeting of APRC on 25 May 2023, in line with 4.1 of the Terms of Reference.

9. Changes to membership to take effect from 1 August 2023 are marked in yellow.
10. The APRC webpages will be updated with membership once all positions are confirmed.
11. The APRC Terms of Reference remain unchanged and are published on the Academic Services website: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/academic-policy-regulations/terms-reference>

Resource implications

12. No amendments with resource implications are proposed.

Risk management

13. Effective academic governance assists the University in managing risk associated with its academic activities.

Equality & diversity

14. The composition of the Senate Committees is largely determined according to defined role-holders (e.g. defined Assistant or Vice-Principal, Director of a defined Support Service or delegate) or as representatives of particular stakeholders (e.g. a College or the Students' Association). The membership of APRC is therefore largely a consequence of decisions taken elsewhere to appoint individuals to particular roles. Ensuring that appointment processes support a diverse staff body is part of the broader responsibility of the University.

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

15. The APRC's Membership and Terms of Reference are communicated via the Academic Services website: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/academic-policy-regulations>
16. Senate Standing Committees are subject to an annual internal review process, and this is reported annually to Senate.

Authors

Olivia Hayes
Academic Policy Officer
May 2023

Freedom of Information

Open

**The University of Edinburgh
Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee
Terms of Reference**

1. Purpose and Role

1.1. The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee is responsible, on behalf of Senate, for the University's framework of academic policy and regulation, apart from those aspects which are primarily parts of the Quality Assurance Framework.

2. Remit

2.1. Oversee the development, maintenance and implementation of an academic regulatory framework which effectively supports and underpins the University's educational activities.

2.2. Ensure that the academic regulatory framework continues to evolve in order to meet organisational needs and is responsive to changes in University strategy, and in the internal and external environments.

2.3. Scrutinise and approve proposals for new or revised academic policy or regulation, ensuring that policy and regulation is only introduced where it is necessary, and that all policy and regulation is suitably accessible to its intended audience.

2.4. Act with delegated authority from the Senate on matters of student conduct and discipline.

2.5. In taking forward its remit, the Committee will seek consistency and common approaches while supporting and encouraging variation where this is beneficial, particularly if it is in the best interests of students.

2.6. Consider the implications of the Committee's work and its decisions in the context of external initiatives and compliance and legal frameworks, particularly in relation to equality and diversity.

3. Operation

3.1. The Committee reports to Senate, acting with delegated authority to take decisions regarding the regulatory framework for the University's educational activities.

3.2. The Committee may bring matters to the attention of the University Executive as required.

3.3. The Committee will meet at least four times each academic year and will interact electronically, as necessary.

3.4. The Committee will follow a schedule of business set prior to the start of the academic year and which is agreed through consultation with Senate, the Conveners of the other Senate Committees, and other relevant members of the community.

- 3.5. The Convener, or Vice-Convener will have delegated authority, on behalf of the Committee, to make decisions on student concession cases, and this business may be conducted electronically where appropriate.
- 3.6. From time to time, the Committee will establish working groups or commission individuals to carry out detailed work under the Committee's oversight.

4. Composition

Role	Term	2022/23 membership
3 x senior staff members from each College with responsibility for academic governance and regulation, and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience at all levels		<p>Dr Emily Taylor, Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Validation (CAHSS)</p> <p>Dr Jeremy Crang, Dean of Students (CAHSS)</p> <p>Rachael Quirk, Head of Taught Student Administration and Support (CAHSS)</p> <p>Professor Tim Stratford, Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE)</p> <p>Stephen Warrington, Dean of Student Experience (CSE)</p> <p>Alexandra Laidlaw, Head of Academic Affairs (CSE)</p> <p>Professor Jamie Davies, Dean of Taught Education (CMVM)</p> <p>Dr Deborah Shaw, Dean of Students (CMVM)</p> <p>Philippa Burrell, Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)</p>
1 x senior staff member from each College with responsibility for postgraduate research		<p>Kirsty Woomble, Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)</p> <p>Dr Antony Maciocia, Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE)</p> <p>Dr Paddy Hadoke, Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM)</p>
1 x Edinburgh University Students' Association sabbatical officer	Ex Officio	Carl Harper, Vice-President, Education
1 x member of the Edinburgh University Students' Association permanent staff		<p>This role is shared between:</p> <p>Charlotte Macdonald, Advice Place Manager, Students' Association</p>

		Clair Halliday, Advice Place Deputy Manager, Students' Association
1 x member of staff from Student Systems and Administration	Ex Officio	Lisa Dawson, Academic Registrar, Registry Services
1 x member of staff from the Institute for Academic development		Dr Donna Murray, Head of Taught Student Development, Institute for Academic Development (IAD)
1 x member of staff from Academic Services		Dr Adam Bunni, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework
1 x member of staff from Information Services' Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division		Karen Howie, Head of Digital Learning Applications and Media
3 x elected Senate member, one positions is nominally assigned to each College	1 year term	Dr Aidan Brown, College of Science and Engineering Dr Murray Earle, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science Dr Uzma Tufail-Hanif, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

3.7. At the final meeting of the academic year, the Committee will identify a Convener and Vice-Convener for the Committee from amongst its membership, to serve in the following year.

3.8. The Convener can invite individuals for specific meetings or agenda items.

3.9. Substitutions of members (i.e. due to inability to attend) will be at the discretion of the Convener of the Committee.

4. Responsibilities and Expectations of Committee Members

4.1. Be collegial and constructive in approach.

4.2. Attend regularly and participate fully in the work of the Committee and its task/working groups. This will involve looking ahead and consulting/gathering input in order to provide the broad spectrum of thoughts and opinions that are necessary for proper consideration of the area being discussed.

4.3. Take collective and individual ownership for the issues under the Committee's remit and for the discussion and resolution of these issues. In taking ownership of the work of the Committee, members must take steps to ensure that they are empowered to take decisions on behalf of academic and managerial colleagues.

4.4. Be committed to communicating the work of the Committee to the wider University community.

Terms of Reference: Approved by Senate August 2022

H/02/27/02

APRC 22/23 9R

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

25 May 2023

Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees

Description of paper

1. This is the annual report of the Senate Standing Committees: Education Committee; Academic Policy and Regulations Committee; and Quality Assurance Committee. It reports on the Committees' achievements and use of delegated powers in 2022-23. It also proposes outline plans for 2023-24.

Action requested

2. Members are invited to note the content included for Academic Policy and Regulations Committee noting the priorities for 2023/24.

Background and Context

3. The Senate Standing Committees provide an annual report setting out progress on activities in the past year and seeking Senate approval for their general strategic direction and priorities for the next academic year.
4. Committee agendas, minutes and papers are available on Academic Services' website. All Senate members are notified when agendas and papers (which include the minute of the last meeting) are available and are advised they can provide comments on agenda items through the Senate representatives on the relevant committee.

Resource implications

5. The proposed plans for 2023-24 will have some resource implications relating to time spent by members of the Committees, Academic Services and staff invited to participate in working groups. Some of the resource requirements for wider work of the Committees will be met through existing resources or have agreed funding in place. As per Senate guidelines, authors of papers relating to the proposed plans for 2023-24 will be asked to include an analysis of resourcing issues (including staff workload issues) in cover sheets.

Risk Management

6. Each individual strand of proposed activity will be subject to risk assessment as appropriate.

Equality and Diversity

7. Where required, Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out for individual work packages completed next year. It is noted that following a previous discussion of Committee effectiveness, all Senate Standing Committees undertook to place more focus on effective evaluation of equality and diversity dimensions.

Next steps / implications

8. The Senate Committees will progress the agreed strategic approach during 2023-24 as set out in the report. This report will also be shared with the University Court for information.

Authors

Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Manager
Sinead Docherty, Academic Policy Officer
Stuart Fitzpatrick, Academic Policy Officer
Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer
Nichola Kett, Interim Director of Academic Services

Presenters

May 2023

Freedom of Information Open

Annual Report of the Senate Committees 2022-23

1. Executive Summary

This report summarises the achievements of the Senate Committees, and their use of the powers delegated to them by Senate, for academic year 2022-23, along with their proposed plans for 2023-24.

2. Introduction

The three Standing Committees of Senate (hereafter referred to as the Senate Committees) are the Senate Education Committee (SEC), Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC), and Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC).

Senate has delegated to these Committees a range of its powers, and these powers are set out in the Committees' Terms of Reference. Links to the Terms of Reference and memberships of the Senate Standing Committees are below:

- [Education Committee](#)
- [Academic Policy and Regulations Committee](#)
- [Quality Assurance Committee](#)

Sections 3, 4 and 5 below provide information on the Standing Committees' activities in 2022/23.

Section 6 sets out proposals for future work. These proposals have arisen from Committee discussions. The proposals are designed to assist the University in pursuing its Learning and Teaching agenda and wider goals as laid out in the University Strategy 2030:

- [Strategy 2030](#)

3. Key Committee and Task Group Activities in 2022-23*

Name of Committee	No. of meetings
Senate Education Committee	5 + one electronic
Academic Policy & Regulations	9 (one additional, meeting and four electronic meetings)
Senate Quality Assurance Committee	5 + one electronic

Name of Task Group	Task Group of:
Coursework Extensions and Special Circumstances Task Group	APRC
Personal Tutor System Oversight Group	SQAC
Student Support Services subcommittee	SQAC
Tutors and Demonstrators Oversight Group	SQAC
Data Task Group	SQAC
Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group	SEC
Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group	SEC, APRC, SQAC

*Includes meetings scheduled for the remainder of the session.

4. Senate Committees' Progress in 2022/23

Section 4 provides information on progress against the activities proposed in last year's report to Senate. Section 5 provides information on other committee activity in 2022/23.

All committees also considered:

- University of Edinburgh Students' Association Vice President Priorities 2022/23
- Committee memberships and Terms of Reference
- Developments from 11 August 2022 meeting of Senate, including new guidelines for Senate Committee operations
- Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review
- Schedule of review for policies, regulations and guidance
- Proposals for Coordinating Institutional Activities on Assessment and Feedback
- Committee priorities for 2023-24

4.1 Education Committee

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

Activity
<p>1. Curriculum Transformation</p> <p>November:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion, comment and endorsement of a final report of a short-life working group set up to generate ideas for the future of our teaching spaces. Intended to inform the new Capital Plan and connects with work emerging from the Curriculum Transformation Programme and the Learning and Teaching Spaces Strategy. Comments were around: sense of belonging, flexible layout of teaching spaces, the importance of being realistic, the value of outdoor teaching spaces given the Scottish climate, the need to prioritise, 'locking down' of buildings, and student composition.• Update of work in progress with the development of a proposed curriculum framework for consideration via the appropriate University governance channels in early 2023. Feedback was provided on: concerns about appetite for a large-scale change project, the reason for change, support for pilot activity. <p>January:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion and noting an update on progress with the development of a proposed curriculum framework for consideration via the appropriate University governance channels. This included plans to work with Schools and Deaneries to develop short and medium term plans for change and investment, and proposals for a modification of the timescale for the implementation and phasing of curriculum transformation. Responses covered: phasing; rationale; the proposed curriculum framework; and resourcing. <p>March:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussed a paper providing an update on planned next steps for in-depth discussions with Schools and Deaneries on their response to the undergraduate curriculum framework and other engagement plans following discussions at Senate in February. Questions and comments focussed on how the Project planned to engage with staff in Schools and Colleges in the coming months. Clarification on what Schools could proceed with in terms of programme development in the intermediate future was sought.
<p>2. Student Experience – ongoing input into matters being taken forward by University Executive</p>

September:

- Commented on the student experience update taken to the University Executive in June 2022. Comments focused on the new student support model.
- Noted the National Student Survey findings and comment on the proposals for how the University should respond to the findings of the NSS and improvements to the quality of the student experience. Comments focused on areas where improvement had been seen, the goal of being equally excellent in research and teaching, and that sense of belonging remained an issue.

November: an update was provided covering: the start of the academic year; student support; cost of living; National Student Survey consultation.

January:

- Noted an update which covered: the Vice-Principal Students Portfolio (including the creation of two groups to assist with developing and delivering enhancements to the student experience); the Student Support Model; and cost of living. Comments included: student representation on the groups; recruitment of Student Advisors; and evaluation of the Student Support Model.

March:

- Noted an update which outlined the findings from the Pulse Survey of all students in December.

May

- Reviewed and approved a new Student Support Framework which will govern the model of Student Support, whilst also approving the retirement of the Academic and Pastoral Support Policy at the end of 2022/23.

3. Enhancement-led Institutional Review – ongoing response to outcomes of 2021 ELIR, particularly around assessment and feedback**September:**

- Discussed and approved the final version of the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities.
- Approved changes to the Academic and Pastoral Support Policy for 2022/23.

November:

- Discussed a paper prepared by the Students' Association on examination format which included recommendations relating to examinations in 2022/23 in response to the results of a University-wide student survey on in-person exams. Discussion focused around: the impact of a return to in-person exams on students; diversification of assessment as appropriate; support available for students; issues with online exams; and academic integrity. Actions agreed related to communication with students on format and support, a review of the December 2022 diet and a discussion on the August 2023 diet.

January:

- Discussion on coordinating institutional activities on assessment and feedback which asked for approval of two new groups (a Strategy and Policy Group and a Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group). An overview of the range of assessment-related activities was given alongside a proposal for coordinating and governing the activities. Strong support was given although comments were provided on the proposed memberships and remits. Approval was given to setting up the two new groups subject to refined proposals (on memberships, timelines and modes of operation)

which take into account discussions with the other Senate Standing Committees being submitted to the March meeting.

- Discussion of a paper submitted by the group considering the arrangements for the August 2023 resit exam diet. Members made points including: workload implications; professional body requirements; consulting with students on changes; approaches to assessment; timing; academic integrity; and support for students. The proposed arrangements were approved subject to one minor amendment relating to student consultation.

March

- Approved revised proposals for membership and remit of assessment and feedback related groups following consideration at Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee and the Senate Quality Assurance Committee.

May

- Discussed and approved recommendations made by the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group covering examination formats for 2023-24, August assessment diet, implementing the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities, and generative AI and approaches to assessment.
- Considered and discussed recommendations relating to the governance of tutors and demonstrators, noting that many aspects fall under the responsibility of HR.

4. Doctoral College developments

September: verbal updates were given on: UK Research and Innovation stipend increase; PGR hardship funding; PhD duration, interaction with new student support structures, Doctoral College Forum meetings; supervisor training; MScR marking instructions; Annual Review Policy update; student systems; and a report from the Equality Diversity and Inclusion/Widening Participation PhD Intern.

January: verbal updates were given on: progress with the Doctoral College; plans to submit papers on the size and shape of the PGR body and the length of a PhD and implications for tuition fee levels; support for progressing with PGR Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR); and progress on the group overseeing work on tutor and demonstrator training.

May: noted a report of the Operations Group of the Doctoral College from the start of the academic year which covered activity and discussion topics.

5. Academic Integrity

September: updates provided on:

- IAD had been tasked with developing a generic mandatory course for all students on academic integrity.
- The Student Support model project team were considering what role the Cohort Lead might play in providing subject-specific guidance.
- The Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures had been reviewed and would be taken to Academic Policy and Regulations Committee for approval and additional student guidance would be developed.

November: discussion on the trends and trajectories in digital assessment and plagiarism detection including the implications of AI-assisted text generation and rising concern of routine use of plagiarism detection systems. Feedback was received on the paper by all three College Academic Misconduct Officers. The analysis in the paper was endorsed and comments were received around re-design of assessment and the links with the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities.

6. Other matters considered during the year

Other key items considered by Education Committee during the year included:

September

- Noting requests for Edinburgh Learning Design and Roadmap (ELDeR) workshops granted by the Support for Curriculum Development Group.
- Noting the Student Partnership Agreement for 2022-23, the themes and agreeing to advise about the opportunity for small project funding.

November

- The outcome of the Office for Students Review of the National Student Survey was presented and the committee agreed the use of two of the optional question banks which allowed year on year data comparison.
- Updates on Learn Ultra (upgrade and early adopter programme) were provided for information/noting. Questions were raised by Senate members which were responded to after the meeting.

January

- Consistent and equitable application of own work declarations, which proposed changes to how these were used. Whilst broadly supportive of the idea of removing own work declarations for individual pieces of work or courses, there was not consensus on key elements of the proposals. Further analysis, consultation and discussion was needed and will be taken forward by the assessment and feedback groups.
- Approval of the proposed institutional questions for the 2023 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Taught Research Survey (PRES). Feedback was provided on terminology and wording, cost of living questions, and governance of student voice.
- Approval of the proposal that the EUSA Community Volunteering role should be recognised in Section 6.1 of the HEAR.

March

- Approval of minor changes to the Lecture Recording Policy following a scheduled review.
- Agreed a schedule of reviews for policies, regulations and guidance.
- Discussed a paper on strategies to optimise postgraduate research student numbers which covered a range of topics, including remote and distance learning PhDs, part-time study in doctoral education, and the length of the prescribed period for funding. The paper would also be discussed within Colleges.
- Noted and commented on a paper which provided an update on discussions regarding the potential development of a Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) for PGR students. Support for developing a PGR HEAR was confirmed and the next steps set out in the paper were endorsed.

May

- Discussed a proposal to add a category of achievement to the HEAR of student participation in strategic/major projects.
- Approved changes to the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy and considered recommendations for the future development.
- Approved the Student Partnership Agreement for 2023-24.

4.2 Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

Activity**1. Feed into the Curriculum Transformation project and support discussion around this****September:**

The Committee received an update and presentation on the Curriculum Transformation Programme which was intended to assist with forward planning of upcoming Committee business. The Committee noted that the development of a proposed curriculum framework will be presented to Standing Committees and Senate in early 2023, with the intention that this will be presented to the University by the end of 2022/23.

January:

The Committee noted that discussions were ongoing between Academic Services and the Curriculum Transformation Project team to establish the timescales for actions requested of APRC. The Committee would be kept up to date as these progressed.

2. Continue to support policy changes required as part of the new Student Support model.**September - February**

The Convener and Secretary, on behalf of the Committee, have continued to support the Student Support model project team with advice on meeting dates and deadlines for revisions to policies resulting from the Student Support model.

March

The Committee approved amendments to eight policies arising from the Student Support Project.

3. Support the review of the Support for Study policy to ensure this remains fit for purpose, particularly in the context of changes resulting from the new Student Support model.**September:**

A short Support for Study policy update paper was due to be presented to the September meeting of APRC. APRC had requested further work be done on the policy, and the new Deputy Secretary, Students has asked for further time to review feedback and practices before further updates are brought to APRC.

January:

The Committee received an update that a meeting of key stakeholders was planned and the Committee notified that a further update would be received at the March 2023 meeting.

March:

The Committee approved revisions which were drafted in response to specific feedback on the policy from January 2022. The Committee noted that a wider and more in-depth review was still under discussion, however the specific revision was approved ahead of a further and more in-depth review of the policy.

4. Support a review of coursework extensions and special circumstances policies, taking account of the recommendations of the ESC Review (conducted during 21/22).**September:**

The Committee received the first update from the task group. The group commenced in August, with the Committee noting that the group are working to an ambitious timeframe and there is potential for industrial action to impact on the group's work. The group highlighted that it is unlikely they will reach complete consensus on a draft policy. The Committee are aware of the forthcoming challenges in agreeing a way forward on this policy.

November e-business:

The Committee received the second update from the task group. The group noted its work to date and highlighted key areas under consideration by the group, including but not limited to the development of a single policy, the time available for a coursework extension and management of repeat coursework extensions.

The group highlighted concerns regarding the timeline and ability to achieve consensus on all areas of work within the group.

January:

The Committee received the third update from the task group. The group noted its work to date and highlighted that timelines were slipping due to the challenges due to the interaction of the task group's work with wider issues and projects which feed into and overlap with the work being undertaken by the group.

The group outlined a package of measures which have received support within the group and noted that timelines for the completion of work would not be met with further meetings scheduled for March and April.

March:

The Committee received the fourth update from the task group. The paper outlined the findings and positions reached by the Coursework Extension and Special Circumstances Task Group, a summary of the findings of the ESC Reviews: discussions with Schools 2022/23 and of the service in 2022; and an overview of the proposed next steps to bring together the findings of work underway across ESC including responses from APRC and Heads of Schools to these proposals, to be overseen by the Deputy Secretary, Students.

5. Develop a timeline for undertaking the scheduled periodic review of policies which were delayed due to external factors.

January:

The Committee received a proposed schedule for undertaking the scheduled periodic review of policies which has been delayed over several years due to factors including Covid-19 and Academic Services capacity constraints.

March:

The Committee approved the revised schedule for reviewing policies, regulations, and guidance documents which are the responsibility of the Senate Committees. The Senate Education Committee and Senate Quality Assurance Committee were both confirmed as being content with the revised schedule.

6. Other matters considered during the year

Other key items considered by Academic, Policy and Regulations Committee during the year included:

Considering temporary variations to regulations to mitigate against the impact of industrial action

November e-business

The Committee received a paper seeking approval for the authority to make a decisions on concessions relating to external examiner regulations to be delegated to the Convener and/or Vice-Convener. In light of comments raised by members, it was agreed that where there is sufficient time to allow the Convener or Vice-Convener to consult Committee members ahead of reaching a decision, the Committee will have a short window of up to 48 hours to feed comments in. The final decision on concessions will rest with the Convener or Vice Convener and in urgent cases they will have the authority to make a decision without Committee consultation.

January

The Committee received an update on industrial action and agreed that no general variation to policies and regulations should be considered. The Committee agreed to continue to position reached at the November e-business meeting on the handling of external examiner concessions.

March

The Committee considered whether to approve any temporary variations to academic policies and regulations. On the advice of the Academic Contingency Group, the Committee agreed to take a staged approach to considering the case for general variations to academic regulations and policies.

The Committee agree that significant disruption has occurred and that it was necessary to activate Taught Assessment Regulation 70.

The Committee approved a temporary variation to permit schools to make changes after the start of a course without the approval of College or consultation with students and external examiners.

The Committee approved a temporary variation to relax the requirement to consult External Examiners when setting examination papers.

May – additional meeting

The Committee considered whether to approve any further temporary variations to academic policies and regulations. On the recommendation of the Academic Contingency Group, the Committee agreed that significant disruption has occurred and considered and approved a range of variations to academic regulations and policies.

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Degree Regulations (reviewed annually)

As part of the annual review of the UG and PG Degree Regulations, the Committee heard proposals for revisions and made recommendations for minor revisions to the University Court.

Taught Assessment Regulations and Postgraduate Research Assessment Regulations (reviewed annually)

The Committee will receive proposals for minor amendments to these Assessment Regulations at its meeting in May 2023.

Academic Misconduct Procedure

September to November:

The Committee received proposals for amendments to the Academic Misconduct Procedures. The paper proposed an initial change of process to be implemented from January 2023, with further changes to be proposed and, if approved, implemented from the start of academic year 2023/24. The initial changes involved giving additional powers to School Academic Misconduct Officers (SAMOs), to allow SAMOs to address minor academic misconduct and apply minor mark penalties, without cases needing to be escalated to

College Academic Misconduct Officers (CAMOs). This change was proposed to reduce the number of cases escalated to CAMOs, and so speed up the process for students, without creating risks to students or the process. The changes were approved, with some minor amendments.

March to May:

The Committee received proposals for further changes to the Academic Misconduct Procedures. The proposals included strengthening the robustness of the process for handling cases of suspected collusion, and the additional option of a 50 mark penalty. The revisions will be presented to APRC for approval in May 2023.

Online Examinations submissions

September to November:

The Committee noted an urgent concern regarding the need for a consistent approach to handling online examinations across the University. It was noted that an agreed position was required ahead of the December 2022 exam diet. The Committee received proposals for academic year 2022/23 and approved these in advance of the December 2022/23 exam diet, on the basis that the issue would be revisited for academic year 2023/24.

March:

The Committee received a closed paper on online exam arrangements for 2023/24 for discussion, and will receive proposals for approval at its meeting in May 2023.

Non-standard & programme changes

September:

MSc MEE: The Committee approved a proposal to permit students undertaking the MSc Mathematical Economics and Econometrics (MEE) to choose between completing a dissertation or a research project as the capstone of their PGT studies.

December e-business:

Online MBA: The Committee received an urgent and late request to approve non-standard academic year dates for the Online MBA. The Committee reluctantly approved a delay to the January 2023 intake of the Online MBA to be delayed to March 2023. The School were asked to return to the January meeting of APRC to allow members to clarify how the revised timescale will work in practice ahead of the Committee considering permanent approval of this arrangement.

January:

Online MBA: The Committee approved a non-standard start date for the Online MBA for March 2023. There were concerns regarding the systems implications surrounding a permanent approval for a non-standard start date and the School were asked to discuss possible implications with Systems colleagues ahead of returning to a future meeting with a proposal for approval.

March:

Online MBA: The Committee received an update that the Systems implications of the non-standard start date for the Online MBA had been considered and the proposal can now be considered. The Committee agreed to receive the paper for formal approval via e-business.

Global Law LLB: The Committee gave its approval for the LLB (Hons) Global Law programme to deviate from Taught Assessment Regulation (TAR) 55.2. A new subclause of TAR 55.2 would be created to reflect this.

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

March e-business:

Online MBA: The Committee approved a permanent non-standard start date for the Online MBA.

4.3 Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

Progress with activities proposed in last year's report:

Activity

1. Develop and oversee the implementation of a plan of action in response to the 2021 Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR).

The University's Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) follow-up report, on actions taken or in progress to address the outcomes of the review one year after the publication of the final reports, was submitted to the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland (QAAS) on 14 July 2022. The Committee will continue to receive regular updates on the ELIR Action Plan.

At the **September** meeting the Convenor reported that the Scottish Funding Council had published guidance on sector quality arrangements for 2022-23 and 2023-24. During this period QAAS will focus activities on Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR) and Institutional Liaison Meetings (ILM) as it continues to develop a new external institutional review method following the completion of the fourth cycle of ELIR. The University's QESR is scheduled for 16th November 2023 and will comprise a one-day visit from a small external panel. No self-evaluation report is required for the review.

In **December** the Committee considered an update on the implementation of the new student support model. A key requirement of the ELIR was for the University to make demonstrable progress on the implementation of the new student support model. The meeting focused specifically on monitoring and evaluation of the new system and the need for baseline quantitative measures to help assess the model and its outcomes. It was acknowledged that there will be methodological challenges but changes to EUCLID tools should help to gather the data needed to support the evaluation process. A key aim of the monitoring and evaluation process will be to identify and smooth out variation in the student experience of the model across the University.

Another key recommendation of the ELIR was related to support and training for Tutors and Demonstrators (T&Ds). At the **April** meeting the Committee considered an update on recent developments led by the Doctoral College. A working group has been set up, the Tutors & Demonstrators Oversight Group, and is collaborating with Schools/Deaneries to co-ordinate training and establish a governance structure to oversee these activities.

2. Implement the recommendations from the Digital Maturity report and consider how quality processes and the data that they produce can support the Curriculum Transformation programme.

During this year work on this priority has been delayed due workload challenges for Academic Services. However, Academic Services does intend to explore options for utilizing SharePoint to optimize the presentation of quality data/evidence to

Schools/Deaneries and encourage greater engagement and traction with quality processes.

3. Continue to examine data and methodological options for the systematic monitoring of retention, progression, and attainment data.

The Committee agreed to implement a new system for monitoring retention, progression, and attainment data in response to recommendations relating to attainment/awarding gaps from the [2017-18](#) and [2018-19](#) Thematic Reviews.

The Committee currently monitors attainment data in **April** each year via an annual report (produced by Governance and Strategic Planning in collaboration with Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling) on degree classification outcomes of successfully exiting undergraduates, including sector trends in undergraduate degree classification outcomes. Any Schools/subject areas considered to have diverged substantially from either the University average or comparators in their discipline are then asked to specifically reflect on the issue, and any proposed remediation, in their School Annual Quality Report. The Committee then continues to monitor progress via this annual reporting process until the issue is considered to have been resolved. This approach ensures systematic University oversight whilst also encouraging Schools to engage with the specific data on attainment, reflect on the issues and context, and then seek local solutions.

The aim of the new system will be to understand how well the University supports different groups across the whole student life-cycle: the likelihood of different student groups continuing or withdrawing from study at the University; the extent to which the University enables different student groups to fulfil their potential during their time at Edinburgh; and how successful the University is at supporting different student groups transition within their programme of study and afterwards to employment or further study. It will be important to understand this data in terms of the 'distance travelled' by different groups in order to provide a greater understanding of the 'value added' by the University and the extent to which the needs of different student groups had been supported by the University.

In February 2020 the Committee established a Data Task Group to examine data set and methodological options for this new system. However progress was initially delayed due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, with the maintenance of core requirements the primary focus of activities across the University. During **this year** work on this priority has been further delayed by the need to prioritise activities in the context of workload challenges for the academic and professional services staff supporting the Committee.

The Committee has collaborated with the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) to determine work streams for each committee to help address awarding gaps across the University. The EDIC will undertake work to understand the underlying causes of attainment/awarding gaps with the aim of identifying and sharing good practice with Schools to help them address these gaps.

The Committee will also collaborate with the reinstated Equality Data Monitoring Research Committee (EDMARC) to draw on the data and analysis in the EDMARC Student Report. The report provides the University with comprehensive statistical data on protected characteristics to support the monitoring of equality and diversity within the University. Utilising this report as a data resource for the annual quality assurance processes will allow the Committee to benefit from the experience and expertise of the EDMARC membership. This will also benefit EDMARC by providing greater visibility, engagement and traction for its annual report across all Schools and Deaneries.

4. Continue to monitor the implementation of the Student Voice Policy via annual quality assurance processes.

A new approach to course level feedback was implemented in 2021/22 academic year following the change from centrally managed Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQs) to locally managed course evaluation. The rationale for the new model was to give ownership of course level feedback to Schools, enabling local areas to gather feedback according to their own (and their students) requirements and allow for closer staff-student interaction, while in alignment with the revised Student Voice Policy. A toolkit to support development of feedback mechanisms was developed centrally to support staff.

The Committee is monitoring the implementation of the Student Support Policy via the School Annual Quality Reporting process. In their annual reports Schools are required to include a reflection on their approach and the effectiveness of their student voice activities in line with the Policy and the move to locally managed course level feedback. In **September** 2022 the Committee considered this year's reports and feedback on the new approach was broadly welcomed, but it was acknowledged that this increased flexibility had created additional work for Schools.

In **March** the Committee reviewed the annual monitoring templates (at programme, School and College level) and agreed to retain the specific question on student voice activity and feedback in order to maintain a focus on implementing the Policy.

5. Engage with the QAA and Universities UK review focused on strengthening the external examining system.

The Committee noted the publication of advice that expands on the External Examining Principles, giving practical help to external examiners and the degree-awarding bodies that appoint them. It will set out typical activities and optional functions and practices for external examiners and institutions, and will apply to postgraduate and undergraduate courses.

5 Other Committee Activity in 2022/23

• Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) Accreditation Committee

The Committee continues to oversee the accreditation of the SRUC programme, 'Environmental Management (BSc)'. The Accreditation Committee met in April 2023 and affirmed continued accreditation of the programme. The Committee also endorsed a proposal to extend SRUC's Accredited Institution status to Postgraduate Research Provision (PGR).

- The attached Annex sets out any new strategies / regulations / policies / codes that the Committees have approved (the more substantive of which are covered in Section 4 above), along with changes to existing documents.

6 Senate Committees' Priorities for 2023/24

6.1 Planning Context

The year will be planned in the context of ongoing University strategic project/activities including: the Curriculum Transformation Programme; the Student Support model (including maturing the approach to evaluation and monitoring); Assessment and Feedback,

Extensions and Special Circumstances, the ELIR action plan; Student Voice activity and responding to the externally-facilitated review of Senate.

6.2 Education Committee

Activity
Assessment and Feedback Groups
Curriculum Transformation
Generative AI

6.3 Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

Activity
Policy and regulatory arrangements for the Curriculum Transformation Programme
Strands of work relating to the Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group (particularly in relation to academic policy and regulation).
Ongoing work around Coursework Extensions and Special Circumstances
Receive policies for approval in line with agreed updated schedule of review of policies, regulations and guidance

6.4 Quality Assurance Committee

Activity
Oversee the implementation of a plan of action in response to the 2021 Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR).
Responding to the outcome of the Scottish Funding Council's Tertiary Quality Review
Strands of work relating to the Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group (particularly in relation to data regarding retention, progression and attainment).
Evaluation and monitoring of the implementation of the new student support model.

Annex – new regulations/policies/codes, and reviews of and amendments to existing regulations/policies/codes, approved by Senate and its Committees during 2022/23

New and updated policies, regulations and guidance will be published on the Academic Services website in due course: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/new-policies>

Senate Committee	Name of document	Type of change (New / Revision / Deletion / Technical Update / Reviewed and no changes made)
SEC	Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities	New
SEC	Academic and Pastoral Support Policy	Revision to take account of changes to the Student Support model
SEC	Lecture Recording Policy	Minor revision following a scheduled review
SEC	Student Support Framework	New
SEC	Academic and Pastoral Support Policy	Deletion
SEC	Student Partnership Agreement 2023-24	Revision
SEC	Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators	Minor revision*
SEC	Virtual Classroom Policy	Minor revision*
APRC	Code of Student Conduct	Revision
APRC	Academic Misconduct Procedure	Revision
APRC	Undergraduate Degree Regulations 2023/24	Revision
APRC	Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2023/24	Revision
APRC	Authorised interruption of study	Minor revision*
APRC	Course Organiser: Outline of Role	Minor revision*
APRC	Performance Sport policy	Minor revision*
APRC	Programme and Course Handbooks Policy	Minor revision*
APRC	Protection of Children and Protected Adults	Minor revision*
APRC	Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure	Minor revision*
APRC	International Student Attendance and Engagement Policy	Minor revision*
APRC	Support for Study	Revision
SQAC	Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting Policy and associated templates	Minor revision

*Updates to take account of the Student Support model

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**25 May 2023****Annual review of effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees****Description of paper**

1. This paper notifies Committee members of plans for the annual review of Senate Committees' effectiveness.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Committee members are asked to note and comment on the plans for the review, and to engage with opportunities to provide feedback on the committees' functioning and effectiveness.

Background and context

3. The 2017 version of the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance states that institutions are expected to review the effectiveness of their Senate and its committees annually and to hold an externally-facilitated review every five years: "49. The governing body is expected to review its own effectiveness each year and to undertake an externally facilitated evaluation of its own effectiveness and that of its committees, including size and composition of membership, at least every five years. As part of these processes or separately, the effectiveness of the academic board (also known as Senate, Senatus Academicus or academic council) is expected to be reviewed similarly. These reviews should be reported upon appropriately within the Institution and outside. Externally facilitated reviews should be held following any period of exceptional change or upheaval (allowing suitable time to see the effects of changes made), the usual timetable for externally facilitated review being brought forward if necessary in these circumstances."
4. In line with the requirements of the Code, Academic Services will conducting an annual review of the three Senate Standing Committees over summer 2023. The outcomes of this review will be reported to Senate and Senate Committees in September/ October 2023.
5. Actions identified in the previous annual effectiveness review, and progress against these actions, are noted in Appendix 2.

Discussion

6. The review process is intended to gather information on and evaluate effectiveness in terms of the:
 - a. Composition of the committee
 - b. Support and facilitation of committee meetings
 - c. Engagement of members and knowledge and understanding of their roles and committee remit
 - d. Impact and strategic relevance of Senate Committees' work

7. The review process will be primarily self-reflective and will gather information as described below:
 - a. Senate Committee members will be invited to respond to an online questionnaire during summer 2023 (facilitated by Academic Services). Committee members will be contacted by the Committee Secretary over the summer period. Draft questions are provided in Appendix 1.
 - b. The Committee Convener and Secretary will review committee coverage of Postgraduate Research Student business.
8. Academic Services will collate the information and produce a report on the findings to be presented to Senate and Senate Committees in September/ October 2023.

Resource implications

9. The review will be conducted by Academic Services and any resource requirements will be met from existing budgets. The resource implications of any actions identified in response to the outcomes of the review will be considered at that stage.

Risk management

10. The annual effectiveness review process assists the University in ensuring that its academic governance arrangements are effective and enables the University to manage a range of risks associated with its academic provision.

Equality & diversity

11. The review provides an opportunity to identify any equality and diversity issues in the make-up of the Committees and the way they conduct their business.

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

12. The report will be presented to Senate and the Senate Standing Committees in September / October 2023. If the review identifies required actions or enhancement opportunities, these will be taken forward by Academic Service (if directly related to the functioning and support of the Senate Committees) or referred to the appropriate body for consideration.

Author

Academic Services
10 May 2023

Freedom of Information

Open

Appendix 1

Senate Standing Committees: Internal Effectiveness Review 2022-23

Draft questions for Summer 2023 survey

Members of the Senate Committees will be invited to fill in an online questionnaire during Summer 2023 and the draft questions for this exercise are set out below for comment. This is the same question set used in the 2019-20, 2020-21 & 2021-22 Senate committee review.

1. Committee remit

- 1.1. Is the Committee's remit clear? If not, what improvements would you suggest?
- 1.2. Is the scope of the remit appropriate?
- 1.3. Has the Committee adapted effectively to the challenges or changes in priority?
- 1.4. Are you happy with your Committee's use of task groups?

2. Governance and impact

- 2.1. Do you have a clear understanding of how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University?
- 2.2. Do you feel that the Committee makes the desired impact based on its remit and priorities?
- 2.3. Are there clear links between Committee business and University strategic priorities?

3. Composition

- 3.1. Do you think that the current composition of the Committee enables it to fulfil its remit?
- 3.2. Is the size of the Committee appropriate in order for it to operate effectively?

4. Equality and Diversity

- 4.1. Is the composition of the Committee suitably representative of the diverse University population? If not, when improvements would you suggest?
- 4.2. Are you satisfied that equality and diversity considerations are adequately addressed when discussing Committee business? If not, when improvements would you suggest?

5. Committee members – Role clarity and participation

- 5.1. Are you clear on your role and responsibilities as a Committee member?
- 5.2. If this is not clear, do you have any suggestions on how to improve this?
- 5.3. If you were a new member in 2022/23, were you satisfied with the induction you were given to the Committee and its business?
- 5.4. Is lack of engagement by members ever an impediment to the Committee?
- 5.5. Does anything create a barrier to your engagement with the Committee?

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Communications

- 6.1. Does the Committee engage and communicate effectively with stakeholders? (For example, is the Senate Committees' Newsletter an effective vehicle?)
- 6.2. Do you have a clear understanding of your role on the Committee as a representative of your College or Group?
- 6.3. Do you have a clear understanding of your role in cascading information from the Committee to your College or Group?

7. Committee support

- 7.1. Do you feel that the Committee is supported effectively by Academic Services?
- 7.2. Does the information provided to the Committee (in format and volume) support effective decision-making by the Committee?
- 7.3. Do papers provide you with appropriate levels of detail on the background of issues brought to the Committee, and on how Committee decisions will be implemented?

Appendix 2: Progress against actions developed in response to 2021/22 review

Due to the low number of respondents to the Effectiveness Review in 2021/22, a combined analysis of the answers to the review questions provided by all of Senate's Standing Committees suggested the following recommended actions:

Area Under Review	Recommended Action	Responsible	Target Completion Date	Update on Progress
Remit	1. Committees to consider the appropriateness of their remit in addition to overlap with, and links to, other Senate Standing Committees, and to feed their views into the externally-facilitated review.	Committee Conveners Standing Committees Supported by Committee Administrators	Ongoing throughout 2022/23	1. This action was ongoing throughout 2022/23 and completed in line with the timescales for the external review.
Composition	2. The expansion of Standing Committee membership to include three elected academic Senate members to each Standing Committee. Senate approved the change of composition and process, with new members expected to join Committees in time for the second cycle of Committees.	Senate Clerk Committee Administrators Committee Conveners.	November 2022	2. This action was completed by the target date.
Governance & Impact	<p>3. An external effectiveness review of Senate will take place in 2022/23, and as part of this review the effectiveness of the relationship between Senate, its committees, and the wider University governance structure will be considered.</p> <p>4. The Convener's Forum will be asked to consider how it can support enhancement of communication between Standing Committee's particularly around items of common business.</p> <p>5. Each committee to consider more effective use of short-life working groups</p>	<p>Standing Committees members are asked to engage with the external effectiveness review as and when required</p> <p>Convener's Forum</p> <p>Committee Conveners Committee Administrators</p>	All: ongoing throughout 2022/23	3. 4. & 5. These actions were ongoing throughout 2022/23 and completed in line with the timescales for the external review.

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<p>EDI</p>	<p>6. Each committee to give proactive consideration of EDI for all papers/discussion and decision making.</p> <p>7. Committee Convener's will be considering how to respond to a motion approved at Senate on 12 October: <i>Each committee convener is expected to propose for approval by the Senate Exception Committee and/or next Senate Meeting reasonable additions to their committee to improve BAME, student, and trade union representation.</i></p>	<p>Standing Committees Committee Conveners Committee Administrators</p> <p>Committee Conveners</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout 2022/23</p> <p>By the next meeting of Senate</p>	<p>6. This action was ongoing throughout 2022/23 with EDI consideration given to all papers/discussions and decision making.</p> <p>7. Committee Conveners presented a paper in response to the motion to the reconvened Senate meeting in March with a further paper expected in May 2023.</p>
<p>Role</p>	<p>8. Academic Services and the Convener to continue offering effective induction for members and to implement improvements to approaches where possible.</p>	<p>Committee Conveners Committee Administrators</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout 2022/23</p>	<p>8. This action was ongoing throughout 2022/23 with induction offered to new members as required.</p>
<p>Communications</p>	<p>9. A Senate Committees' Newsletter will be reintroduced from 2022 onwards. The newsletter will inform the University community of discussions and decisions taken at Senate and its Standing Committees.</p>	<p>Committee Administrators</p>	<p>The first newsletter is expected to be published in December 2022, with further newsletters to align with the cycle of Committee business.</p>	<p>9. This action was partially completed. The first newsletter was published in December 2022 however subsequent issues were not produced as regularly as anticipated due to capacity constraints. A second issue is planned for May/June following the final round of 2022/23 Committee business with more frequent issues planned moving forward in 2023/24.</p>