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

**Meeting to be held on Wednesday 27 February at 10am
in the Raeburn Room, Old College**

A G E N D A

1.   Welcome and Apologies

2.   **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8 December 2018**   SQAC 18/19 3A

3.   Matters Arising

For Discussion

4.   Quality Assurance and Enhancement for Postgraduate Research   Verbal

5.   Enhancement-led Institutional Review:
- 2015 Review - Theme Reports   SQAC 18/19 3B
- 2020 Review – Update and Contextualised Themes   SQAC 18/19 3C

6.   College Annual Quality Reports 2017-18   SQAC 18/19 3D
- College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
- College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
- College of Science & Engineering

7.   External Examiner Reporting System (EERS):
- Postgraduate Taught Reports - Thematic Analysis 2017-18   SQAC 18/19 3E
- Total Reports 2017-18   SQAC 18/19 3F

8.   Student Support Services Annual Review (SSSAR):   SQAC 18/19 3G
Annual Reporting Template Updates

9.   Mid-year update on progress against SQAC priorities   SQAC 18/19 2H

For Information and Formal Business

10.   Thematic Review of Student Support:
- Mature Students and Student Parents and Carers 2017-18 -   SQAC 18/19 3I
Implementation Update
- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Students 2018-19 - Progress   SQAC 18/19 3J
Update

11.   Internal Review Reports and Responses   SQAC 18/19 2K

12.   Any Other Business

13.   Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 25 April 2019 at 2pm in the Torridon
Room, Charles Stewart House

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

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 6 December 2018 at 9am
in the Torridon Room, Charles Stewart House**

Present:

Professor Tina Harrison (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Dr Shereen Benjamin	Associate Dean (Quality Assurance) College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science
Megan Brown	Schools Engagement Officer, Edinburgh University Students' Association
Brian Connolly	Secretary to Senatus Quality Assurance Committee, Academic Services
Dr Gail Duursma	School Representative (Engineering), College of Science and Engineering
Dr Katherine Inglis	School Representative (Literatures, Languages and Cultures), College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science
Dr Linda Kirstein	Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture, College of Science and Engineering
Dr Claire Phillips	Director of Quality Assurance, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services

Apologies:

Lisa Dawson	Director of Student Systems and Administration
Brian Green	Deputy Associate Principal (Learning & Teaching), University of Strathclyde
Dr Jeni Harden	School Representative (School of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Nichola Kett	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team, Academic Services
Sarah McAllister	Head of Operations & Projects & Assistant Director, Institute for Academic Development
Diva Mukherji	Vice President (Education), Students' Association

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

2. **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 20 September 2018 and Notes of the electronic meeting conducted between 21-25 September 2018**

   The Committee approved the minutes and notes of the previous meetings.

3. **Matters Arising**

   a. **Quality Code**

   The Convenor noted that the QAA had published the advice and guidance underpinning the new Quality Code. Academic Services will now examine how this relates to current policy and regulations. In the longer term, this may be followed by a more fundamental reflection on the University's approach to the Quality Code.

   b. **School Annual Quality Reports – Actions**

   The Committee considered the School responses to the Committee's requests for further information in relation to the School Annual Quality Reports. The Committee was content that the responses met the original requests.

   For Discussion

4. **Annual Reports 2017-18**

4.1 **Undergraduate Taught External Examiner Reports: Thematic Analysis**

   The Committee considered an analysis of data from the External Examiner Reporting System (EERS) covering undergraduate programmes for the academic year 2016/17.

   The Committee noted the high number of commendations across the University and the low number of issues requiring attention, with no significant issues escalated to University-level. The Committee noted the wealth of information contained in the EERS and agreed that it should be more widely used across the University.

   The main theme of commendation across all three Colleges was the assessment process and student feedback. Of the issues highlighted by External Examiners the most frequently mentioning were in relation to the provision of information and issues raised in a previous report. The Committee noted that while schools should reflect on and response to External Examiners' comments they are not required to take the action that an External Examiner recommends and a lack of understanding on this point may be a source of dissatisfaction. The Committee also discussed whether this dissatisfaction was indicative of an underlying issue or due to the way the question is framed on the EERS. The Committee also noted that a number of reports remain outstanding and discussed whether some of the outstanding reports are attributable to External Examiners coming to the end of their term of contract.

   > **Action: Academic Services to include (a) more contextual analysis of External Examiner comments concerning issues raised in previous reports and (b) more analysis of reasons for the non-submission of reports (including a breakdown of how many are coming to the end of their contract) in next year's report.**

> **Action: College Deans of Quality to ensure that the outcomes of the Committee's discussions in regard to the External Examiner Reports are made available to and considered by the relevant College committee(s).**

4.2 Academic Appeals – CLOSED PAPER

The Committee considered the annual report on academic appeals from Academic Year 17/18.

The Committee noted that there are some signs of a plateauing in the volume of academic appeals following an upward trend in recent years and that the number of appeals remains small relative to the overall student population.

The Committee noted that in a high proportion of cases students draw attention to situations that they believe affected their academic performance but which they did not declare at the required time through the Special Circumstances (SC) process. The Committee noted that the SC policy and processes is currently under review by the Service Excellence Programme (SEP).

> **Action: Service Excellence Programme to clarify the anticipated impact of the new SC policy on the academic appeals process.**

The Committee noted that the perceived quality of supervision received by students submitting dissertations at both UG and PGT level and for PGR students continues to feature in appeals.

> **Action: Academic Services to ensure that students are made aware that the appeals process cannot be used to challenge the quality of supervision.**

The Committee agreed that if feasible future reports should include rolling averages over a number of years for appeals received from students in protected characteristic categories. It also asked Academic Services to clarify the rationale for the categories for ethnicity (e.g. why there are separate categories for 'white' and 'white other'). The Committee also agreed that the school data should be split into undergraduate and postgraduate to allow patterns specific to levels of study to be identified.

> **Action: Academic Services to examine the feasibility of including the information identified by the Committee in next year's report.**

The Committee agreed that terminology such as 'considerable' and 'significant' numbers should be avoided in future reports as they can be misleading, given the small number of cases.

The Committee commended the author on a comprehensive report.

4.3 Student Discipline – CLOSED PAPER

The Committee considered a report on the number of breaches of the Code of Student Conduct over the course of the academic year 2017/18.

The Committee noted that there are some signs of a plateauing (in fact, a slight fall) in the volume of academic misconduct cases following an upward trend in recent years and that the number of cases remains small relative to the overall student population.

However, there is an increasing number of student conduct cases related to allegations of violent or offensive behaviour, including sexual misconduct (although the volume of cases remains very small). The Code of Student Conduct is under review and a consultation is currently underway on proposals for amendments to the Code which will equip the University to deal more appropriately with sexual misconduct allegations.

The Committee agreed that future reports should if feasible include data on academic misconduct cases (ideally presented as a rolling average) for cases analysed by protected characteristic categories.

> **Action: Convenor to discuss the feasibility of reporting on protected characteristic categories with College Academic Misconduct Officers.**

In relation to offences dealt with by Accommodation, Catering and Events, the Committee noted that the number of accommodation-related cases where fines are applied has increased. The Committee agreed that future reports should include specific analysis of what these fines are for and an explanation of the sub-category 'Suspected use of unknown substances'.

> **Action: Academic Services to clarify with Accommodation, Catering and Events what fines are for and what is meant by 'suspected use of unknown substances'.**

4.4   Complaint Handling

The Committee considered a report on the handling of complaints to the University for the academic year 2017-18.

The Committee noted that there were no discernible trends in the complaint handling cases. The Committee agreed that terminology such as 'significantly' should be avoided unless it is clearly used to indicate statistical significance. The Committee discussed the frontline resolution process and the importance of signposting and transparency throughout the process in order to maintain student confidence in the complaint handling process. The Committee agreed that the Complaint Handling Officer should be invited to the next meeting to discuss the issue raised.

> **Action: Complaint Handling Officer to be invited to the next meeting of the Committee.**

4.5   Annual Review of Student Support Services

The Committee considered a report on the review of Student Support Service annual reports for 2017/18, highlighting areas of good practice and themes for consideration in the next reporting cycle.

The Committee noted that the revised reporting template and process was well received by support service areas and that the University Executive will consider the themes identified by the review. The Committee also noted that the Deputy Secretary Student Experience is currently considering how to set and measure service standards for the student support services in relation to the student experience.

The Committee noted that Estates participated in the process for the first time. The Committee agreed that in next year's report Estates should include more reflection on how they are managing current pressures on space and how they have listened to and responded to the needs of staff and students.

> **Action: Estates to include more reflective analysis in its 2018-19 report.**

The Committee approved the report and the areas identified for further consideration by the student support services.

> **Action: Academic Services to feedback to Student Support Services.**

5.   Evaluation of Mid-Course Feedback

The Committee considered an update on the evaluation of mid-course feedback carried out in March 2018.

The Committee agreed that the Assistant Principal (Assessment and Feedback) should carry out a follow up evaluation out in semester 2 to allow some longitudinal data comparison. This should be as light touch as practicable and include students, possibly via the SSLCs and using student representation structures.

The Committee agreed in principle that mid-course feedback should be extended to postgraduate taught provision (noting that this already takes place in many areas), and that it would consult with stakeholders on this proposed extension of the policy as part of the planned evaluation in Semester Two. The Committee also confirmed that it regarding mid-course feedback as relevant to online courses as on-campus courses.

The Committee also agreed that Schools should monitor the implementation of mid-course feedback through annual monitoring, review and reporting processes.

> **Action: Committee Secretary to feedback to Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback.**

6.   Annual Monitoring, Reporting and Review – Minor Changes

The Committee considered proposals for minor changes to the annual school and programme templates in response to feedback, an Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2015 recommendation, and the evaluation of mid-course feedback (see above).

The Committee approved the changes with the proviso that the Annual Programme Monitoring Template question 'How have students been/will students be informed of the actions that have been/will be taken in response to their feedback?' be amended to 'How has the feedback loop to all students been closed?'

7. **Degree Classification Outcomes CLOSED PAPER**

The Committee discussed the recently published UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA) report looking at the reasons behind the increase in the number of graduates receiving first and upper-second class degrees. Some of the recommendations are modest, others are potentially far-reaching. The University will participate in a UK-wide consultation early in the new year. The Committee agreed that the University will also hold an internal workshop to discuss how Schools can explore whether their patterns of degree classification outcomes are appropriate following on from the UKSCQA workshop.

Action: Academic Services to organise a Degree Classification Outcome workshop.

The Committee continues to monitor subject areas across the University for patterns in degree classification outcomes which diverge substantially from either the institution average or disciplinary comparators. To this end, the Committee agreed that it was content with the responses from the four areas identified as outliers at the April meeting. In particular, the Committee was content that the further response from one particular School provided an appropriate level of reflection on the upward trend, and that its proposed actions constituted an appropriate approach to calibrating marking practices to ensure that standards are maintained in the context of different approaches to assessment.

Action: Committee Secretary to feedback to the four schools.

8. **Students' Association School Reports**

The Committee considered the reports detailing School engagement with the Students' Association.

The Committee welcomed the insight the reports offered to the student population at a local level. The Committee agreed that Academic Services should include the information in the reports in internal review documentation. The Committee agreed that the reports, with an executive summary/overview, should be submitted to the Committee annually and then circulated by the Students' Association to: Heads of School; Directors of Teaching; Directors of Quality; Senior Tutors; Deans of Students; Deans of Quality; Heads of Teaching Organisation; Heads of Support Services; SSLC Chairs. The Committee also suggested that in future years the Students' Association provide an institutional-level report, in addition to the School-level reports.

Action: Academic Services to include Students' Association School Reports in internal review documentation.

Action: Students' Association to submit School and University level reports annually to the Committee.

The full reports are published on the Committee wiki:
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SQAC/Thursday+6+December+2018

9.   **Personal Tutor (PT) System Oversight Group**

The Committee approved a proposal from the PT System Oversight Group to change the timing of its annual meeting held to reflect on student survey results in relation to PT system. The meeting will now be held (either in person or via email) immediately after the National Student Survey and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey results are released in the summer. At this meeting, the PT System Oversight Group will consider the trends and implications for both Schools and the University and then feed comments on the PT system to the September meeting of the Sub Group considering the School annual quality reports. This will allow the latter group to make judgments and recommendations to Schools informed by the PT System Oversight Group's considerations. This will also allow the Committee to monitor the PT system within mainstream School/Deanery quality assurance processes.

For Information and Formal Business

10.   **Internal Review Reports and Responses**

The Committee confirmed that it was content with progress implementing the recommendations from the Teaching Programme Reviews (TPRs) of Biomedical Sciences and Education Programmes.

However, the Committee agreed that it was not wholly content with the progress implementing the recommendations from the TPR Medicine. The Committee recognised that while there are complex issues involved which require close working and negotiation with external partners, the number of actions still outstanding is disappointing. The Committee agreed that a further update on progress should be requested for submission to the 25 April 2019 meeting of the Committee. In preparation for this, the Convenor and Academic Services will hold a meeting with the team in Medicine to discuss progress and ways in which the University provide support.

Action: Academic Services to feedback to the reviewed areas.

11.   **Thematic Review**

11.1   **Mental Health Services Review 2015-16 - Implementation Update**

The Committee considered a progress update on the implementation of the recommendations from the Thematic Review of Mental Health Services, 2015-16.

The Committee noted that all the actions linked to the recommendations had now been completed or are integral to the ongoing work of the Student Mental Health Strategy Group. Therefore, the Committee agreed that it was content that the recommendations had been completed and that ongoing monitoring will be via the Strategy Group or mainstream reporting processes.

11.2   **Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) 2018-19 - Progress Update**

The Committee noted that the first meeting of the review panel will be held in January with the following panel membership:

- **Professor Rowena Arshad** OBE, Head of Moray House School of Education / Co-Director of the Centre for Education for Racial Equality in Scotland (CERES), (Review Convenor);
- **Professor Vick Gunn**, Head of Learning and Teaching, Glasgow School of Art;
- **Kai O'Doherty**, Vice President Welfare, Edinburgh University Students' Association (Student Representative);
- **Isabella Neergaard-Petersen**, Black and Minority Ethnic Officer, Edinburgh University Students' Association (Student Representative);
- **Laura Cattell**, Head of Widening Participation / Deputy Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions;
- **Dr Emily Sena**, Research Fellow, Centre for Clinical Brain Sciences (CCBS) / Co-convenor of The University of Edinburgh's Staff BME Network (Academic Representative).

12. **Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2020 - Update**

The Committee noted an update on preparations for the University's next ELIR.

13. **Enhancement Themes Institutional Plan - Year 2**

The Committee noted an update on the University's plan for year two of the Enhancement Theme, Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience.

14. **Knowledge Strategy Committee**

The Committee noted an update on matters considered by the Knowledge Strategy Committee.

15. **Any Other Business:**

Senate Committee Planning

The Committee was encouraged to respond to the email invitation (circulated on 4 December 2018) to comment on the priorities for student experience, learning and teaching that Colleges, Schools and support groups should engage with during the planning round.

16. **Date of Next Meeting:** Tuesday 27 February 2018, 10am, Raeburn Room, Old College

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

27 February 2019

Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2015 Reports

Executive Summary
The paper presents reports on activity undertaken since February 2018 for four of the six areas for development from the University's 2015 ELIR. The other two areas for development (workload allocation models and student data dashboards) are now considered complete in relation to the 2015 ELIR recommendations.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
The Committee has responsibility for monitoring progress against agreed actions.

Action requested
For discussion. The Committee is also asked to agree that these should be the final reports to recognise the fact that activities are being progressed and reported on through other mechanisms such as implementation plans for the Learning and Teaching Strategy, the Student Partnership Agreement, and the Student Experience Plan.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
Actions will be implemented and communicated by theme leads and/or other staff involved.

Resource / Risk / Compliance
1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   The implementation of the plans have resource implications for support services as well as for Colleges and Schools, which need to be taken account of when setting the priorities for the Senate Committees.
2. **Risk assessment**
   The ELIR has been managed within the University's risk management process.
3. **Equality and Diversity**
   The paper does not require an Equality Impact Assessment. Equality and diversity considerations will be taken into account by theme leads and/or other staff involved.
4. **Freedom of information**
   Open.

Key words
Enhancement-led Institutional Review, ELIR

Originator of the paper
Nichola Kett (Academic Services) with contributions from across the University and the Students' Association

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

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)
Final Theme Report

Theme: Assessment and Feedback

Recommendation 59. Subject-level staff who met the ELIR team indicated that discussions have been held at school level about approaches to providing feedback, and that there continued to be frustration around the comparatively low scores in a number of schools. **The University is encouraged to progress with its plans to engage in further analyses of NSS free text answers at school level, in addition to working with students in the schools concerned to address the matters raised.** (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 55, 56, 57, 58, 74)

Progress since February 2018

Further Analysis of NSS Free Text Answers at School Level
Student Systems and Administration will continue to produce School specific reports as part of an annual cycle, trialling different approaches to analysis and presentation to maximise the use of qualitative feedback from student surveys.

Working with Students in the Schools Concerned to Address Matters Raised
This will continue to be undertaken at School-level, using both local information and information provided through University-level initiatives. Mid-course feedback for undergraduate courses and course enhancement questionnaires (CEQs) for taught courses allow Schools to work with students to address matters in a timely manner.

In December 2018 Senate Quality Assurance Committee approved updates to the annual programme monitoring template, with the following updates relevant to addressing the ELIR 2015 recommendations:

- To add a question on the requirement for formative feedback for each course in response to the ELIR 2015 recommendation: "The University should ensure it is able to implement feedback policy and practice in a clear and consistent manner across the University to ensure that all students receive timely, relevant and high quality feedback at key points during their programmes. Particular attention should be paid to the provision of formative feedback opportunities that help students progress."
- To add a set of questions on the student voice with the aim of confirming that mid-course feedback and course enhancement questionnaires have been used, to identify themes from student feedback mechanisms, and understanding how the student feedback loop has been/will be closed.

Evaluation of impact

The Senate Learning and Teaching Committee has oversight of NSS, CEQ and PTES results and considers these annually. The Senate Quality Assurance Committee considers themes from external examiners reports annually.

Schools consider and respond to these sources of data as part of annual monitoring, review and reporting process.

Recommendation 60. The University should ensure it is able to **implement feedback policy and practice in a clear and consistent manner across the University** to ensure that all students receive timely, relevant and high quality feedback at key points during their programmes. Particular attention should be paid to the **provision of formative feedback opportunities** that help students progress. There would be benefit in **working closely with students at school level to understand their specific issues and needs**, and to consider whether students in particular disciplines, locations or modes of study would benefit from **contextualised approaches**. In carrying out this work, there would be value in the University **reflecting on the positive experiences of assessment and feedback reported by ODL students**. (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 55, 56, 57, 58, 74. ODL students: 49) Paragraph 74 repeats the recommendation to reflect on the positive experiences of assessment and feedback reported by ODL students, with the addition of **'with a view to replicating them across the student body'**.

Progress since February 2018

Implement Feedback Policy and Practice in a Clear and Consistent Manner across the University
The 'engagedED in feedback and assessment' guidance (replacing the Feedback Standards and Guiding Principles) impact is being reviewed by the Institute for Academic Development as part of a wider reflection on the use of the new series of guides.

Five Board of Studies Convenors and Administrators training sessions have been delivered. The sessions cover both pedagogical considerations for developing and reviewing course and programme proposals and clarification of Boards of Studies' roles and responsibilities. Key aspects of assessment and feedback are covered in the session e.g. the need for each course to have a formative feedback event and aligning learning outcomes and assessment.

Provision of Formative Feedback Opportunities
The balance of formative and summative feedback will continue to be explored through initiatives such as Leading Enhancement in Assessment and Feedback (LEAF), Edinburgh Learning Design Roadmap (ELDeR) and course and programme design workshops and events.

The March 2019 meeting of the Directors of Teaching network will include presentations on formative feedback and colleagues will be encouraged to submit contributions to the Teaching Matters blog on the subject.

Working Closely with Schools to Understand Specific Issues and Needs (Contextualising Approaches)

The Institute for Academic Development is working with colleagues in GeoSciences on LEAF activity in 2018/19. 10 ELDeRs have/will have taken place in academic session 2018/19.

Reflecting on the Positive Experience of Assessment and Feedback reported by Online Distance Learning Students (with a view to Replication)
The Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group continue to receive updates on the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences' electronic submission of assessment and return of feedback project.

Evaluation of impact

The Senate Learning and Teaching Committee has oversight of NSS, CEQ and PTES results and considers these annually. The Senate Quality Assurance Committee considers themes from external examiners reports annually.

Schools consider and respond to these sources of data as part of annual monitoring, review and reporting process.

A comprehensive evaluation of mid-course feedback was carried out in semester 2 2017/18 and will be repeated in semester 2 2018/19.

The Board of Studies training sessions are evaluated and results inform future developments and topics for discussion at Boards of Studies network events.

Attendance at Directors of Teaching Network events is monitored and feedback has been sought on the impact and utility of the 'engagEd in … feedback and assessment' guidance.

The Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group have agreed an approach to evaluating LEAF audits consisting quantitative data from NSS and a narrative on activity following audits. Courses and programmes that have been through an ELDeR process will also be evaluated.

Hits on relevant Teaching Matters blogs will be measured.

Online assessment and feedback activity and patterns are monitored and considered by the Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group.

Recommendation 94. There would be value in the University **reviewing the information provided to students about marking schemes**, building on good practice developed within some schools of expanding the descriptors of grade schemes and considering the possible benefit of developing grade descriptors at institutional level.

Recommendation 104. There would be benefit in the University **reviewing the information provided to students on the grade descriptors for the common marking schemes in use and to consider this as part of the wider area for development around implementing feedback policy in a clear and consistent manner across the University** (see paragraphs 61 and 75).

Progress since February 2018

Reviewing information provided to students on marking schemes and grade descriptors

The continued approach will be to recognise the importance of local context in making marking schemes and grade descriptors more transparent to students. The Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group is carrying out scoping work with Academic Services with a view to potential rationalisation and evolution of the current common marking schemes and will report to Senate Learning and Teaching Committee in semester 2 2018/19.

Evaluation of impact

Clarification of marking schemes and grade descriptors was not identified as an area for further development from the most recent consideration of School annual quality reports (as it was in 2018).

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

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)
Final Theme Report

Theme: Personal Tutor System

Recommendation 44. & 73. The ELIR team recognised the highly devolved nature of the University and the potential benefits of tailoring the Personal Tutor System to the needs of particular student groups and disciplines. Nonetheless, it was evident that the system was not working effectively for all student groups and there would be considerable benefit in the University **revisiting the way in which schools are implementing the system to ensure all students are able to benefit from the arrangements as intended**. There would be value in the University **providing additional clarification for students around the aims of the system, and signposting alternative avenues of student support, in order to align the expectations of students and staff undertaking the Personal Tutor role**. Paragraph 73 provides more directive text: 'The University should provide additional clarification for students around the aims of the system, and provide information about alternative avenues of student support' (See further background information at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 40, 41, 42, 43, 73)

Progress since February 2018

Revisiting the ways in which Schools are Implementing the System (to ensure all students benefit from arrangements as intended)

<u>Review of the Personal Tutor system</u>
As announced in October 2018 and outlined in the Student Experience Plan, the University undertake a holistic review of the Personal Tutor (PT) system which will link to a wider review of student support. Therefore, no structural changes have been made to or are currently proposed for the Personal Tutor system.

<u>Enhancements for 2017/18</u>
The planned PT "group practices" guidance was deprioritised.

<u>Enhancements made to reward, recruitment and recognition</u>
The figure for PT activities developed and recommended by the Senior Tutor Network will not be included in the University's Principles and Operational Guidance for the Development and Implementation of Academic Work Allocation Models. This is because the Guidance details high-level principles which are the responsibility of Colleges and Schools to use to develop and implement an appropriate model. The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences is undertaking work to harmonise and streamline the approach to workload allocation models, enabled by a data collection tool.

<u>Training and support</u>
The Student Mental Health training programme has continued into 2018/19. To date 631 staff have been trained through the programme. The delivery of the training events continues to be reviewed as part of the Student Mental Health Strategy Implementation Group and though the training is School based, steps have been taken to maximise

attendance from staff within the respective Colleges. We are working in partnership with the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust to further develop the online training modules available, and have launched a pilot project identifying 'champions' within Schools and departments to promote and facilitate the use of the online modules.

Due to the wide variety of roles across the University, it was not possible to implement the internal audit of Student Support Teams (SSTs) recommendation that a mandatory training plan be developed for SSTs. However, discussions to develop a non-mandatory professional development framework will start in March 2019.

The internal audit of SSTs also recommended that each College should have a Student Support Forum or equivalent platform and that the University-wide network should be re-established. Both these recommendations have been implemented.

Schools' implementation of the system
The PT Oversight Group met on 25 June 2018 to review School Personal Tutoring Statements and will continue to meet at this time in 2019 to review next year's statements.

In September 2018 the SQAC Sub Group tasked with reviewing School annual quality reports started to consider the reports with a particular focus on the PT system and making several recommendations where individual Schools' satisfaction with PTs had fallen or were low. Therefore this academic session's annual review of the operation of the PT system by the PT Oversight Group meeting was cancelled. SQAC subsequently approved a change to the timing of this strategic review meeting each year, moving it from semester one to immediately after the NSS and PTES results are released in the summer. At this meeting, the Group will consider the trends and implications for both Schools and the University and then feed comments on the PT system to the September meeting of the Sub Group considering the School annual quality reports. This will allow the latter group to make judgments and recommendations to Schools informed by the PT System Oversight Group's considerations. This will also allow SQAC to monitor the PT system within mainstream School QA processes.

Providing additional clarification for students around the aims of the system, and signposting alternative avenues of student support, in order to align the expectations of students and staff undertaking the Personal Tutor role

Clarification and communication
At its meeting on 25 June 2018 the PT Oversight Group noted that at the previous meeting, held on 6 November 2017, the Students' Association Vice President Education shared student feedback on the PT system. Also at the meeting on 6 November, the Group agreed to examine the options for a leaflet guide for PTs, one side noting examples of good practice and the other providing guidance akin to the 'Here to Help' publication. In response, consultation sessions were held with students (via a focus group held on 27 April 2018) and with staff (via the Senior Tutor Network meeting on 4 June 2018) to examine ways of improving communication of the aims and expectations of the PT system. The following was noted:

- Students and staff were in agreement that the central PT webpages for students (My Personal Tutor) and staff (Personal Tutors and Student Support Teams) contain all the relevant and necessary information but are too corporate and lacking the aesthetic appeal that would draw users back for repeat usage.

In response, minor enhancements were made to update information on Special

Circumstances, Interruption of Studies, and the new General Data Protection Regulations. Further consideration will be given to the format of the information contained on the webpages (see below).

- Students and staff were in agreement that a guidance leaflet for the PT system must clarify what each should expect of the other. There was agreement that the leaflet should be a brief, clear, and bulleted explanation of what PTs will and will not do.

The Group agreed that the leaflet should be a two-sided, electronic, A5 leaflet providing a high level description of the bare essentials of the PT system aimed at both students and staff which would be relevant (and not contradict the diversity of practice) in each of the 20 schools. It was agreed that the leaflet would be posted on the student PT web portal and circulated to Senior Tutors (for dissemination to their PTs) for the start of welcome week. During the summer of 2018 Academic Services produced a draft leaflet and circulated it for comment to the Group, EUSA Sabbaticals for Welfare and Education, and the College Offices. The text was approved by the Group and EUSA Sabbaticals for Welfare and Education but was delayed due to disagreement at College level as to the content. After several iterations, lasting well into the first semester, it proved impossible to reach an agreement on a basic text that could encompass the diversity of practice across the institution. This is indicative of one of the main challenges facing the PT system: the tension between local autonomy and diversity of delivery and the demand for greater consistency and standardisation.

Academic Services will continue to review PT system information (primarily website-based) to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and consistent/complimentary.

Confidential space
At its meeting on 25 June 2018, the PT Oversight Group considered the following recommendation from the internal audit of Student Support Teams:

Student Support Team Confidential Space

- Each Head of School should consider options for a confidential space that is available at short notice. A plan of action should be agreed and shared as appropriate. Longer term, each school should consider this issue when planning space requirements.

During the first semester of 2017/18 each Head of School was asked to action this recommendation within their School/Deanery by (1) considering options for confidential space that could be available at short notice, (2) agreeing and sharing a plan of action, and (3) ensuring that this issue was considered when planning space requirements longer term. College Deans of Students were then invited to review the responses from each School/Deanery in their College and comment as to whether, in their opinion, each of the three points has been addressed sufficiently. Follow-up responses were requested from a number of schools. The Group received and noted the follow-up responses.

Evaluation of impact

The uptake and impact of the enhancements made for 2017/18 were evaluated via the June 2018 Senior Tutor Network meeting.

As part of the annual monitoring, review and reporting processes, Schools are asked to provide a reflection on a performance indicator of 80% student satisfaction with their PT experience, with the figure drawn from NSS and PTES results.

As part of the implementation of the Learning and Teaching Strategy, there is a commitment to review and clarify the academic and pastoral support available to students (including that provided by Personal Tutors and Student Support Teams), communicate this more effectively to students and encourage them to engage with it.

The PT Oversight Group had previously concluded that more robust and granular internal survey data were required if meaningful conclusions were to be drawn and/or judgements made in regard to the relative performance of both Schools and individual PTs. The Assistant Principal Academic Support explored this concept with key stakeholders and it was concluded that this was not a viable way forward at this time.

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

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)
Final Report

Theme: Postgraduate Research Student (PGR) Experience

Effective communication and consistent implementation of the Code of Practice

The revised Code of Practice was approved by the Researcher Experience Committee (REC) in June 2018 and published in August 2018. The status of the Code has been confirmed as non-mandatory and it provides advice and guidance for supervisors and students that should be read in conjunction with the relevant regulations and policies, which are signposted from the Code. During the revision, some content was relocated into regulations and policy.

Publication was widely communicated via College Postgraduate Committees, College Administrative Forums, the Postgraduate Research Supervisor Network and the Academic Services' annual regulations communication. Academic Services provided a blog post in Teaching Matters (August 2018), an article in the PGR student newsletter (September 2018) and content was also included in relevant Institute for Academic Development (IAD) newsletters at the beginning of 2018/19.

Academic Services plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the revised Code during semester 1 of 2019/20 by getting user feedback from the PGR Supervisor Network, the Students' Association, relevant College committees and forums, and feedback from Supervisor Briefings facilitated by IAD.

Review the effectiveness and regularity of research supervisor training

Work on the Excellence in Doctoral Research and Career Development programme has continued. Further information and a progress report from June 2018 can be found at: http://edin.ac/2pFy7zo

One of the themes of this programme is Supervisor Training and Support, which aims to:
- Enhance the content of compulsory supervisor briefings by sharing practice across Colleges and ensuring updated database of resources.
- Identify, design and pilot optional training for supervisors, including facilitation guides for Schools to use.
- Consult with Schools and Colleges to design an online toolkit to support supervising at a distance.
- Explore ways in which to ensure accurate, central recording of supervision training.
- Identify ways to recognise and share practice of excellence in supervision.

Following on from work in 2017, the programme of optional Continuing Professional Development (CPD) events for supervisors has continued to be developed, with monthly informal supervisor network discussions and more formal events including, for example, focus on co-supervision and gaining accreditation for supervisory practice. Online

resources continue to be added to the IAD webpages for supervisors to support effective supervisory practice. Events and resources are communicated through the supervisor newsletter.

A task group to look at supervisor CPD was approved by REC in January 2018. The final report will go to REC in March 2019, where the Committee will be asked to support including a statement on the timing and mandatory nature of supervisor training in the Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2019/20, stating that all supervisors must attend a supervisor briefing every 5 years. A framework outlining content of additional online training will also be proposed and work will focus on developing this training in 2019. Principles of good supervision were developed by the task group and will be communicated to the Teaching and Academic Careers Task Group.

Feedback on supervisor briefings is collected by IAD. Questions are asked about the content and style of the workshop, as well as the facilitators approach. Feedback on the question 'my understanding of the subject or areas has been improved' from briefings run over the last two academic years has been 78% responded 4 or 5 (on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is best). Measuring impact will be considered as supervisor training is developed.

Analyse the needs and experience of PGR students (School, College and University) to ensure effective support (particularly in the context of increasing numbers) and clarify where students go for further support

At its meeting in January 2019, REC considered themes identified in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), internal postgraduate programme reviews and by PGR student reps, which have an effect on student experience. Past, current and planned activity in relation to PGR student experience was also considered. Actions were identified in relation to: induction; student-supervisor relationship expectations; and space.

Schools consider and respond to PRES data as part of annual monitoring, review and reporting process.

One of the strands of the Excellence in Doctoral Research and Career Development programme, Mentorship and Wellbeing, is working to:
- Explore the PGR mentor function across the University and identify a number of possible models. This involves benchmarking current practice, scoping and defining different models.
- Benchmark and carry out a gap analysis of support for PGR wellbeing across the University.

Two of the outcomes from this strand are as follows:
1. A full-time post was approved to look at expanding peer mentoring to PGR students. This post was jointly managed by IAD and the Student's Association and started in May 2018. Pilots for different models of postgraduate peer support were developed and have become established in some Schools. Additionally, the requirements for a toolkit for PGR peer support were mapped out. This work will continue with recruitment of a part time PhD student intern for 12 months due to start in Spring 2019. The intern will finalise toolkit and resources, carry out evaluations of existing pilots, and support new peer mentoring activities.
2. A comprehensive report on 'strategies for PGR wellbeing' was commissioned by IAD and produced in June 2017. This report sets out a set of recommendations for

> the University, REC and the Excellence Programme. The Mental Health Strategy Group has discussed this and REC will be involved in discussions.
>
> A pilot event for supervisors called Spotlight on … mental health and wellbeing support for PGR students was held in February 2018. This was a partnership between IAD, Student Counselling, Student Disability Service, the Student's Association and the Chaplaincy. The event was positively received by supervisors.
>
> Discussions are taking place on extending the Personal Tutor Student Mental Health training programme to supervisors.
>
> Updates on progress to June 2018 can be found here: https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/projects/excellence-in-doctoral-education
>
> **Training and support of PGR students who teach (including on assessment and feedback and are aware of career development resources through IAD)**
>
> Academic Services will evaluate the Policy on recruitment, support and developing tutors and demonstrators which was implemented in 2017/18 session.
>
> PGR students who teach can consult the IAD webpages for Tutors and Demonstrators for information on workshops, routes to Higher Education Academy accreditation and relevant resources. http://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/learning-teaching/staff/tutors-demonstrators

Recommendation 64. The majority of students who met the ELIR team had positive experiences with their supervisors, indicating that they felt supported and encouraged to engage with development and educational opportunities, including attendance at events and conferences. However, a small number of students did not feel that this was the case and they were not aware of what to do or where to go if they required further support. Not all of the students considered that the Code of Practice was implemented consistently. Heads of school outlined the roles of the co-supervisors in cases where students did not consider that their needs were being met, and acknowledged that further training for some research supervisors could be beneficial. The team encourages the University to review the effectiveness and regularity of research supervisor training.(Further background information at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 61,62,63,65,78)

Recommendation 66. The University should continue to analyse the needs and experience of postgraduate research students at school, college and institutional level to ensure that they are effectively supported, particularly in the context of the University's plans to increase the research student numbers. The University should review the effectiveness and regularity of supervisor training and ensure that the University's Code of Practice is communicated and implemented effectively. The University should also made certain that postgraduate research students who teach are properly trained and supported for the role (including in the provision of assessment and feedback) and are made aware of the career development resources available through the IAD.   [Para. 65 has background information to the recommendation on training for postgraduate research students who teach: "The training and development for tutors and demonstrators has developed since the 2011 ELIR with better oversight of tutors through guaranteed contracts and the appointment of a staff

member in the IAD who works specifically with this group. Nonetheless, during the current ELIR, undergraduate students expressed a level of dissatisfaction with teaching delivered by postgraduate research students; the research students who taught indicated to the ELIR team that they did not always feel sufficiently trained or prepared to do so."]

Recommendation 78. In the context of the University's ambitions to increase the postgraduate research student population, there would be considerable benefit in the institution continuing to analyse the needs and experience of postgraduate research students at school, college and institutional level to ensure that they are effectively supported. The University should review the effectiveness and regularity of supervisor training and ensure that the University's Code of Practice is communicated and implemented effectively. The University should also make certain that postgraduate research students who teach are properly trained and supported for the role (including in the provision of assessment and feedback) and are made aware of the career development resources available through the Institute for Academic Development.

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

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) Final Theme Report

Theme: Student Representation – College and School Level

Report author: Megan Brown, Edinburgh University Students' Association

36. The University recognises that student representation at the college level could be strengthened further, for example the time and volume of committee meetings in one college were identified by students as barriers to engagement; a flexible model designed to allow a group of representatives to share the load of committee attendance had, to date, achieved mixed success. The devolved structure gives considerable decision-making power to the colleges making it all the more important to have effective student representation at that level. The University is, therefore, encouraged to **progress with work to promote and implement more effective representation at the college level.** (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paras 36, 37, 39)
As our last report detailed, the Vice President Education (VPE) recommended that going forward College Committees should predominantly be attended by student representatives with knowledge of the College. Colleges agreed to this approach and so a call was sent to existing School and Programme Reps in Semester 1 of 2018/19 encouraging them to put themselves forward for College committee roles. 25 applications were received and student reps are now sitting on 12 committees spread across all 3 Colleges. Colleges have reported an increased attendance from students this academic year and we will continue to evaluate this in the coming years as the system embeds. The VPE continues to sit on College Learning and Teaching Committees and this continues to work effectively. The Students' Association and the University will carry on working together to effectively support students sitting on College level committees, including the use of the College Committee Student Member Handbook and the possibility of introducing briefings or an initial training session for new reps.
Evaluation of impact Attendance at College Committees has been higher and more consistent than in previous years. We will continue with the current model for 2019/20 and see if this trend continues. We will also gather qualitative feedback from College Committee Student Reps at the end of this academic year to hear their thoughts on their roles and what additional support and training (if any) they would recommend for future cohorts.
39. The University is encouraged to continue building on the existing constructive relationship with the Students' Association to **ensure there is more effective student representation at college and school level.** The University should **review the processes for appointing students to school committees and provide more effective training and preparation for the roles, ensuring that staff in schools understand the student roles and are able to support students to contribute effectively**. There would also be benefit in the University considering the **best ways of providing feedback to the wider student body about the action that is taken** in response to matters raised

through school and college-level committees. (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 36, 37, 38)

75. The University has a positive and constructive relationship with the Students' Association and it is encouraged to continue working in partnership to ensure there is **more effective student representation at college and school level.** The University should **review the processes for appointing students to school committees and provide more effective training and preparation for the roles, ensuring that staff in schools understand the student roles and are able to support students to contribute effectively**. There would also be benefit in the University considering **the best ways of providing feedback to the wider student body about the action that is taken** in response to matters raised through school and college level committees.

In our last update, the Students' Association was hopeful that 13 Schools would move to the new Programme Rep system for 2018/19. After further conversations with Schools over the summer, we are thrilled to report that 18 Schools at the University (out of a total of 24 Schools and Deaneries) chose to adopt the Programme Rep system for 2018/19. In the first semester of 2018/19 we recruited 1293 Reps. We are still calculating our final Rep totals for the whole 2018/19 academic year, but we estimate this number to be no more than 1600. This is compared to 2260 Reps registered in 2017/18. This is a significant step in the move towards a more manageable level of Rep numbers, and this total is set to lower again next year as the remaining Schools move to the Programme Rep system.

In the last report, we noted our plan to introduce in-person training for Reps across the University. This was initially scheduled to take place over 3 years, but due to the interest in moving to the new system we have reduced the timescale to 2 years. Programme Rep Trainers (students recruited by the Students' Association and trained by sparqs) facilitated 41 in-person training sessions in 2018/19. 448 Reps were trained in-person.

Alongside the changes to the Rep system, additional projects are ongoing which focus on Rep communications and feedback. The University and the Students' Association are currently working on a project to improve the ability for Reps to communicate with the students they represent. This is currently at the scoping stage, with the suitability of different tools being considered by the working group. Pilots using the shortlisted tools will be run in 2019/20 and a University-wide approach will be put in place by 2020/21. The University and the Students' Association are also working on a project which considers the current effectiveness of Student-Staff Liaison Committees, particularly focusing on issues which cannot be solved at the School level and how these are escalated. Recommendations from this project will be reported to Senate Learning and Teaching Committee in May 2019.

Evaluation of impact

Rep Training uptake has increased across the University. 84.3% of Reps have completed training (either online or in-person) as of Monday 12th November 2018 (when training closed for Semester 1). This is an increase of 15.8% Reps trained from the 68.5% trained in 2017/18. Training uptake has also increased in each College:

- College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science: 81.61% of Reps completed training, an increase of 13.91% from 67.7% trained Reps in 2017/18. There were 15 in person training sessions delivered for 7 Schools in CAHSS.
- College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine: 86.62% of Reps completed training, an increase of 18.12% from 68.5% trained Reps in 2017/18. There were 3 in person training sessions delivered for 2 Schools in CMVM.
- College of Science and Engineering: 90.79% of Reps completed training, an increase of 14.79% from 76% trained Reps in 2017/18. There were 9 in person training sessions delivered for 5 Schools in CSE.

93% of Reps who completed the in-person training would recommend the training to others.

There has also been a significant increase in Rep Lunch attendance (consistently between 60-80 Reps at those scheduled on our Central campus), as well as an increase in Reps visiting the Student Representation & Leadership Hub to speak with staff regarding any queries. We have also seen an increase in Reps engaging with other Programme Reps and the Representation team on the Programme Rep Facebook page.

The Centre for Open Learning adopted a Rep system for the first time this year, adopting the Programme Rep model. 100% of its Reps were trained via in-person training.

Some qualitative feedback from the In-Person Training:

- *"I'm more aware of my duties as a student rep and more confident about what I can do in the future"*
- *"It felt like we were being talked to personally"*
- *"Very informative! Safe space to ask questions"*
- *"I will be more proactive in approaching my coursemates and now know how to engage in meetings"*

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

27 February 2019

Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2020 – Update and Discussion of Contextualised Themes

Executive Summary
The paper updates Committee members on the University's preparations for its 2020 ELIR, and asks for their views on the proposed contextualised themes.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
Relevant to the University's strategic priority to improve the quality of the student experience and specifically the Student and Staff Experience Plan and the Learning and Teaching Strategy.

Action requested
To note the update on preparations and discuss the proposed contextualised themes, indicating prioritisation and any gaps.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
The views of Senate and its four committees are being sought and will be used by the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance and Academic Services to develop a final draft list of contextualised themes for discussion with the Quality Assurance Agency (Scotland) in late March 2019. The final list of contextualised themes will be approved by the Learning and Teaching Policy Group on 18 April 2019.

Resource / Risk / Compliance
1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   No additional actions are requested.

2. **Risk assessment**
   A successful ELIR outcome is of vital importance to the University.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   Will be considered as part of individual activities/projects.

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open.

Key words
ELIR, Enhancement-led Institutional Review

Originator of the paper
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14 January 2019

Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR)

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review is the method by which the Quality Assurance Agency (Scotland) reviews universities and other higher education institutions in Scotland. The last ELIR took place in 2015 and the University received the highest possible judgement, an outcome of 'effectiveness' in the management of academic standards and enhancing quality. The University's next ELIR takes place in October and November 2020.

A review team, comprising between 4-6 senior academic peer reviewers and student reviewers is appointed by the Quality Assurance Agency (Scotland) to conduct the ELIR and will visit the University twice, meeting with staff and students.

Key dates:
- Planning visit: Thursday 1 October 2020[1]
- Review Visit: Week beginning 16 November 2020 (visit likely to last 5 days)[2]

ELIR provides an opportunity for us to reflect on our approach to learning and teaching and the quality of our student experience, and to gain valuable feedback from an external review team. As such, ELIR is a process that we should embrace positively as we seek to enhance further both the student experience and the quality of our teaching, building on our many achievements to date since the last review.

In preparation for the review we are asked to develop a Reflective Analysis (RA) covering: contextual information; enhancing the student learning experience; strategy and practice for enhancing learning and teaching; academic standards and quality processes; and collaborative provision. The development of the RA will involve inputs from across the University and opportunity for feedback from students and staff to ensure that it reflects the strategies, practices and intentions across the whole University. The RA will be supported by an Advanced Information Set that comprises a set of supporting evidence (including a sample of key quality reports and an analysis of student feedback).

Management of the ELIR Process

Rather than establish a separate ELIR Steering Group for ELIR 2020 (as was the case for ELIR 2015), a small team comprising the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance and staff in Academic Services will lead the preparations, and the Learning and Teaching Policy Group (LTPG) will oversee these preparations. Papers and discussion items will be brought to LTPG at relevant intervals, and members will be asked to give comment on draft chapters of the RA as it develops. LTPG does not have student representation so regular meetings will be held with representatives from the Students' Association to inform ELIR preparations. Other committees and groups will also be consulted and a number of staff from across the University and the Students Association will be involved in drafting content for the RA.

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[1] The Planning Visit is likely to involve three meetings with colleagues from the institution. There will be a working meeting with the main contact from the institution, who is likely to be the senior member of staff with responsibility for leading the institution's preparations for ELIR. The ELIR team will meet with a group of student representatives, a key aim of which will be to establish the students' views of the topics that should be explored during the main Review Visit. There will be a further meeting with a group of staff involved at the discipline level.

[2] During the visit, the ELIR team will consider a range of the institution's documentation and hold meetings with staff and students.

Contextualisation of ELIR[3]

A key development of the ELIR process since last time means that we now have to identify, ahead of the review, themes that we wish the review team to focus on.

The intention is that this helps to contextualise the review process, ensuring it is more responsive to us and how we operate, our student population and our strategic priorities. Identifying appropriate themes is therefore crucial to ensure we get the greatest value from the review process.

Contextualised Themes

The themes will <u>not</u> be new activities, but should be existing or planned activities linked to our strategic priorities that we wish to focus on throughout the ELIR. They should be informed by a consideration of available evidence (such as student surveys and other key performance indicators) and discussions with staff and students.

Sources to Inform Contextualisation

Key sources of information we should consider include:

- Significant changes to the student population
- Outcomes of the last ELIR
- Significant changes in strategy, for example: Strategic Plan; Learning and Teaching Strategy; Student and Staff Experience Action Plan; Widening Participation Strategy; Student Mental Health Strategy
- Evaluation of student feedback (including the themes in the Student Partnership Agreement)
- Outcomes of quality assurance and enhancement processes*
- Quality Code mapping (the Code sets out fundamental principles that should apply to higher education quality across the UK and to which the University maps its policies and practices)
- Annual reports to the Scottish Funding Council (linked to *) and Outcome Agreement
- External surveys and related reporting e.g. NSS and DHLE (reflected on as part of *)

Proposed Contextualised Themes

Early consultations with stakeholders on potential contextualised themes have been held to date with the Senior Vice-Principal and other senior colleagues (including via LTPG); College Deans for Learning and Teaching and Quality, the Director of the Institute for Academic Development (IAD), and Students' Association representation.

From the consultations to date, the following long-list of suggested themes has been generated:

- Widening participation
- Academic community (including online)
- Student support (including use of data e.g. retention)
- Postgraduate research student experience
- Teaching and academic careers
- Data-driven innovation and the curriculum
- Community engagement
- Student voice (including co-creation of the curriculum)

[3] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaas/reviewing-he-in-scotland/elir4-handbook-2017.pdf?sfvrsn=178af581_16

- Use of data to manage learning and teaching.
- Employability

From the above long-list the following four themes are proposed. Views are sought on whether these should be the main themes we wish to focus on, in terms of using the ELIR to support our objectives. The RA provides opportunity for us to highlight other aspects not directly included under the proposed themes.

- Teaching and Academic Careers
  - This would include all the academic development work provided by IAD, plus the recent work of the Teaching and Academic Careers Task Group.
- Student Voice and Community
  - Including the work the Students' Association has done around representation and the work around student surveys, mid-course feedback and strengthening of other student voice mechanisms, but also including planned work and future directions under the new Student and Staff Experience Plan.
- Student Support
  - This will include an (expected) update on developments with student support following the focus on Personal Tutors in the last ELIR, but will refocus around the new plans under the Student and Staff Experience Plan for student support as well as including work around widening participation and considering student support more broadly than academic support.
- Student Skills and Employability
  - Including all work related to supporting the development of students' skills and attributes for employability.

Further Consultation

Throughout late February/early March, a series of both face-to-face and virtual sessions will be held giving students and staff the opportunity to feed in views on the proposed themes and to consider the evidence-base to put forward.

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

27 February 2019

Annual College Quality Reports
2017-18

Executive Summary
This paper presents the College annual quality reports for 2017-18.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
The paper is relevant to the Committee's remit to oversee the delivery of annual reporting from Schools and Colleges.

Action requested
The Committee is asked to discuss the reports, especially items noted in 'Themes for SQAC forward planning' (section 3) and the timing and function of the reports (in the light of the feedback from Colleges).

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
College reports should be considered by the relevant College committee. Should the Committee agree any actions, consideration will be given to how to communicate these.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   Not applicable.

2. **Risk assessment**
   No change to existing practice.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   No change to existing practice.

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open

Key words
College, annual, quality, report

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College Annual Quality Report

College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Academic Year: 2017/18

The report should cover all credit-bearing provision, including collaborative and postgraduate research programmes, and Massive Open Online Courses. Colleges are encouraged to use **bullet point** format. A limit of 300 words per section is suggested. Reports should be sent to Academic Services in January annually.

1. Reflection on progress with actions from the previous year

- **Student Support/Personal Tutor System:** following a College-wide review of the Personal Tutor System, led by the Dean of Students, a report was completed and submitted to the College's Planning and Resources Committee (CPRC). While the College will continue to identify and encourage opportunities for local enhancement, any structural changes will be guided by the planned University-wide review of the Personal Tutor System and student support structures more generally.
- **Joint Degree Programmes:** the Dean of Undergraduate Studies is continuing to lead enhancement work in this area, linking Schools together using a dedicated task group. The School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures (LLC), who own a large proportion of joint degree programmes, has initiated a two-year review of this provision in partnership with other Schools in the College. Progress is being recorded using a blog on the Teaching Matters website.
- **Student Experience Initiatives:** institutional plans to deliver a Student Experience Action Plan will define how College and School enhancement initiatives are shaped. In response to this plan, Schools have been submitting updates on key priorities to CPRC. The College Quality Assurance Committee (CQAC) continues to share and promote good practice emerging from School Annual Quality Reports. A dedicated Sharing Good Practice event is being planned for April 2019, following on from a University-wide event in February.
- **Widening Participation (WP):** the College continues to support the University's newly launched Widening Participation Strategy and implementation plan. College Committees and individual Schools are identifying where they can contribute to the strategy with a particular focus on progression and retention. To support this work a WP induction event was held in December 2018, with a further workshop planned for semester two. Entrance statistics for SIMD20 students (11%) are particularly encouraging. The Centre for Open Learning (COL) also reported that 44% of enrolments to the Access Programme in 2017/18 were from SIMD10 and SIMD20 backgrounds. COL continues to expand its support for WP student induction using the successful Moving On programme.
- **External Examiner Themes:** themes emerging from External Examiner reports across the last two years are largely consistent (see section 2), with the induction process, provision of information and materials and communication about key dates and responsibilities identified as areas where work is required. The College will use the sharing of good practice to help address local challenges in partnership with individual schools.
- **Withdrawals:** the numerical data on the rate of withdrawals will require ongoing monitoring to assess long term trends. Data from the last three years suggests a slight increase in the overall number of withdrawals at undergraduate level (see section 2). A recent report submitted to Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC) on non-continuation identifies a higher rate of non-continuation among certain groups of students; particularly mature male students. The College will continue to work with Schools through CQAC to monitor this data.

2. Overview of performance data across the college[1]

Undergraduate Taught: Key Data trends

- **Student numbers:** the total number of undergraduate students entering the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS) has grown by 12% since the 2013/14 session. The majority of School reports refer to capacity issues in estate and staffing infrastructure associated with substantial rises in these student numbers. Alongside the expansion of student numbers in COL and the School of Health and Social Sciences (HiSS), the largest percentage increases can be seen in the Business School (18%), Social and Political Science (SPS) (23%) and Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences (PPLS) (25%). There has also been a steady increase in the number of part-year visiting undergraduate students entering the College, rising by 48% between 2013/14 (1,776) and 2017/18 (2,624). The number of full-year visiting undergraduate students has dropped during the same period and overall numbers have levelled out for the 2018/19 session.

- **Degree classifications:** degree classification data is only currently available for the end of the 2016/17 academic session. The following trends can be identified:
    - Degree classifications awarded across the institution in the first class bracket have risen from 21% in 2007/08 to 29% in 2016/17. A parallel decline in the number of upper- (58% in 2007/08 to 56% in 2016/17) and lower-second class (18% in 2007/08 to 13% in 2016/17) awards is also noticeable.
    - While this institutional trend is generally in line with the Russell Group average, there is a more visible upward trend in the percentage of firsts awarded in some areas. For the 2016/17 academic session, the percentage of first-class honours degrees awarded is higher than the University average in LLC (36%) and Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) (35%). The School of Law shows an increase over the last two years, rising to 31% for 2016/17. This is considerably higher than the Russell Group average of 17%.
    - Moray House School of Education (MHSE) awarded double the number of firsts this year (rising from 9% to 18%), but this almost brings the School back into line with the sector average of 21%.
    - All Schools provided contextual commentary in their 2017/18 annual quality report submissions.

- **Withdrawals:** the rate of full-time undergraduate withdrawals is 8% for those entering in 2014/15. There was a noticeable spike in the School of Law withdrawals for 2013/14 entrants, increasing to 14%, but the withdrawal rate has remained constant for other cohorts and is 7% for 2014/15. The withdrawal rate in MHSE remains slightly higher than the College average at 11% for the 2014/15 entry cohort.

- **Course fail rates:** the average fail rate for pre-honours courses at level 7 and 8 decreased significantly from 3% in 2016/17 to 1.76% in 2017/18. Pre-honours fail rates are higher than the College average in HiSS (2.81%), Law (2.8%), Divinity (2.41%) and SPS (2.45%). Fail rates will be monitored to see whether the result is sustained or an anomaly.
  For honours level courses at level 9 and 10 the fail rate is largely consistent with a slight rise from 1.77% in 2016/17 to 1.92% for this year. The honours course fail rate in Law has risen from 2.06% in 2016/17 to 3.3% in 2017/18 and is the only noticeable outlier.

  For students from a Widening Participation background, available data suggests that the pre-honours and honours course fail rate is higher at 3.06% and 2.79% respectively. The College will continue to monitor this under the Support to Progress and Support to Succeed strands of the University's Widening Participation Strategy.

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[1] It should be noted that these percentage changes often reflect small numbers in some Schools.

Postgraduate Taught: Key Data trends

- **Student numbers:** from admissions data we know that the postgraduate taught population has grown by 42% since 2013/14. Similar references to the impact of this growth on estate and staffing infrastructure have been made in most School reports. The number of students entering CAHSS to undertake a taught Masters has increased by 39% over five years: 2013/14 (2,342 FT, 203 PT), 2014/15 (2,496 FT, 254 PT), 2016/17 (3,075 FT, 266 PT), 2017/18 (3,264 FT, 195 PT).
- **Postgraduate Taught progression:** withdrawal rates have remained steady for full-time and part-time students (2% and 12% respectively) over the last four years.

Postgraduate Research: Key Data trends

- **PGR Withdrawals:** the number of withdrawals for full-time students continues to decline year on year (by entry session: 2011/12 = 14%, 2012/13 = 11%, 2013/14 = 10%). Although decreasing, this remains high for part-time students (by entry session: 2011/12 = 42%, 2012/13 = 33%, 2013/14 = 32%, 2014/15 = 29%). Financial and personal reasons were again cited as the main reason for withdrawal.
- **PhD Submissions:** available data suggests that on average the time taken to submit has remained fairly consistent (48 months) for cohorts entering between 2009/10 and 2012/13. It should also be noted that the number of students who are yet to submit is 9% for the 2012/13 cohort and 13% for the 2013/14 cohort.
- **MSc Research awards:** the proportion of students gaining merit and distinction has broadly remained consistent this year, with 7% awarded a pass, 38% merit and 43% distinction. A general downward trend for the number of passes awarded and an upward trend for the award of merit during this period is visible; the percentage of distinctions awarded has remained constant.

Student Satisfaction: Surveys

- **National Student Survey (NSS):** the 2018 results were mixed with noticeable decreases in satisfaction in areas including Overall Satisfaction, Organisation and Management, Learning Community and the Personal Tutor question. Significant decreases were noted in some Schools for the Personal Tutor question, however satisfaction scores have increased in this area for the School of History, Classics and Archaeology (HCA), LLC and MHSE. Schools continue to complete thematic analysis at both school and programme-level. Across the College there are some high-level recurring patterns, and CPRC discussed NSS results at a dedicated meeting in September. This year, as in previous years, it has not been possible to identify any action points that would be applicable across all schools.
- **Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES):** the results show an overall drop in satisfaction from 82% to 76% for 2018 (0.6% lower than the Russell Group average), with 5-6% decreases in the themes of Assessment and Feedback (69%), Organisation and Management (70%) and Academic Community (61%). The lowest recorded scores were for 'I feel part of an academic community' (61%), 'there is sufficient contact time' (61%) and 'I was encouraged to be involved in decisions about how my course is run' (59%). These are areas where the University is currently performing poorly against the sector. Overall satisfaction increased in Economics (83%) where scores for academic community (80%) and contact time (75%) are noticeably higher.

The College is providing ongoing support through good practice sharing and focus groups with School representatives, and student experience is a standing item on CPRC. The College and Schools continue to investigate the mismatch between data sets collected locally and national surveys.

External Examiner Reports – Taught

- **Undergraduate:** Schools across the College received a total of 567 commendations and 248 suggestions. The high number of commendations is a very positive outcome and the College will identify ways of sharing the good practice identified by External Examiners in their reports. A total of 50 issues were raised with most focusing on the Provision of Information (13) or the Assessment Process (15) – access to systems, timing of communications about key dates and responsibilities, sample sizes and tight turnaround times for reviewing work were highlighted and will be investigated further in collaboration with Schools.
- **Postgraduate:** a total of 440 commendations, 195 suggestions and 63 issues were recorded. Again, the high number of commendations is a positive result. Issues noted fall under the following themes: Provision of Information (30), the Assessment Process (11) and Boards of Examiners Meetings (12). Comments focused on the high volume of coursework samples, tight turnaround times and poor communication about dates of meetings.

3. Themes for SQAC forward planning

- **Data Sources, Analysis and Insight**: recent feedback suggests that the data sources available for strategic planning and quality assurance purposes are too disparate and housed within complex and inaccessible systems. In last year's report, data discrepancies were noted between the Student Data Dashboards and Business Intelligence Suite and this has subsequently lowered confidence in these resources. The College requests that one definitive system is developed to provide basic but accurate data on student numbers and other key performance indicators at course, programme, Subject Area, School and College level.
- **School and Programme Quality System (SPQS)**: support is requested from Information Services and Student Systems to expand on the success of this well designed and popular system across the institution. This system has been used for two years in CAHSS and was piloted in the College of Science and Engineering (CSE) last year. Support is requested to maintain this system for both Colleges and for a full institutional roll-out to support annual quality reporting. A Power BI Tool is currently in development for the thematic analysis of all reports, which is envisaged will support the upcoming Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR).
- **Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQs)**: the College requests that continued support be provided for centrally managed course-level feedback mechanisms. A number of major concerns about the format, flexibility and delivery of CEQs and the sharing of their results were raised with the Director of Student Systems and Administration. We welcome the recent establishment of a working group to facilitate enhancement work in this area. The College and individual Schools will actively contribute to the work of this group.

4. College action plan

- **Sharing Good Practice:** enhancement through the sharing of good practice will continue to form a major part of the remit of CQAC. The College will identify new and effective ways of promoting good practice to enhance the student and staff experience, using dedicated focus groups to support this initiative in collaboration with the Institute for Academic Development (IAD).
- **Withdrawals:** the data available on student withdrawals suggests that there is a slight upward trend in non-continuation; the SLTC report on non-continuation also identifies specific groups that are more likely to withdraw from study. The College plans to monitor this trend, using this

data to track and support progression and retention for all students with a specific focus on early intervention.

- **Common Marking Scheme:** the College was asked to examine ways of ensuring greater consistency and confidence in the marking scheme/s. The Deans of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies submitted a paper to SLTC in November, in collaboration with the Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback, which outlines some of the main concerns. We welcome the scoping work that will be taken forward for streamlining the common marking schemes.
- **Assessment and Feedback**: the College will continue to monitor the movement to online submission of assessment and feedback. The Undergraduate Learning and Teaching and Postgraduate Studies Committees are working with the College's Chief Information Officer to support schools as they move to online submission and marking of dissertations. CQAC is also engaging student feedback after School concerns were raised about the impact of the 15-day turnaround on providing high quality feedback.
- **Postgraduate Action Plan**: the Dean of Postgraduate Studies continues to support Schools to implement the [Postgraduate Research Action Plan](). Following a short life working group, a [Postgraduate Taught Action Plan]() has also been developed for implementation in the 2018-19 session.
- **Course feedback**: in collaboration with Student Systems, the College continues to support the implementation of mid-course feedback on all undergraduate and postgraduate courses. College will work with the IAD to promote diverse methods for engaging students in mid-course feedback, emphasising its primary purpose in facilitating dialogue and enhancement. Although response rates remain comparatively low for CEQs, the College will continue to discuss ways of enhancing engagement including facilitating their delivery through LEARN.

January 2019

Appendix 1

The supporting data used in section two of the report was taken from School Annual Quality Reports and from the centrally maintained data sources that support annual quality reporting across the institution (https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/annualqualitydata.pdf):

Undergraduate Taught: Key Data trends

- **Student numbers:** BI Suite: Entrants Report 10 years
- **Degree classifications:** GASP report on Degree Classifications over 10 years
- **Withdrawals:** BI Suite: Completion rate of entrants – 4 year UG
- **Course fail rates:** Power BI Dashboard data provided by Student Systems

Postgraduate Taught: Key Data trends

- **Student numbers:** BI Suite: Entrants Report 10 years
- **Postgraduate Taught progression:** BI Suite: Completion rate of PGT entrants

Postgraduate Research: Key Data trends

- **PGR Withdrawals:** BI Suite: PGR Progression and Outcomes Report
- **PhD Submissions:** BI Suite: PGR Progression and Outcomes Report
- **MSc Research awards:** BI Suite: Completion rate of MSc by Research entrants

Student Satisfaction: Surveys

- **National Student Survey (NSS):** Student Surveys Unit – NSS Results 2018
- **Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES):** Student Surveys Unit – PTES Results 2018

External Examiner Reports – Taught

- **Undergraduate:** BI Suite: External Examiner Reporting – Feedback by Theme
- **Postgraduate:** BI Suite: External Examiner Reporting – Feedback by Theme

College Annual Quality Report

College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Academic Year - 2017/2018

The report should cover all credit-bearing provision, including collaborative and postgraduate research programmes, and Massive Open Online Courses. Colleges are encouraged to use **bullet point** format. A limit of 300 words per section is suggested. Reports should be sent to Academic Services in January annually.

Glossary:

DBMS = Deanery of Biomedical Sciences

DCS – Deanery of Clinical Sciences

DMGPHS = Deanery of Molecular, Genetics and Population Health Sciences

MBChB – Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery (Medicine Degree)

R(D)SVS = Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies

1. Reflection on progress with actions from the previous year

Good progress has been made with many of the College actions planned in last year's report. Some are complete, others ongoing and will be reported on again next year. The direction of travel is positive and shows engagement across the College.

- MBChB: *Further activities will be undertaken to make teaching and admin staff more accessible to students. Continue to work towards improving communications with NHS staff.*
  Progress: Medical Education is moving accommodation to one area of Chancellor's building (move completing April 2019). Having all teams in one space will make it easier for students to locate staff and access student support in a more confidential manner.
  College Communications is currently working on a communication project for the MBChB programme, looking at the best ways to communicate to both staff and students. It is due to be finalised in January 2019.

- *MBChB timetabling – migration to central system*
  Progress: The timetabling project has been merged into the Service Excellence Programme (SEP) timetabling stream. It is thought that timetabling and room bookings will be held centrally for 2019-20 but further work is needed by the central team to ensure they can meet the MBChB requirements.

- *Across the College - work will continue to improve NSS scores and focus on the developing of a greater sense of community.* Progress:
  Bioquarter Campus: Status: planning for a new biomedical and medical teaching building progresses. The outline business case was approved by Estates Committee in March 2018. Architects will be appointed in January 2019. Timeline dependent on capital prioritisation discussions underway at University level.
  DMBS: Starting January 2019. Two initiatives to develop sense of community; Informal student and staff 'Coffee and cake conversations'; Workshop/ brainstorming session for staff and students to identify ways to reinforce a sense of academic community.

  Note: NSS results were disappointing in most areas again this year. Each area has reflected, issues have been discussed at College level. Positive changes implemented last year will hopefully be reflected in NSS 2019.

- *New opportunities for dissemination of good practice and innovation will continue to be sought.*
  Progress:
  The College Annual Good Practice Showcase on 6th March 2018 was extended to include both UG and PG. Next event on 3rd April 2019 to be opened by the Principal.
  The College designed a poster for the University LT Conference in June 2018.
  Colleagues from the College will be presenting at the University QAE event on Feb 6th 2019.
  DBMS – NEW - at academic staff meetings, standing item where Director of QA promotes examples of good practice in the deanery

- *The College will seek to institute a single Concessions Committee and will engage with the Service Excellence Programme, especially in the areas of extensions, special circumstances and studying away,*

Progress: on review of current practice and required concession decisions, the College will develop a process of decision delegations to various parts of Schools or College as appropriate. We intend to align UG and PGT where possible. There are already very established processes for PGT.

Engagement with SEP – College and School/Deanery-based colleagues have been participating in various SEP workshops on all strands of the programme.

- *The Edinburgh Medical School is piloting an Academic Workload Allocation Model in BMS in 2017-18, with a view to rolling it out in the other Deaneries for 2018-19.*
  Progress: WAM Pilot in DBMS is ongoing. Project Initiation Document with Simitive has been signed off and training has been received. DBMS are in the process of configuring the system to their requirements. Systems build and completion of data import templates will be completed in February with user acceptance testing early in March 2019. They hope to go live 1st April 2019.

- Additional items to note during 2017/18:
  o College Quality Officer - confirmed as permanent in October 2018. Allowing; continued development of our processes, procedures and systems, improved communication between College QAEC and both SQAC and Schools/Deaneries (QAE and LTC)
  o New Dean of Quality for CMVM and new Head of Academic Administration for CMVM
  o The College QAE committee will review the commendations and recommendations across all TPRs and PPRs carried out within the College annually; identify common themes, potential actions to support areas for development, highlight good practice. Common issues so far; NHS staff role in UoE teaching, value and perceived value of teaching relative to research, promotion, reputation. Common commendations; Engagement with IAD to support programme development, staff and students.

2.	Overview of performance data across the college

- **UG applications and entrants:**
Entry 2018 – 6,942 applications show a continuing upward trend although Biomedical Sciences saw fall in applications. Across the College:
  - a slight fall in % male applicants 38 to 33%.
  - a fall in number of Scottish applicants (continuing a 3 year trend) although BVM&S saw an increase this year.
  - An increase in number of RUK and overseas applicants (matching trend of 3 years),
  - EU applicants – increased again after a fall in applicants for entry in 2017.
  - Conversion rates similar to last year across the College.

- **PGT applications and entrants:**
Across the College:
  - 9 on-campus, 39 ODL, 7 on campus MSc by Research programmes.
  - Entry 2018 – 1304 students. This is an upward trend in numbers compared to previous years (entry 2017 – 1241).
  - Variable success when relating to target numbers although many programmes have a niche market and are professional or CPD programmes. Some notably over-target- On-campus - Master of Public Health, Biomedical Sciences (Zhejiang), ODL – Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health, Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases. Some of those coming in under target are new programmes and are therefore in their infancy. Programme marketing and sustainability are monitored regularly by College PGT committee.

- **PGR – recruitment**
The number of entrants back up from last year (162 versus 148) and more closely aligned to figures seen over the previous two years (171 and 170). Primarily due to return to previous recruitment numbers for UK students in Deanery of Molecular, Genetics and Population Health Sciences. Gender balance static (approx. 60-65% female). Figures also stable in relation to age demographic. There are no noticeable deviations from trends in any of the Schools/Deaneries.

Student Outcomes:
- **UG provision** - Course results for 2017/18 continue to show a marginally higher proportion of grades A2, A3 and B awarded than the University (UoE) average, with fewer grades A1, C, D and F. This is consistent with the grade profiles noted last year. Within CMVM, Widening Participation students were awarded fewer grade A with a greater percentage of grade B and C but a similar percentage of D and F grades when compared to non-WP. A similar trend is seen in grade awards for male compared to female students.

- **PGR** – across the College - average time to complete has seen a shallow-falling three year trend from 47 to 43 months. Similar trend seen across all Schools/Deaneries.
  College is showing a decreasing trend in number of withdrawals although start point in low single figures per School/Deanery anyway (2017/18 – only 6 across the College).

- **Degree classifications –**
All Schools/Deaneries within the College have considered, where appropriate, the percentages and trends in degree classification within their areas and reflected on these in the Annual reports.
  DBMS reported a drop in the number of 1st class degrees (2017/18: 21% vs 2016/17: 28%) and an unusually high proportion of 2:1 degrees (74% of all degrees). Although long-term trends are generally stable. The Deanery has just implemented an harmonised dissertation feedback and marking sheet to encourage the award of the full range of marks.
  DCS programmes do not report any exceptional change in classification patterns but will review and discuss this in 2018/19.
  DMGPHS No programmes reported any inappropriate patterns. Student performance is as expected and in line with benchmarks.

- **NSS**
The University saw a fall in overall satisfaction and across all primary themes compared to 2017. Two out of the three reporting areas within the College also saw falls in overall satisfaction and across most primary themes.
  o DBMS saw notable falls in Learning Community (-10.3%), student voice (-4.7%) and Personal Tutor (-8.3%). DBMS now sits close to the University performance levels with the exception of assessment and feedback (52.5% versus 60.8% for UoE), and employability and skills – theme introduced in 2018 – (52.1% versus 69.7% for UoE).
  o MBChB saw notable falls in all but one parameter in 2018. Assessment and feedback and organisation and management are clearly below the University scores. The fall in assessment and feedback is disappointing after an increase in 2017. Student voice was disappointing (-10.8% to 50.8). However the Deanery experienced a very positive increase in Personal Tutor score (+ 12.7% to 78.7%). This is the reverse of the trend seen across the rest of the College and the University in general. Employability and skills was also greatly above the University overall (87.9% versus 69.7%).
  o BVM&S saw a general increase across most themes including overall satisfaction (92.9% to 99.3%). A fall of 7.9% was seen in organisation and management, not unexpected due to staff absences and changes across the year in the Veterinary Teaching Organisation. There was also a fall on Personal Tutor by 3.4% to 76.3%. Employability, as across the College is very positive at 96.2%. All parameters are notably above the University scores except organisation and management (68.5% versus 69.3% for UoE).
  The College continues to discuss plans to improve the results both at Learning and Teaching, and Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committees. Sharing good practice, common themes and supporting each area to formulate and implement plans are key processes

- **PTES**
  College primary theme scores and overall satisfaction are comparable with or above the other Colleges. Performance across the College in most themes are comparable with the UoE scores. Medical School scores are notably above the University averages.
  Response rates are challenging at 27-55% across the College.
  Overall satisfaction is stable at 87-89% across the College except Edinburgh Medical School performs at a higher level of 98% with a positive trend in scores for Skills development and personal tutor (up 9 and 11% respectively). Both DMGPHS and DBMS saw increases in Dissertation or major project scores (10% and 8% respectively). DMGPHS also saw positive scores for Personal Tutor (10%) and academic community (6%).
  R(D)SVS and Clinical Sciences saw stable scores compared to 2017 except R(D)SVS saw a fall of 8% for Dissertation or Major Project which was reported as due to the loss of a programme coordinator at a key point being disruptive.

- **Course Enhancement Questionnaires**
  The overall completion rate across the College including both UG and PGT provision, although not high, is greater than that seen for the University (UG and PGT combined 40% versus 34%). There is some variation between cohorts with DCS seeing noticeably higher response rates in UG students compared to the other areas of the College, perhaps linked to the small cohort size. There is less variance seen in the PG-level response rates, College 49%, UoE 44%.
  The mean scores for core questions and staff questions across the College align closely with those seen at institutional level. In general only small variations are observed between different areas of the College across most core questions although greater differences are seen in UG compared to PGT scores.

There were less favourable mean scores from UG students across all areas of the College in response to '**Feedback so far has been helpful and informative'** which continues to be a challenge and is a key action point this year.

- **MOOCS**
  R(D)SVS - 5 MOOCs ran in 2017/18. All have increased numbers of active learners and percentage completing the course (18 – 24%). All have seen a rise in their feedback ratings (range 4.7 – 4.8/5).
  DBMS - one MOOC "Understanding Obesity". 4784 enrolled on the course last year (up 63%) and 179 completing. Rating is 4.5/5.
  DMGPHS - Sit Less Get Active MOOC continues to be popular with 150000 ever learners and 30000 active learners.

3.	Themes for SQAC forward planning

- **Common problems and repeated, continuing problems from across the College are sent to SQAC as part of School/Deanery Annual QA Reporting.**
  We request intra-year updates on progress with items identified as University issues in School/Deanery QA reports not only those within the remit of SQAC but also those forwarded to other areas of the University.

- **Pace and extent of changes and central university initiatives**.
  Change and enhancement are to be welcomed. However when these are frequent and with tight timelines implementation can be very time consuming and detrimental to staff, both academic and professional, whilst they try to maintain quality of the student experience and learning and teaching.

- **Increasing student numbers and push to increase further.**
  This is putting notable pressure on staff – academic and professional. This includes teaching, feedback, admin but also provision of Personal Tutors.

- **Timetabling.**
  Errors in course timetables are reported as significant in number and impacts the student and staff experience but is frequently out-with the control of School/Deaneries. The number of inappropriate rooms, including location, being reported is notable and impacts on the student experience.

FROM LAST YEAR'S COLLEGE QA REPORT BUT NOT YET ADDRESSED.
- CEQ response rates and consistency and timeliness of release to students and return to course organisers.
- EERS –
  one report only per EE even if reporting on more than one course/programme roles (and thus permissions) mutually exclusive
  List of External examiners is alphabetical by forename NOT surname in EERS and BI Suite reports
- Support for student mental health
- Mobile phone coverage at Easter Bush campus

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4. College action plan *(– for the support of teaching excellence and capacity building)*

- To share examples of good practice around feedback and closing feedback loops.
- To enhance College External Examiner processes
- Support Schools/Deaneries to increase student survey response rates.
- Continue to share and enhance QA processes between each area of the College. Learning, sharing and communication across the College structure, both PG and UG.
- Review visibility of student feedback and QA documentation across each area of the College – enhancing communication - the student voice (see section 2 – NSS results 2018) and the staff voice in relation to learning and teaching
- Encourage all areas to direct students to IAD resources and to work with IAD to develop new resources in response to identified needs within the College
- Request regular updates on progress with items identified as College issues in School/Deanery QA reports but out-with the remit of the CQAEC
- Continue to learn from TPRs and PPRs across College – identify common themes and consider what actions CQAEC could undertake to support areas for development or to highlight good practice and innovation.
- Monitor progress with ongoing actions from 2016/2017 report.

1.	Reflection on progress with actions from the previous year

Curriculum Approval Review and Enhancement

College Curriculum Approval Board

The College Curriculum Approval Board (CCAB) was established in November 2017, and is chaired by the Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture (formerly Dean of Quality Assurance), ensuring relevant QA themes are communicated between CCAB and the College Quality Assurance Committee (CQAC).

The Board has brought a greater level of consistency to decision making across both taught and research provision for programme approval. To support its operations, the Board introduced a 2 stage process to new programme approval, a new closure procedure and a new procedure for major changes. This was accompanied by a new suite of documentation and templates to assist proposers which members can access in a dedicated section in the Academic Affairs SharePoint. Additionally the Academic Affairs Team has created new internal processes, promoting better record keeping and tracking of actions following all meetings.

School and Programme Quality System Trial

A project was approved for three schools in CSE to trial the School and Programme Quality System (SPQS) used by the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS). The trial had limited success due to constraints in the character limit permitted for online submission of the reports. As Schools had been asked to comment on additional points in the report, they were unable to keep to the character limit and therefore submitted reports manually. Additionally, one School reported that they had not been able to cluster programmes for reporting and therefore could not use the system. The College is committed to working with CAHSS in their development with SPQS in the hope that more Schools can use the system, with a view to moving to online submission in future if reports can be of a more appropriate length, and clustered more effectively.

Student Experience and Engagement

Student Experience Task Group (2017/18)

As part of the College Plan it was agreed to set up a Student Experience Task Group to tackle levels of dissatisfaction amongst the student body. The aim of the task group was to develop specific proposals for improving our students' educational experience, with the further aim of developing a one-day conference to facilitate broader discussion.

In practice, it was decided to postpone the Conference due to the announcement of the University's Learning and Teaching Conference which was planned for a similar date as the proposed Student Experience Conference. The work of the Task Group therefore focused on the sharing of good practice examples between schools in the College. A newly constituted task group has been set up for 2018/19 – see section 4 below for further details.

Student Support Forum

Significant developments took place in 2017/18 in the development and introduction of the Student Support Forum/ Network. Establishment of the Forum was challenging due to the differing nature of support structures between Schools in CSE, with staff having a variety of job titles and responsibilities. After extensive work with Schools, CSE identified appropriate staff and contacts within Schools and the CSE Student Support Forum is scheduled to meet twice per year, with additional correspondence taking place via the dedicated email group.

Student Representation

Work was undertaken at the start of the 2017/18 academic year to work with the Representation and Democracy Manager at EUSA to look at ways of engaging with students more effectively at the Kings Buildings campus. The inclusion of the VP for Education at all meetings improved student representation within the College. We are confident that stronger links have been established with EUSA and elected representatives and further work is taking place in 2018/19 to strengthen these relationships and introduce a stronger student voice within the College's committees and activities.

Data and Technology

Data Analytics

There has been significant improvement to the information the College receives in relation to Course Evaluation Questionnaires. Student Systems worked with the three Colleges to create an output which would be more useful in the creation of purposeful commentary, and the Data Dashboard also enhanced the use of data across the College.

Technology Enhanced Learning

The College Technology Enhanced Learning Forum discussed matters such as the use of ExamOnline, Notable, the VLE Standards Project and the Learning Technology role.

Flexible Learning

In 2017/18, further work went into the standardisation of Lecture Capture, with workshops run at forums in the College of Science and Engineering for academic and administrative staff. This has now been superseded by widespread use of the Replay service.

In 2018/19, we intend that the College will engage in further discussion about the opportunities presented by online learning, the ways in which online learning is currently delivered, and what the optimum might be for the College in terms of cost effectiveness, delivery and scalability. A further consideration in relation to flexible learning is the adaptability of the estate to accommodate different styles of learning.

Best Practice

Best practice was identified and shared at the College Quality Assurance Committee. Academic Affairs also contributed a Good Practice Poster to the University Learning and Teaching Conference. We are actively engaging with colleagues across the College to ascertain whether a College-wide Best Practice event would be of benefit, in the context of wider University initiatives to share best practice.

Industrial Partnerships

The College approved a new BSc Data Science Graduate Apprenticeship in collaboration with PricewaterhouseCoopers. The programme seeks to combine a thorough grounding in the theory and practice of data science, with experience of the application of these techniques in a business context. The incorporates work-based professional practice courses, supported by a professional practice tutor. Additionally, students are required to undergo internal appraisal processes carried out by the industrial partner. The lessons learned in creating this collaborative programme will be applied to future industrial partnerships.

2. Overview of performance data across the college

Taught Provision

Withdrawals and Exit Awards

Undergraduate Withdrawals

- The withdrawal rate in 2017/8 decreased slightly in comparison to previous years, to 7.2% across the College. This is an improvement based on the period from 2013/14 – 2016/17 when withdrawal rates were fairly static at approximately 9%. Informatics saw the highest number of withdrawals in 2017/8 at 9.5%, while GeoSciences had the lowest withdrawal rate at 4.7%.

- The withdrawal rate typically decreased with each year of study, with the highest number of withdrawals in year 1, followed by years 2 and 3. The exception to this was Engineering, which had a higher rate of withdrawal (without exit award) in year 2.

Undergraduate Exit Awards

- In 2017/8 the premature exit award rate as 7.6% across the College. This represented a decrease in the number of premature exit awards issued, down from 9.2% in 2016/7.

Postgraduate Taught

- Withdrawal rates remained low, at 3% of the overall PGT cohort within the College. All Schools had a low rate of withdrawal, with all under 5% except Physics and Astronomy which had a withdrawal rate of 6% in 2017/18.

Degree Classification

Undergraduate

2017/18	1st class		2.1		2.2		3		Exit Award	
School	%	Change	%	Change	%	Change	%	Change	%	Change
School of Biological Sciences	29.45	5.16	47.24	2.48	15.34	-1.8	1.23	0.28	6.75	-6.11
School of Chemistry	34.62	9.81	37.5	2.62	13.46	1.06	0	0	14.42	-13.48
School of Engineering	24.44	-2.54	50	10.95	14.04	-4.69	1.12	-1.42	10.39	-2.31
School of GeoSciences	20	-1.63	65.83	7.46	8.75	-3.09	0.42	0.01	4.99	-2.77
School of Informatics	57.87	17.52	19.29	-17.55	5.08	-4.57	0	0	17.77	4.62
School of Mathematics	52.82	13.57	27.46	2.23	9.15	-6.74	0	-0.93	10.57	-8.12
School of Physics and Astronomy	31.78	2.28	37.98	4.17	17.05	0.5	0	-2.88	13.18	-4.09

Table 1: Showing % of degree classifications awarded in each school in 2017/18 along with % increase or decrease from 2016/17

- The percentage of First Class degrees awarded across all Undergraduate programmes increased to 33.5% (+6.5%). Whilst the number of female students receiving a first class degree as a percentage of the total population remained at 13%, the percentage of male students receiving a first increased significantly, from 14% to 20% of the total population. The overall percentage split of females to males in the first class degree boundary was 39% to 61%.

- Informatics and Mathematics saw significant increases in the number of first class degrees awarded, at 17.52% and 13.57% respectively.

- All Schools except Informatics saw a decrease in the number of students exiting with a premature exit award.

- The percentage of all Female students achieving a First Class degree rose to 32% (+5%) in 2017/18, from 27%.

- The percentage share of First Class degrees awarded to BAME students increased from 12% in 2016/17 to 19% in 2017/18.
- The percentage of BAME students achieving a First class degree (within the BAME cohort) rose to 31% (+10%), up from 21% in 2016/17.

Widening Participation (WP)

- 249 WP students successfully completed an award in 2017/18 (18% of all successfully completed awards). Of these, the distribution was 47% Female, 53% Male.
- 38.6% of the total number of withdrawn students were from a WP background, with 75% of those being male and 25% female.
- This data gives a mandate for the prioritisation of the 'support to succeed' aspect of the University's Widening Participation agenda, and the College is seeking to address the higher proportion of withdrawals in this category across all year groups. We are aware of a number of examples of good practice across the College in this regard, and the QA Action Plan for 2018/19 will explore how to focus support for WP students.

External Examiner Comment Themes

Analysis continues to show a high number of commendations across the University and a low number of issues. There was a good rate of return in CSE but not 100% submission by externals. External examiners generally positive with no significant concerns about academic standards in the College. Limited comments were received on programme development and enhancement of the student experience. The assessment process was deemed good including the range of assessments.

Negative comments concerned tight timeframes and limited notification of meetings. Some variable practice across Schools in terms of moderation was identified.

Recommendations:

- Discuss use of algorithms for degree classification of borderlines.
- Use full scale of marking i.e. do not compress around 70%.
- Address consistency in moderation approach.

Student Satisfaction

Undergraduate – NSS

- The NSS results for 2017/18 (published August 2018) saw the average overall satisfaction rate for the College fall from 81.8% to 78.8%. This was in line with the University +/- 1%.
- An increase in overall satisfaction was recorded for the School of Informatics (84.0% (+11.3%)), School of Biological Sciences (87.7% (+4.3%)), and the School of Physics and Astronomy (81.5% (+2.9%)).
- The School of Engineering had an overall satisfaction score of 66.0% (-16%), returning to a score more in line with the 2016 result.
- The School of GeoSciences saw the largest decrease in overall satisfaction, with a score of 66.7 (-16.5%).
- Smaller decreases were recorded in the School of Chemistry, -1.3% at 86.7% satisfaction, and the School of Mathematics, -5.8% at 79.2% overall satisfaction.
- The scores of five schools exceeded the University average of 77.4% (Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Informatics, Physics and Astronomy, Mathematics).

Undergraduate – Course Enhancement Questionnaire (CEQ)

- The response rate across the College, which was already low, reduced in 2017/8 to 28.6% (-3.4%). The College remains very much in line with University averages. The results therefore represent a minority view point which should be taken into consideration when analysing the data and it is noted that the data is most useful when considered in context with qualitative comments.
- Typically, the highest performing areas for both pre-honours and honours courses related to the staff-level questions, with a pre-honours college average of 88% for 'The lecturer was organised and well prepared', and an honours course college average of 88% for 'the lecturer was approachable and willing to help'.

Postgraduate – PTES

- Overall satisfaction in the College reduced in 2018 to 78% (-3%). This reduction was slightly less than the reduction in the University average, down -4% to 79%.
- All areas in the PTES saw a reduction in the level of satisfaction except for Resources and Services, which remained static at 87%.
- Academic Community saw the greatest decrease in satisfaction, at 61% (-5%). 81.5% (+2.9%). The School of Physics and Astronomy, however, saw a significant increase in satisfaction in this area, rising +19% to 82% satisfaction. Physics and Astronomy also saw a significant increase in satisfaction relating to skills development, rising to 86% satisfaction (+19%).
- Personal Tutor satisfaction rose to 100% in the School of Chemistry (+8%).

Postgraduate - Course Enhancement Questionnaire (CEQ)

- The College response rate at around 37% slightly exceeded the University average of around 32%.
- The School of Chemistry had the highest overall response rate at 65.9%. The lowest response rate came from the School of Informatics at 20%, although it should be noted that the number of responses in Informatics significantly outnumbered the total number of responses from Chemistry (54 responses in Chemistry to 635 in Informatics).
- Responses to the staff questions typically received a higher % of positive scores than the course-related questions.

Research Provision

Withdrawals

- The trend seen in previous reports i.e. a drop in the number of withdrawals has continued for the cohort (2014/15 start) that has a Maximum Period of Study end date in 2017/18. This is also reflected in the reduced number of students needing to extend study into Year 5 of programme.
- As percentage figures, 6.6% of the 2014/15 entry population withdrew compared to 7.6% of the 2013/14 population and 11.7% of the 2012/13 population.
- The introduction of mandatory online reporting of PGR annual reviews has reinforced the requirement that each student's progression is reviewed annually. In addition, Supervisor Briefings held annually in schools have in recent years focussed on dealing with progression issues at the earliest stage possible. Supervisors are advised that 'best practice' is for students to be reviewed regularly with any nascent issues dealt with through signposting

- various support services, interruption of study or extensions to period of study. This provides opportunities for students to get 'back on track' before a lack of progress or other issues get to a critical point at which the only option is for a student to withdraw or to be excluded.
- Whilst 'withdrawal' in regulatory terms is distinct from 'exclusion', our student system does not differentiate. However, for sub-categories that relate to exclusion, for example "written off after lapse of time", the trend is also downwards. The number of students excluded is significantly less than the number of students withdrawing voluntarily. The only sub-category that relates to exclusion where an increase is recorded in 2014/15 is "non-attendance or non-engagement" but the increase is very small (3 students from the 2014/15 cohort compared to 1 from the 2013/14 cohort).
- The majority of students withdraw for "personal reasons". Although there are sub-categories for "health" and "financial reasons", it is likely that students withdrawing will select "personal reasons" rather than declare that their reasons are related to health or financial difficulties.
- Students starting in 2015/16 cohort onwards are still within the Maximum Period of Study and therefore not considered in points above.

The available data indicate that there is a high level of support for students to encourage them to stay on programme; however in some cases it is evident that students are enrolled for long periods of time and some reflection may be required to ensure that progression reviews are not encouraging students to stay on programme if they are unlikely to complete.

Submission rates

According to BI suite data submitted to Senatus Researcher Experience Committee on 25th January 2019, only 13 full-time doctoral students who commenced study in 2014/15 (and were therefore due to submit a thesis for assessment in 2017/18) submitted later than the maximum period of study of 48 months. This is in contrast to preceding cohorts when 45 of the 2013/14 and 48 of the 2014/15 cohorts submitted after the maximum period of study.

Annual Progression Review

Supervisor briefings held in schools annually have in recent years strongly emphasised the benefits of monitoring progression regularly and also dealing with any progression issues timeously. These briefings also allow College to highlight the range of services within the University to support students experiencing difficulties. This has reduced the number of late submissions and also the numbers of students at risk of being excluded for 'lapse of time' i.e. not submitting thesis and no extension in place.

The introduction of online reporting of the annual progression review for PGR students has not been without its problems, however, mandatory reporting has also highlighted to students as well as staff the need for an annual review. Previously, many staff and students assumed that once the first year review had passed satisfactorily, no further formal review was required.

External Examiner Comment Themes

In 2017/18 comments from external examiners continues to be collated from the Part III Examiner Reports and shared with CQAC. Very few were negative with the majority of negative comments relating to the University's (not College's) approach to requiring verification of the external's 'right to work'.

3.   Themes for CQAC forward planning

Student Services Review

The Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture recently participated in the review of Student Services Reporting (led by Senate Quality Assurance Committee). Particular themes which resonated with the College, and which we will reflect further on, relate to:

- Effective use of KPIs in relation to College activity.
- Working in partnership to support the student experience, ensuring services are joined-up in support of the student journey.
- Affordability and finance. This is a particularly strong issue for students and staff based at King's Buildings Campus, where there is limited choice and therefore opportunities for ensuring affordability and provision of facilities to enable students and staff to reduce costs are essential.

Estates

Concerns relating to the suitability of estates and facilities remain a primary concern for students and staff, with this issue being mentioned in virtually every School Quality Assurance Report and a key topic of discussion at a variety of College meetings and fora.

The College will continue to strongly support and actively contribute to estates developments and improvements on the King's Buildings campus, whilst recognising that the College's and Schools' ambitions will be constrained by capital availability/ affordability. The main developments in 2018/19 will be the launch and rollout of full usage of Murchison House, and continuing work to develop phase 1 of the proposed KB Nucleus for 2021/22.

Latterly, issues have been raised around the removal of 24 hour study space at KB campus. Although additional study space has been introduced in the newly refurbished Murchison House, this does not have 24h access. Investigations are ongoing at the time of writing as to how 24h access can be reinstated at KB campus.

The University-wide review of capital investment in estates is likely to impact some of the planned capital projects (i.e. new buildings/ significant renovation works) and therefore it will be essential to consider how to offset this impact with investment in less significant improvement works/ freeing up of community space for school use.

Student Exchanges

The College Curriculum Approval Board (CCAB) has identified a need to ensure that Student Exchange Agreements clearly demonstrate how curriculum matching has been done with the UoE School and overseas institution. Currently the level of detail is highly variable and a more considered approach is required in order to ensure due diligence, and be assured that visiting students will get a positive experience.

CRTC Away Day

The Away Day held for members of the College Researcher Training Committee in April 2018 included lengthy discussion of annual progression review practice in each of our seven schools. Whilst the schools operate the reviews in different ways, there are commonalities such as a review panel that includes supervisor(s) and someone external to the supervisory team, review and feedback on documentation submitted by the student and face-to-face meetings with the student. This was an opportunity for sharing best practice and the

comments from all three of our student representatives who attended were particularly valuable.

Increased collaboration CRTC/CQAC
In lieu of a joint CRTC/CQAC meeting, the Convener and Secretary of the College Quality Assurance Committee were invited to join members of CRTC at the CRTC Away Day. The Secretary was able to attend and contribute to the discussion relating to progression monitoring.

Systems Data
Whilst the Student Data Dashboard was positively received, the upgrade to PowerBI and subsequent outage of this facility has presented challenges in obtaining data for a range of activities.

We will also continue to liaise with Student Systems and improvement programmes such as the Service Excellence Programme to improve the quality of systems, data and record-keeping. There is variability in the usefulness of data provided to colleagues for generating reports, and the College will work with colleagues in Student Systems and Academic Services to ensure the usefulness/ standardisation of data.

There is also a need to ensure that there is ongoing enhancement to the Assessment Hub to ensure it is fit-for purpose and provides adequate data to support Exam Board and Progression activity. This fits with the need more generally to ensure up-to-date and fit-for-purpose systems.

Improved PGR data remains a key requirement, with improvements needed to the accessibility and accuracy of PGR data and an enhancement to the Student Data Dashboard to include this would be a welcome development.

Course Evaluation Questionnaires
The College has concerns about the limited usefulness of Course Evaluation Questionnaires (CEQs) due to low return rates, potential gender bias, and the use and dissemination of questionnaire results, and we aim to address this within our action plan for 2018/19.

Learning Analytics
In line with the enhancement theme 'Evidence for Enhancement', the Student Experience Task Group has identified the use of learning analytics to enhance the student experience as an area of interest in 2018/19, and we are working with the College IT Liaison Officer to identify potential developments in this area. The College is also looking to engage with IAD projects looking at the use of data in evidence-based enhancement activity.

4. College action plan

Student Exchanges
1. A wider conversation is required within the College relating to its strategy for recruitment and allocation of visiting students (incoming) and students going abroad for a period of study (outgoing), in order to ensure that Schools have capacity to facilitate exchanges and that there is reciprocity in the numbers of incoming and outgoing students. In 2018/19 we aim to develop a greater understanding of the 'pinch points' caused by visiting students,

and the impact of visiting students on schools in the College, with a view to developing a strategy that will maximise schools' abilities to accommodate visiting students in taught activities whilst minimising the pressure this creates for schools.

2. We will investigate the possibility of student exchanges in year 2 rather than year 3 for interested schools.

Brexit planning: International Experience

3. The University has promised all students will have an international experience. Whilst the implications of Brexit are not fully clear at the time of writing, it presents a risk that there will be a reduced opportunity for Scottish/ RUK students to interact with other international students in the classroom. There may also be challenges presented in relation to field trips and study abroad if these become more expensive or administratively complex. The College will monitor these issues in 2018/19 and will develop a plan to mitigate against any reduction to the international opportunities available to students. This will include consideration of how to attract international/ EU students to retain diversity in the classroom.

Collaborations

4. There is a lack of clarity in the support arrangements and process details for creation and negotiation of collaborations, leading to varied practice across the University. This creates unnecessary risk around a high-profile and strategically important area of business. We therefore intend to work with the Service Excellence Programme (if Collaborations is deemed to be in scope) or colleagues across the University (if out of SA&S Scope) to clarify the arrangements for support of collaborations.

Improvements around Quality Processes

5. We are intending to create a secure area in SharePoint for the College Curriculum Approval Board so that documentation can be submitted and shared electronically, as an interim measure in anticipation of improved Programme and Course Information Management processes resulting from the Service Excellence Programme.

6. The College will work with CAHSS in their development of SPQS in the hope that more Schools can use the system, with a view to moving to online submission for the entire College if the system can be developed so that reports can be of a more appropriate length, and clustered more effectively.

7. In 2018/19 we will continue to engage with the Student Surveys Unit to understand the value of CEQs and, if surveying in this format is to continue, improve the usefulness of CEQs. We will also look at methodologies to improve the analysis of results, for example use of a traffic-lighting system to facilitate review of issues (noting contextual data is critical to this and that this may be subject to bias).

Student Representation

8. The College will engage more proactively with Student Representatives, including taking a more structured approach to briefing students prior to Committee discussions so they are able to consult with the student body and proactively contribute; and bringing together all College Student Representatives, EUSA Colleagues, and key members of the College including the Head of College, Deans, and Registrar for a Representatives Networking Event.

Student Experience Project

9. Enhancement of the student experience is an ongoing priority, and the Task Group has been reconstituted for 2018/19, now with membership of all Heads of School and Directors of Professional Services in the College. The Student Experience Project aims to make improvements across the full breadth of Science and Engineering student experiences, from transport and catering through to learning, teaching and postgraduate research provision. It is intended that a number of specific projects/ actions will be commissioned by the Task Group aimed at enhancement of the Student Experience, including a move towards adoption of a single borderline algorithm for the College, and standardisation/ improvement of moderation processes.

Learning Analytics

10. The College of Science and Engineering would like the opportunity to engage with Undergraduate and Postgraduate taught students across the seven schools that comprise the College, to understand the attitudes and appetite towards the use of Learning Analytics to support their learning journeys. We are bidding for small project funding to initiate a project working with students across the College's seven schools to explore whether using a system such as OnTask, would provide the level of engagement and support students indicate they need to achieve a positive experience of academic support throughout their courses.

Service Excellence Programme

11. The College has and will continue to actively engage with the work of the Service Excellence Programme to ensure that we are fully involved in the scoping and design of solutions. It is hoped that the College's feedback is valued and that the many areas of good practice across the College will be represented in the solutions taken forward by the Programme.

Lecture Recording

12. CSE engagement with lecture recording has been high and we have benefited from capturing of blackboards, whiteboards and PowerPoint. We are looking for ways to improve both the staff and student experience as a result of lecture capture, but note that dependability of the service is key in keeping staff informed, including offering regular training. We will work with colleagues in IS to ensure the effective use of Media Hopper across the College.

February 2019

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

27 February 2019

Postgraduate Taught External Examiner Reports: Thematic Analysis 2017/18

Executive Summary

Analysis of data from the External Examiner Reporting System (EERS) for postgraduate taught programmes in 2017/18. The paper covers major themes arising from commendations, suggestions and issues in the External Examiners' reports. It also provides comparison with the previous year, an overview of the number and stage of reports. Nothing was identified for institutional escalation in the 2017/18 External Examiner reports.

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

The paper is relevant to the Committee's responsibility for the quality assurance framework.

Action requested

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee is invited to discuss the report and identify any University-level actions (assigning to specific areas as appropriate) to take as a result. College representatives should ensure that the outcomes of the Committee's discussions are available to and considered by the relevant College committee(s).

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

The Committee to consider how any agreed action will be implemented and communicated.

Resource / Risk / Compliance
1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   The paper is a report on activity and no resource implications are identified.
2. **Risk assessment**
   The paper is a report on activity and no risk assessment is required.
3. **Equality and Diversity**
   The paper is a report on activity and an equality impact assessment is not required.
4. **Freedom of information**
   The paper is **open**

Originator of the paper
Susan Hunter, Academic Services
20 February 2019

# Postgraduate Taught External Examiner Reports: Thematic Analysis 2017/18

1. Introduction

1.1 This report provides a thematic analysis of External Examiner reports for postgraduate taught programmes. Analysis was conducted based on data available from the online reporting system on 20 February 2019.

1.2 **Action requested:** Senatus Quality Assurance Committee is invited to discuss the report and identify any University-level actions (assigning to specific areas as appropriate).

2. Analysis of major themes

2.1 Analysis continues to show a high number of commendations across the University and a low number of issues. The total number of examiner reports has increased slightly in 2017/18 compared with the previous year.

2.2 All Schools received commendations from their External Examiner reports. The average commendation rate across all Schools was 55%.

Figure 1
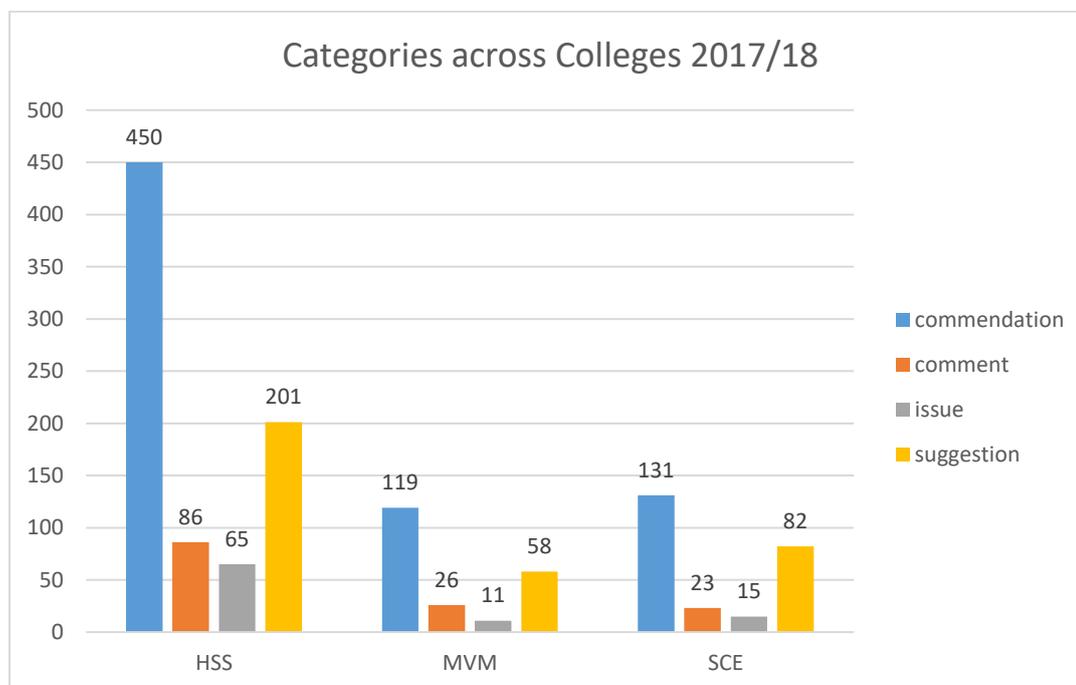
HSS (College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences), MVM (College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine), SCE (College of Science and Engineering). The number of issues, commendations and so on are in the context of the relative size of each college.

Figure 2
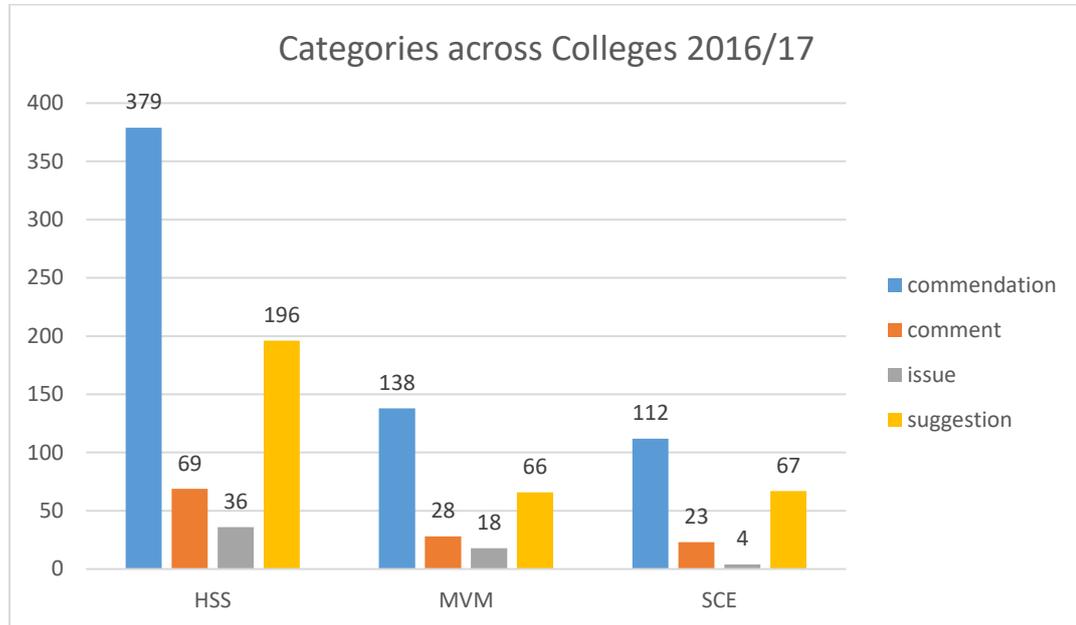
HSS (College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences), MVM (College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine), SCE (College of Science and Engineering). The number of issues, commendations and so on are in the context of the relative size of each college.

2.3   Commendations

The main sub-theme commended across all three Colleges was Good Practice and Innovation. Many commendations were course or programme specific, however the most often occurring type of commendation related to the range, quality and diversity of teaching, learning and assessment. Some examples of External Examiners' comments are given below:

"The range of teaching, learning and assessment methods in this course is really to be congratulated - from writing blogs (with clear, weekly instructions) to world-class dissertations, the course is clearly stretching the ablest of students and supporting the less able ones."

"…the mixture of types of assessment used on the programme are extremely impressive, and that the use of assignment briefs that are partially prescriptive and partially open-ended is a great way of getting students into the mindset required at M-level."

"The wide range of assessment tasks reflect a programme (and in particular a teaching team) that really stretches the student learning."

2.4   Suggestions

The Programme Development and Enhancement theme attracted the highest number of suggestions. This theme has one sub-theme, Enhancing Student Learning Experience. Suggestions were spread across the three Colleges and suggestions were varied and often subject-specific. The most often recurring theme were suggestions relating to using a range of assessment methods and ensuring clarity on assessment criteria.

2.5   Issues

Overall, 91 issues were raised. The main themes were Provision of Information (35 issues) and The Assessment Process (22 issues) made across all three Colleges. Examiners raised most issues in the sub-theme Boards of Examiners Arrangements. These mainly related to meeting date changes and miscommunication on date changes. Schools have responded to the majority of comments raised.

3.   Additional analysis of issues, suggestions and comments

Analysis showed two main additional themes emerging consistently across Schools and Colleges. These were the same themes highlighted in the 2016/17 report to this Committee.

3.1   **Provision of information to examiners**

External Examiners suggested some additional information would be useful to enable them to carry out their roles. Some experienced difficulty with the timely provision of information and materials, and some had difficulty in accessing or navigating systems. External Examiners also suggested that it would be helpful to set Boards of Examiners meeting dates at the start of the year.

3.2   **Marking and moderation**

External Examiners suggested clarity on moderation procedures and marking criteria and descriptors would be helpful for examiners, markers and students. Consistency of marking and using the full range of marks also featured in some External Examiner reports.

Schools have responded to or are preparing responses for the majority of these reports.

4.   **Overview of the number of External Examiner Reports**

4.1   Outlined in the figure and table below are the number of postgraduate taught (PGT) reports by College comparing the previous two academic years.

	2017/18	2016/17

College		
College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS)	191	179
College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM)	53	51
College of Science and Engineering (CSE)	36	36
Total number of reports	280	266

Table 1: Number of postgraduate taught reports by College

4.2   Outlined in the figures below are the number and stage of postgraduate taught reports in each College for 2017/18 and 2016/17.

Table 2: Number and stage of reports by College and academic year

	Report Stage	2017/18	2016/17
AHSS	Response Submitted (complete)	90	94
	Draft Response (response outstanding)	51	35
	Draft Report (report outstanding)	26	28
	Cancelled	0	2
	Submitted Offline	0	0*
	Allocation (see below)	24	20
MVM	Response Submitted	28	32
	Draft Response	8	7
	Draft Report	11	5
	Cancelled	0	0
	Submitted Offline	4*	4
	Allocation	2	3
SCE	Response Submitted	23	21
	Draft Response	9	9
	Draft Report	3	5
	Cancelled	0	3
	Submitted Offline	1	3

∗   College reports number expected to increase

4.2   Reports at the allocation stage relate to reports that have not been allocated to an Academic Response Coordinator and therefore have not been circulated to the External Examiner. This can happen for a variety of reasons, for example, due to the External Examiner no longer being utilised. Further analysis of the reasons for non-submission of reports will be included in next year's report.

4.3   CAHSS are continuing to work with Schools to ensure any outstanding draft reports are received and that responses are completed as soon as possible. The College expects a small number of reports to be submitted offline due to issues with allocation deadlines in EERS and more general problems with the structure of the reporting system. The College plans to investigate this issue further with Student Systems.

4.4   CMVM continues to experience issues with external examiners not being able to access the system. This is has been particularly acute in the Deanery of Clinical Sciences with eight offline reports expected. However, the Deanery report that the problems have been resolved and they expect online submission of all reports next year.

5. Items identified by Academic Response Coordinators as Institutional matters

5.1   **External Examiners reports did not raise anything for escalation to institutional level in 2017/18**. Academic Response Coordinators can decide whether an issue, suggestion or commendation is a School, College or Institutional matter and escalate it accordingly. In the previous year, Academic Response Coordinators flagged six **suggestions** for institutional escalation and reported to the Committee in February 2018.

Table 4: Institutional escalation themes 2016/17

Programme Development and Enhancement (suggestion) (CAHSS – 2, CSE – 1)	3
Provision of Information (suggestion) (CAHSS)	2
The Assessment Process (suggestion) (CAHSS)	1

Susan Hunter
Academic Services
20 February 2019

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

27 February 2019

External Examiner Reporting System:
Total Reports for 2017-18

Executive Summary

A summary of the total number of undergraduate and postgraduate taught reports submitted through the External Examiner Reporting System. Reports are illustrated by status, stage and College.

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

The paper aligns with the University's strategic objective of leadership in learning.

Action requested

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee is invited to note the paper.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

The paper is for information and no action is associated with it.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   The paper is for information and no resource implications are identified
2. **Risk assessment**
   The paper is for information and no risk assessment is required.
3. **Equality and Diversity**
   The paper is for information and equality impact assessment is not required.
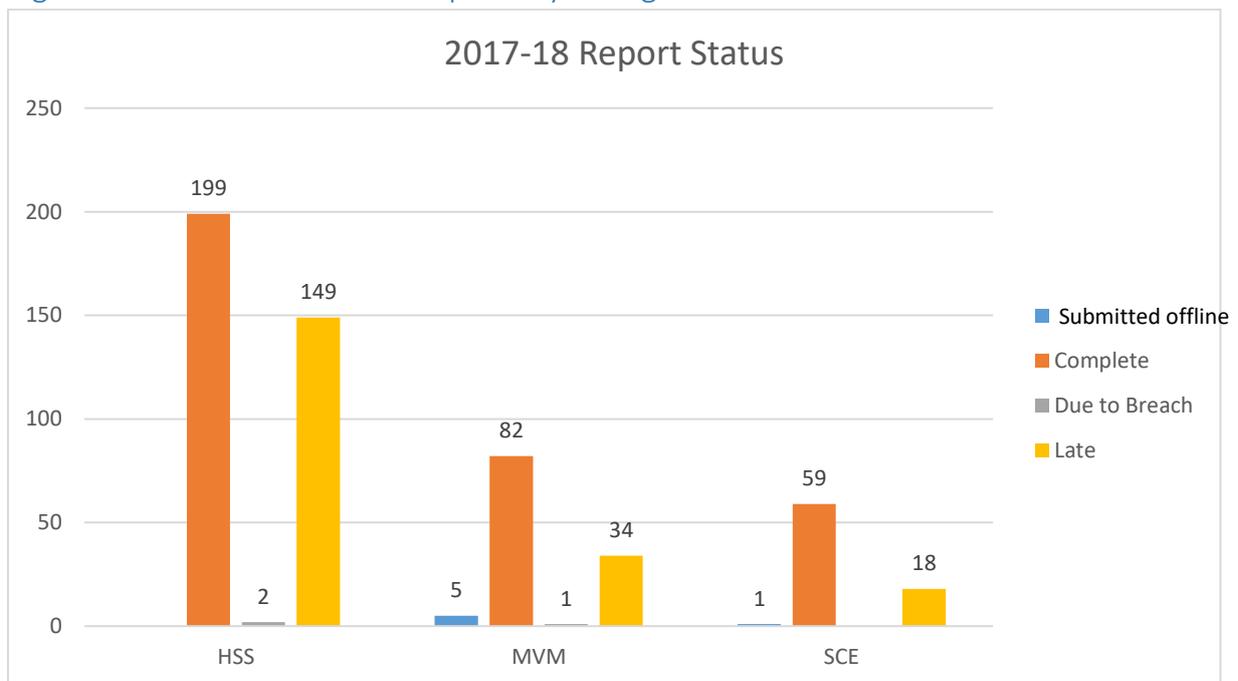4. **Freedom of information**
   The paper is **open**

Originator of the paper

Susan Hunter, Academic Services
20 February 2019

External Examiner Reporting System: Total reports for 2017/18

In 2017/18 a total of 550 undergraduate and postgraduate taught external examiner reports were submitted via the system. This report draws on data from the system on 20 February 2019.
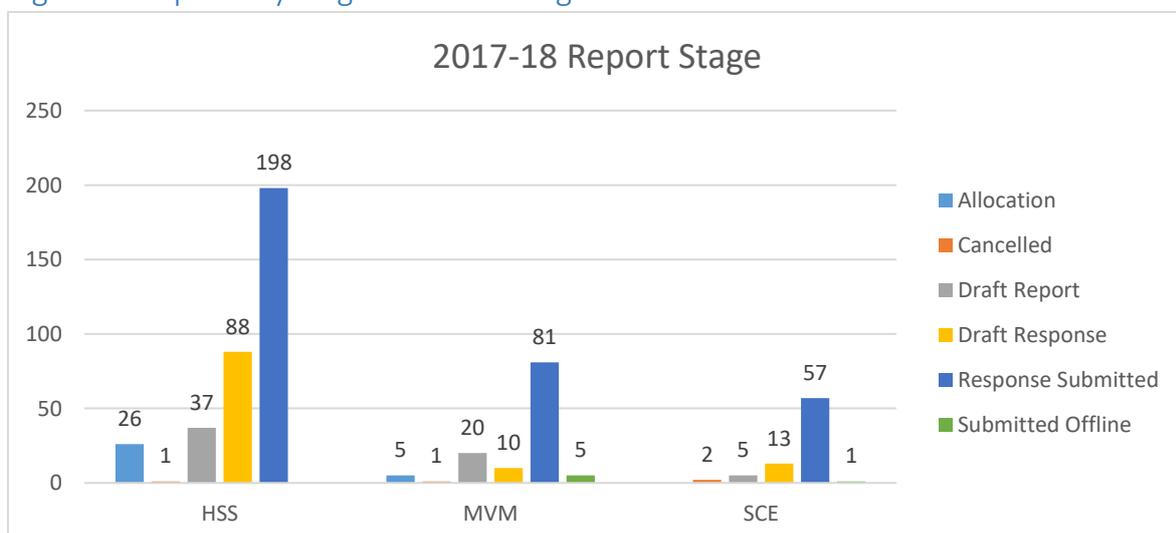
Figure 1: Status of submitted reports by College

2017-18 Report Status

College	Submitted offline	Complete	Due to Breach	Late
HSS		199	2	149
MVM	5	82	1	34
SCE	1	59		18

HSS – College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences, MVM – College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine, SCE – College of Science & Engineering

Colleges continue to follow up with Schools on any outstanding reports. Colleges reported that some outstanding reports were allocation errors, for example duplication of allocation or allocation to External Examiners who had reached the end of their term of office.

Figure 2: Reports by stage in each College.

2017-18 Report Stage

College	Allocation	Cancelled	Draft Report	Draft Response	Response Submitted	Submitted Offline
HSS	26	1	37	88	198	
MVM	5	1	20	10	81	5
SCE		2	5	13	57	1

Five reports in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (MVM) and one in the College of Science and Engineering (SCE) were submitted offline. There were two cancelled reports in the College of Science and Engineering and one each in the other two Colleges.

Table 1: Breakdown of reports by stage in each College

College Code	Allocation	Cancelled	Draft Report	Draft Response	Response Submitted (complete)	Submitted Offline	Grand Total
HSS	26	1	37	88	198	0	350
MVM	5	1	20	10	81	5	122
SCE	0	2	5	13	57	1	78
Grand Total	31	4	62	115	332	6	550

Susan Hunter, Academic Services
20 February 2019

<u>The University of Edinburgh</u>

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

27 February 2019

Student Support Services Annual Review (SSSAR): Updates to Annual Reporting Templates

Executive Summary

Proposed minor amendments to the Service Report and Reader Report templates for annual reporting. Changes include incorporating areas for further consideration identified for all services in the 17/18 reporting cycle (reported to the Committee in December 2018) and emphasis that reporting should focus on the student experience. Academic Services has reformatted both templates to provide clarity for services and readers on reporting expectations. The paper does not propose any changes to the reporting process or timescale, however it invites the Committee to consider whether the current practice of allocating report reader responsibility offers the most benefit (see page 4).

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

The paper is relevant to the Committee's responsibility for the quality assurance framework.

Action requested

Academic Services requests approval of the proposed minor amendments to the reporting templates for implementation in the next reporting cycle.
Academic Services invites the Committee to consider whether a peer review element would be beneficial.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Academic Services will implement the amended templates for use in the next reporting cycle and communicate changes to services and readers.

Resource / Risk / Compliance
  1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
     No resource implications are indicated for the proposed minor amendments to the reporting templates. There may be resource implications if a peer review element is included in the annual review process. See page 4.

  2. **Risk assessment**
     The proposed changes aim to clarify the reporting process for services and readers. They should minimise any risk of confusion and ensure a robust reporting process.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
    The proposed changes should not result in any equality and diversity impacts.

4. **Freedom of information**
    The paper is **open.**

Originator of the paper
Susan Hunter, Academic Services
13 February 2018

Student Support Services Annual Review (SSSAR):

Updates to Annual Reporting Templates

Following the Student Support Services Annual Review (SSSAR) cycle in semester 1 of 2018/19, Academic Services reviewed the reporting templates in consultation with the Deputy Secretary Student Experience and the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance. The 2017/18 annual review advised changes to the reporting templates to ensure clarity for services and readers on reporting expectations. The annual review for 2017/18 identified some areas for further consideration relevant to all services, which the Quality Assurance Committee approved in December 2018. The updated service template incorporates these:

- Establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) (measuring impact).
- Services report honestly on challenges and actions required to address them (both by the service and by others).
- Addressing feedback, in particular feedback on feedback – closing the loop.
- Length of submissions: keeping to guidance of 10 pages. Focus on reflecting on what is working well and what needs further development.
- Commitment to staff development, for example a staff development KPI.
- Analysis of service usage.

The updated templates emphasise that services should focus on the student experience for reporting and refer specifically to linking activity to the University Student Experience Plan. (See appendix 1.)

Academic Services has reformatted the templates to include bullet points for clarity on all the points that services and readers should consider in their reports. The 2017/18 review also yielded some exemplar reports, which Academic Services uploaded to the SSSAR wiki and will remind services about when sending out the reporting templates in June.

Academic Services has revised the reader template for consistent terminology with the service template. An additional section at the end of the template aims to ensure that readers identify commendations and areas for further consideration in their reports. (See appendix 2.)

The reporting process and timescale worked well for 2017/18, so Academic Services is not proposing any changes to those. (See appendix 3.)

Action for QAC: The Committee to consider approval of the proposed minor amendments to the reporting templates for implementation in the next reporting cycle.

Report Readers

The Student Support Services Review Policy states that, "Authority for the oversight of Student Support Service review lies with the Senatus Quality Assurance Committee (QAC). Monitoring of services is delegated to the QAC sub-committee." The sub-committee membership includes College Associate Deans for Quality Assurance or College Director of Quality Assurance, Deans of Students, Edinburgh University Students' Association (Students' Association) nominee, an external member (currently University of Stirling), Heads of Services (or their representatives) submitting reports.

The guidance on Student Support Services reviews defines Readers as, "All readers are members of the Student Support Service sub-committee of Senate Quality Assurance Committee (afterwards referred to as 'the sub-committee')".

Current practice is that the College Quality Deans or Directors, Deans of Students, Students Association and the external member act as Readers. During the 2017/18 reporting cycle, the sub-committee Readers meeting discussed the addition of a peer reviewing element for future Service reports. Some benefits include, peer reviewers would have a good understanding of Student Support Services business, peer reviewing could facilitate deeper appreciation of operations across services and may foster collaboration.

The proposal is that instead of having two academic members of the sub-committee as Readers, each Service report would have an academic and peer reviewer as Readers. Potential options include:

1. All Heads of Service sub-committee members to peer review another Service's report.
2. Selected Heads of Service sub-committee members peer review a number of Service reports.
3. An external peer reviewer reviews all reports. This could be someone who is external to the Student Support Services but internal to the University's business units. Alternatively, an external consultant – although this would incur a cost. This option would require a change to current practice and guidance.

All options would have resource implications, either in staff time to read reports or financial resource for an external consultant.

Action for QAC: The Committee to consider introducing a peer review element for the next reporting cycle and, if this is desirable, identify the preferred option to carry out peer reviewing.

Susan Hunter, Academic Services
13 February 2019

Appendix 1

THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Student Support Services Annual Review

Service Value Assessment: Academic Year 2018/19

Completing the report

- The report should be the output of a reflective process, focusing on
  - activities **over the past academic year,**
  - the student experience and
  - activities that relate to student use of the service.

- The report should be brief, **no longer than 10 pages**. Focus on changes from the previous year's report, reflecting on what is working well and what needs further development.

Text in *italics* is for guidance; please replace it with your own content.

   The Student Support Services Review Policy contains an overview of the process.

Service:	
Submitted by:	
Date:	

Reflection on Previous Review

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1. Summary of the impact of activities from the previous academic year on the student experience and how these contribute to University Strategy

• **Update on actions** *from priorities outlined in last year's report and their impact on the student experience.*
    ○ *(Academic Services insert priorities outlined in pervious report.)*
 	
• **Update on areas for further consideration** *identified from last year's report and their impact on the student experience:*
    ○ *(Academic Services insert points for update.)*
 	
• *Indicate where how activities link to the University's Student Experience Plan, Strategic Plan and/or to other key University strategies as appropriate.*

Measures of Success

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2. Reflection on user engagement and feedback, service use, partnership working and externality

User engagement and feedback
(Users are defined as students and academic/ business units)
Reflect upon

- *how user feedback was gathered/satisfaction was measured and*
- *what mechanisms were used for evaluation.*
- *how the service is closing the feedback loop (giving feedback on user feedback)*

Analysis of service use

- *Briefly outline key trends, associated risks, impact on the student experience, and action taken.*
  - *Include numbers (if quantifiable), for example, numbers of enquiries or visitors and*
  - *coverage and reach, for example student groups (UG, PGT, PGR), demographics (for example gender) and*
  - *over or under use by particular student groups.*

- *What are the key performance indicators (KPIs) relating to the student experience and what plans does the service have to develop KPIs*
  - *Provide a brief overview of and reflection on key measures/performance indicators, for example,*
    - *input/output statistics,*
    - *turnaround/throughput times,*
    - *results against any specific Service Level Agreement measures,*
    - *student satisfaction data.*

Partnership working: with Schools, Colleges and other services

- *Outline internal or external collaboration that has supported and/or enhanced service delivery. Include opportunities, and any examples, of working across boundaries.*

- *Summarise and reflect upon*
  - *activity to support collaboration,*
  - *where more collaboration is needed and*
  - *how will the service address gaps in partnership working.*

  - *Outline internal customer service activity*
    - *How is the service supporting Schools and Colleges to deliver their academic business?*

Externality

- *External recognition and benchmarking*
  - *Summarise and comment upon external **recognition**, for example in professional networks and/or awards.*
  - *Summarise any external **benchmarking** activity. Reflect on any changes to relevant professional body guidelines or sector developments.*
  - *Outline any major actions undertaken as a result of learning from external benchmarking or accreditation activity.*

3.   Staff development activity

How is the service developing its staff and measuring the impact of staff development on the student experience?

> - *Outline key staff development activity undertaken to support service delivery and the resulting impact on the student experience.*
>
> - *What are the gaps in skills/knowledge that may affect service delivery or impact on the student experience? How will the service address any skills gaps?*

Opportunities and Enhancements

4. Reflection on service, changes, new ways of working and efficiencies
Using the information above, provide a holistic reflection of the service. *What has worked well and what has not? Include:*   *A brief outline of and reflection on any new developments and their impact on service delivery (doing new things).*   *A brief outline of and reflection on changes made to activities, processes, practices or policies, in response to feedback, reviews or external drivers (doing the same things in a new way).*   *A summary of any learning, efficiencies and effectiveness achieved from these changes (include anything that has ceased).*   *Reflect on how the service is delivering within existing resources. Include opportunities for building efficiencies, for example increase in volume of use/demand for the service.*

Actions

5. Key priorities for the coming academic year
Summarise the top 3 – 5 priorities based on the analysis and reflection above. *How will the service take these forward?*

6. Risk analysis
Indicate any specific risks to achieving the service's core activities, and the approach to mitigating risks.   *What are the service's challenges and what actions are needed to address them (both by the service and by others)?*   *How is the service engaging with the issues that are likely to have a positive impact on the student experience?*

June 2019

THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Appendix 2

Student Support Services Annual Review

The report should be brief, with bullet points in each section. The Student Support Services Annual Review policy contains an overview of the process.

Services are asked to focus on activities over the past academic year, the student experience and activities that relate to student use of the service.

Reader Report on Service Value Assessment: Academic Year 2018/19

Service:	
Submitted by:	
Date:	

Reflection on Previous Review

1. Summary of the impact of activities from the previous academic year on the student experience and how these contribute to University Strategy
• *Has the service demonstrated impact on the student experience from its priorities?*   • *Are there any outstanding areas for further consideration/barriers identified to achieving these?*   • *Has the service demonstrated links between its priorities and activities and the University's Student Experience Plan Strategic Plan and/or to other key University strategies as appropriate?*

Measures of Success

2. Reflection on user engagement and feedback, usage, partnership working and externality
(Users are defined as students and academic/business units)   *Has the service a) gathered appropriate data and b) fully reflected on:*   • *User engagement and feedback. Is feedback on user feedback (closing the feedback loop) appropriate?*   • *Analysis of service usage*   • *Does the service have appropriate key performance indicators/success measures for student experience and internal customer service activity? Are there other measures/indicators it could be using? Are the targets stretching enough?*   • *Partnership working: with Schools, Colleges and other services. How is the service supporting the delivery of academic business?*   • *External benchmarking including professional body guidelines. Have any accreditations been successful, or are there opportunities for accreditation not currently being pursued?*

3. Staff development activity

Has the service
- *demonstrated a strong commitment to staff development at all levels;*
- *fully reflected on the effectiveness of staff development activity, identifying any skills or knowledge gaps and*
- *is development activity aligned with service objectives?*

Opportunities and Enhancements

4. Reflection on service, changes, new ways of working and efficiencies
Has the service effectively used reflection to identify appropriate changes, new ways of working and efficiencies?

Actions

5. Key priorities for the coming academic year
Has the service identified achievable and relevant priorities?

6. Risk analysis
Has the service identified risks to achieving its goals and appropriate mitigating actions? Has it identified challenges? Is it engaging with issues likely to have a positive impact on student experience?

7. Commendations and areas for consideration
List commendations arising from the report:

List areas for further consideration arising from the report (limit these to three to five achievable and targeted actions):

February 2019

Appendix 3

Student Support Service Review Timeframe

Date	Activity	Responsibility
Last week June	Reporting template circulated to Services	Academic Services
First week October	Service reporting deadline	Service Directors
	Readers allocated	Academic Services
Third week October	Readers' reporting deadline	Readers
Fourth week October	Composite report[1]	Academic Services
	Draft recommendations returned to Service Directors	Academic Services
First week November	Readers' meeting[2]	Academic Services
Second week November	Full sub-committee meeting[3]	Academic Services
Third week November	Agreement of recommendations	Service Directors and Academic Services
	Finalising report to QAC	Academic Services and Assistant Principal
Fourth week November	Report submitted to QAC	Academic Services
Early December	Approved recommendations returned to Service Directors	Academic Services

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[1] The composite report comprises all areas of good practice and areas for development identified by Readers. It is circulated to attendees of Readers' meeting to inform discussion on themes for full sub-committee

[2] Readers' meeting convened by Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance, following which themes for discussion are circulated to full sub-committee

[3] Full sub-committee meeting: all Service Directors and Readers invited to attend and includes brief presentations from a selection of services on promising practice for sharing and round table discussion on themes from Readers' meeting. Outputs are reported to QAC in the annual report submitted in fourth week November.

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

27 February 2019

Mid-year update on progress against SQAC priorities

Executive Summary
The paper provides an update on progress towards SQAC's priorities agreed at Senate in May 2018.

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

Action requested
For Information.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
For Committee members to disseminate as appropriate.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

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

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

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

4. **Freedom of information**
   Yes.

Key words
Class Representation, Personal Tutor, ELIR, Thematic Review, mid-course feedback, academic communities

Originator of the paper
Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer

Mid-year update on progress against SQAC priorities

1. **Work with the Students' Association to enhance the Class Representation System**

   The Committee considered the Students' Association School Reports and welcomed the insight the reports offered to the student population at a local level. The Committee agreed that the information in the reports would be included in internal review documentation and that the reports, with an institutional-level report, would be submitted to the Committee annually.

2. **Oversee and evaluate the effectiveness of the Personal Tutor (PT) system**

   The Committee has received regular reports from the PT System Oversight Group in relation to ongoing activities to mainstream the PT system within School QA processes. The Group oversaw the annual School Personal Tutoring Statement approval process in June 2018 and agreed actions to improve the communication of the statements.

   In September 2018 the Sub Group tasked with reviewing School annual quality reports started to consider the QA reports with a particular focus on the PT system and making several recommendations where individual Schools' satisfaction with PTs had fallen or were low. Therefore this year's Annual Review of the Operation of the PT system meeting was cancelled. The Committee subsequently approved a change to the timing of this strategic review meeting each year, moving it from semester one to immediately after the NSS and PTES results are released in the summer. At this meeting, the Group will consider the trends and implications for both Schools and the University and then feed comments on the PT system to the September meeting of the Sub Group considering the School annual quality reports. This will allow the latter group to make judgments and recommendations to Schools informed by the PT System Oversight Group's considerations. This will also allow the Committee to monitor the PT system within mainstream School QA processes.

   During the summer of 2018 the Group agreed a draft leaflet for students and staff clarifying what each should expect of the other within the PT system. The text was approved by the EUSA Sabbaticals for Welfare and Education but was delayed due to disagreement at College level as to the content. After several iterations, lasting well into the first semester, it proved impossible to reach an agreement on a basic text that could encompass the diversity of practice across the institution. This is indicative of one of the main challenges facing the PT system: the tension between local autonomy and diversity of delivery and the demand for greater consistency and standardisation.

   The University is about to initiate a major review of student support including, but not limited to, the PT system. The plan is to have recommendations finalised by the end of calendar year 2019, with implementation by academic year 2020-21. This project will be located within the Student Administration and Support (SA&S) strand of Service Excellence but will be governed in a slightly different way through a Design

Group consisting of both Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and SA&S members, with ultimate oversight of changes to the PT system via LTC and changes to professional services structures via SA&S.

3. **Oversee institutional activities in response to 2015 Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR)**

   The Committee will consider what is proposed to be final update reports in February 2019 in recognition of the fact that activities are being progressed and reported on through other mechanisms such as the Learning and Teaching Strategy, Student Partnership Agreement and Student Experience Plan implementation plans.

4. **Oversee initial preparations for the University's next ELIR**

   The Committee received an update on ELIR preparations in December 2018 and will consider the proposed contextualised themes for the 2020 ELIR in February 2019 (see agenda item 5)

5. **Embed mid-course feedback for undergraduate students, and develop appropriate mechanisms for evaluating its operation**

   The Committee continues to monitor the implementation of mid-course feedback through annual monitoring, review and reporting processes. The Committee considered the evaluation of mid-course feedback carried out in March 2018 and agreed to a follow-up evaluation in semester two to allow for longitudinal data comparison. This will be as light touch as practicable and will include students, possibly via the SSLCs and using student representation structures. The Committee also agreed in principle that mid-course feedback should be extended to postgraduate taught provision (noting that this already takes place in many areas), and that it would consult with stakeholders on this proposed extension of the policy as part of the planned evaluation in semester two.

6. **Thematic review to support the implementation of the University's Widening Participation Strategy**

   During summer 2018 the Committee agreed that the scope of the Thematic Review 2018-19 would be changed from a general review of support for Widening Participation (WP) to a specific focus on Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students' experiences of support at the University. This refocus was in response to Students' Association concern that it may not have been possible to consider BME student issues in depth as part of a broader review of WP. Furthermore, it was agreed that it was appropriate to allow more time for the University to implement the new WP Strategy before a further assessment is made on the University's approach to WP.

   The review is being led by Professor Rowena Arshad, Head of Moray House School of Education and Co-Director of the Centre for Education for Racial Equality in Scotland (CERES). The review panel is currently consulting students and will report initial findings to SQAC at the meeting to be held on 23 May 2019. These findings

will then be discussed with key staff stakeholders from across the University. The final report, identifying areas of good practice and areas for enhancement, will then be submitted to SQAC for approval and publication in September.

7. **Review good practice identified in quality review processes in relation to developing academic communities**

The Committee considered the themes that emerged from the School annual quality reports and teaching/postgraduate programme reviews held in 2017-18. Examples of good practice were identified in relation to building academic communities which became the focal point of a University level sharing practice event on 6 February 2019. To tie in with this, the theme of Teaching Matters in April 2019 is academic community, with good practice examples being drawn from the outcomes of quality processes.

Brian Connolly
Academic Services
February 2019

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

27 February 2019

Thematic Review of Student Support 2017-18: Mature Students and Student Parents and Carers

Executive Summary

The initial progress update on the implementation of the recommendations of the Thematic Review of Support for Mature Students and Student Parents and Carers.

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

The paper is relevant to the University's Strategic Goal of 'provide the highest-quality research-led teaching and learning".

Action requested

For information.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

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

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

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

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open.

Key words

Thematic Review, Student Support, Mature, Parent, Carer

Originator of the paper

Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

27 February 2019

Thematic Review of Student Support 2017-18:
Mature Students and Student Parents and Carers

Report on Recommendations/Remitted Actions

Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC), at the meeting held on Thursday 20 September 2018, approved the final report of the Thematic Review of Support for Mature Students and Student Parents and Carers. The recommendations of the review were then remitted to the individuals and areas identified in the report, which in most instances involved further consultative and developmental work during the 2018-19 academic session.

The individuals and areas remitted actions were asked to provide an initial response to each, noting expected timescales for completion and highlighting potential barriers to progress. The following responses were received:

Report Paragraph Reference	Recommendation	Timescale for completion *If no timescale suggested in Final Report, please indicate a realistic timescale.*	Comment on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion	Completion date/ *Expected completion date*
3.1.3	The review panel **recommends** that the **Student Systems** develop and implement a systematic collection of data on student parents and student carers.		This will be addressed through the Edinburgh Cares project (the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy, and focusing on students who are carers an estranged students).	
3.2	The review panel **recommends** that the **Director of Student Wellbeing** and **Senate Curriculum and Student Progression Committee** develop and implement a Student Parent and Student Carer Policy setting clear expectations for when the institution and the individual need to take action.	Within 9 months	Within work-plan for "Edinburgh Cares" project (University's working group on implementing the Corporate Parenting Strategy, also	Nov 2019

			focusing on students who are carers and estranged students.	
3.3.1	The review panel **recommends** that the **Director of Student Wellbeing** develop and implement a systematic and sensitive disclosure process for student parents and carers with follow-up assessment of needs and appropriate support, advice and guidance. This system must be underpinned by a programme of training for academic and professional service staff supporting it, with particular in-depth training for those assessing the needs and recommending support mechanisms.	Within 7 months	Within work-plan for "Edinburgh Cares" project (University's working group on implementing the Corporate Parenting Strategy, also focusing on students who are carers and estranged students.	Sept 2019
3.3.2	The review panel **recommends** that **Senate Curriculum and Student Progression Committee** and the **Director of Student Wellbeing** consider developing a system of adjustments (covering issues such as extensions and examination arrangements) that are consistent with, but not the same as, those for disabled students.	Within 9 months	Within work-plan for "Edinburgh Cares" project (University's working group on implementing the Corporate Parenting Strategy, also focusing on students who are carers and estranged students.	Nov 2019
3.3.3	The review panel **recommends** that **Student Recruitment and Admissions** conduct a consultation with mature students and student parents and carers and tailor induction provision according to the findings.	September 2019 to January 2020	As part of Welcome Week 2019, SRA's Pre Arrival & Induction team (PAI) are organising an event for commuter students, mature students, student parents and student carers. This event will be designed for new students who are not living in University accommodation, and will be an opportunity to meet and socialise with other students in similar circumstances. As part of this event, we will ask students for their initial thoughts on their induction and welcome	End of January 2020

| | | | experience, and what they think they need to know at this point in their journey, and will aim to address these issues, and to incorporate them into planning for future events.

In addition, we will interview mature students, self-identified student carers, and student parents to ask them about their induction experience.

As a follow up, at the start of semester two, we will carry out focus groups with some of the original participants and capture their reflections on their induction experience and improvements for future cohorts.

The major barrier to this consultation will be identifying student carers and parents in sufficient numbers to gain meaningful insights that can inform future activity. To mitigate this, in part, we will work with the Centre for Open Learning and include participants in the Moving On programme in the evaluation. | |
| 3.3.4 | The review panel **recommends** that the **Director of Student Wellbeing** and **Student Systems** develop central, user-friendly webpage portals for mature students, student parents, and | Within 9 months | Within work-plan for "Edinburgh Cares" project (University's working group on implementing the | Nov 2019 |

	student carers. These pages must provide clear and supportive information on support, representation and facilities including application details and profiles, quotes, videos or case studies, wider local community information (e.g. childcare, finance etc.).		Corporate Parenting Strategy, also focusing on students who are carers and estranged students. The Head of Student Data and Surveys (Paula Webster) is liaising with the Director of Student Well-being to plan and implement this action.	
3.3.4	The review panel **recommends** that the **Service Excellence Programme** and any other reviews that impact on Student Support ensure that the continuation of welfare support for international students is considered as part of any organisational changes to Edinburgh Global.			
3.4.1	The review panel **recommends** that **Senate Learning and Teaching Committee** explore the options for growing undergraduate part-time provision to provide more flexible study options for mature students and student parents and carers. This would benefit many other groups of students, including those from Widening Participation backgrounds.	Unknown	Discussions around curriculum review are being taken forward as part of the Student Experience Action Plan. It is anticipated that the new Vice-Principal Students, once appointed, will lead an initial phase of work to scope out what an institutional curriculum review project would involve. Exploring the potential to provide more flexible study options would be part of this work.	Unknown
3.4.2	The review panel **recommends** that **Senate Learning and Teaching Committee** embed lecture recording fully across all academic areas, with an opt-out policy to maximise the availability of lectures to mature students and student parents and carers. This would benefit many other groups of students,	**Completed** (although additional rooms will be equipped for lecture recording over time)	Lecture recording is now fully embedded in venues where the service is available. The Lecture Recording Policy came into operation on 1 January 2019 and	Complete

	including those from Widening Participation backgrounds and international students.		makes provision for those lecturers that have reasons (in line with the policy) to opt out of lecture recording.	
3.4.5	The review panel **recommends** that **Senate Quality Assurance Committee** implement systematic monitoring of retention and degree outcome data by age and caring responsibility and, if appropriate, develop interventions where there are clear and consistent patterns of divergence between 'traditional' students and mature students, student parents, student carers.		**To be considered by SQAC at the April meeting.**	
3.5.5	The review panel **recommends** that the **Vice-Principal People and Culture** and **Director of Student Wellbeing** conduct a strategic review of childcare provision, from the provision of child friendly spaces and crèche facilities to nurseries and childcare bursaries. The review must include benchmarking with peer institutions and consultation with students and staff in order to understand fully the needs of students and staff and to provide an evidence base for strategic decision making regarding the allocation of resources.	Within 9 months	Within work-plan for "Edinburgh Cares" project (University's working group on implementing the Corporate Parenting Strategy, also focusing on students who are carers and estranged students.	Nov 2019
3.6	The review panel **recommends** that the **Director of Student Wellbeing** explore the need to support the development of online or in-person social networks for mature students and student parents and carers, recognising the lack of time they have to establish these on their own.	Within 9 months	Within work-plan for "Edinburgh Cares" project (University's working group on implementing the Corporate Parenting Strategy, also focusing on students who are carers and estranged students.	Nov 2019
3.7	The review panel **recommends** that oversight of support for student carers should be integrated into the remit of the Implementation Group overseeing support for care-experienced	**Completed**	Oversight of support for student carers has been integrated into the remit of "Edinburgh Cares"- the	Dec 2018

				Implementation Group overseeing support for care-experienced and estranged students	
	and estranged students, chaired by the **Director of Student Wellbeing**.				
3.7	The review panel **recommends** that the **University Disability Access and Equality Manager** consider the appropriate provision of Changing Places facilities across the estate.	**Completed**		The Disability Access and Equality Manager considers the provision of changing places facilities to be reviewed across the estate on an ongoing basis. Upgrading of existing ones and developing and providing new ones occurs, where possible and appropriate. The feasibility of providing a new changing place facility at the Wellbeing Centre (7 Bristo Square) is under review. Further inclusion of suitable locations in forthcoming developments will be reviewed by the Disability Access and Equality Manager.	The initial action was completed in October 2018 but the requirement to consider the need for changing places facilities is an ongoing action.

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

27 February 2019

Thematic Review of Student Support 2018-19:
Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Students

Executive Summary
An update on the progress of the Thematic Review of Student Support 2018-19: Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Students

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

Action requested
For information.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

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

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

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

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open.

Key words
Thematic Review, Student Support, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)

Originator of the paper
Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

27 February 2019

Thematic Review of Student Support 2018-19: Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Students

Progress Update

The Thematic Review of Student Support 2018-19 is focused on Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students' experiences of support at the University. The review will identify and analyse areas of good practice and areas for enhancement in relation to the provision of support for BME students.

The membership of the review panel is as follows:

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

First Review Panel Meeting – 23 January 2019:
The review panel agreed the remit, and the following timescales and consultation schedule for the review:

- February – March 2019 – Student Consultation Phase
- March 2019 – Second Review Panel Meeting
- April - June 2019 – Staff Consultation Phase
- May 2019 – initial findings to Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) meeting to be held on 23 May 2019.
- September 2019 – final report to SQAC for approval and publication.

Communication:
An initial email communication was circulated to key staff stakeholders across the University on Monday 4 February 2019 announcing the review and consultation schedule, and inviting

staff to send the panel examples of good practice and suggestions of areas that the review should explore.

Student Consultation
Focus group sessions (facilitated by Isabella Neergaard-Petersen and Kai O'Doherty) will be held on each main campus as follows:

- **Tuesday 26 February 2019** between 1-2pm in Tutorial Room 1.25, Vet School, Easter Bush;
- **Thursday 28 February 2019** between 12-1pm in Seminar Room 5, First Floor Chancellor's Building, Little France;
- **Friday 1 March 2019** between 1-2pm in Room 1.09, Main Library, George Square, Central Area;
- **Friday 8 March 2019** between 12.30-1.30pm in Room G.30, Murchison House, King's Buildings.

In addition to these campus based sessions, and to ensure that a diversity of student voices are heard and included in the review, separate consultations will be held with specific student groups across the University.

Second Review Panel Meeting – Friday 29 March 2019
At this meeting the review panel will discuss the findings of the initial student consultation phase and plan the staff consultation phase.

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

Reporting
The review panel will report initial findings to SQAC on 23 May 2019. These findings will then be discussed with key staff stakeholders from across the University. The final report, identifying areas of good practice and areas for enhancement, will then be submitted to SQAC for approval and publication in September 2019.

Brian Connolly
Thematic Review Coordinator
February 2019

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

27 February 2019

Internal Periodic Review Reports and Responses

Executive Summary

The following Year on responses from Internal Periodic Reviews 2017/18 and final report from Internal Periodic Reviews in 2018/19 are published on the Committee wiki:
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SQAC/Wednesday+27+February+2019

Year on responses 2017/18:
Postgraduate Programme Review of Chemistry
Postgraduate Programme Review of Clinical Sciences
Postgraduate Programme Review of Engineering
Teaching Programme Review of English Literature *** to be tabled at the meeting ***
Teaching Programme Review of Physics and Astronomy *** to be tabled at the meeting***

Final report 2018/19:
Teaching Programme Review of Classics

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

The paper is relevant to the Committee's responsibility for the quality assurance framework.

Action requested

Report: for approval. The Committee is asked to note the following commendations and recommendations. The full reports are published on the wiki**:**
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SQAC/Wednesday+27+February+2019

Year on responses: For comment and consideration of the recommendations. The Committee is asked to confirm that they are content with progress.

PPR/TPR	Recommendation	Comment
PPR Chemistry year on response		We look forward to hearing about progress on the recommendations in the School Annual Programme Monitoring report. We are interested to learn about the examples of positive change noted in the response as a result of the review
PPR Clinical Sciences year on response		We look forward to hearing about progress on the recommendations in the School Annual Programme Monitoring report. We are interested to learn about the positive change noted in the response as a result of the review
PPR Engineering year on response		We look forward to hearing about progress on the recommendations in the School Annual Programme Monitoring report.

		We are interested to learn about the examples of positive change noted in the response as a result of the review

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
Comments on the progress towards completion of recommendations will be reported back to the School/Subject Area. The responses will be published on the Academic Services website.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

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

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

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

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open.

Key words

Postgraduate Programme Review, Teaching Programme Review, PPR, TPR, year on response, final report.

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