

The University of Edinburgh  
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

**Meeting to be held on Thursday 30 November 2017 at 2pm  
in the Hodgson Room, Weir Building, Kings Buildings**

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15. **Date of Next Meeting:**  
Thursday 8 February 2018 at 2pm in the Raeburn Room, Old College

The University of Edinburgh  
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19 September 2017  
at 2pm in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House**

**Present:**

Professor Tina Harrison	Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance (Convener)
Bobi Archer	Vice President (Education), Students' Association
Dr Shereen Benjamin	Associate Dean (Quality Assurance) College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science
Professor Jeremy Bradshaw	Director of Quality Assurance, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, and Assistant Principal, Researcher Development
Megan Brown	Schools Engagement Officer, Edinburgh University Students' Association
Brian Connolly	Secretary to Senatus Quality Assurance Committee
Brian Green	Deputy Associate Principal (Learning & Teaching), University of Strathclyde
Nichola Kett	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team, Academic Services
Dr Claire Phillips	School Representative (Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Dr Inger Seiferheld	School Representative (Business School), College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science
Dr Jon Turner	Director, Institute for Academic Development
Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services

**Apologies:**

Dr Sheila Lodge	CMVM Head of Academic Administration (Co-opted Member)
Dr Gordon McDougall	Dean (Quality Assurance), College of Science and Engineering
Barry Neilson	Director, Student Systems (Co-opted Member)

**1. Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 25 May 2017**

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

## 2. Matters Arising

### a) Membership

The Convenor welcomed **Ms Bobi Archer** to her first meeting in her new role as Students' Association Vice President Education and **Ms Megan Brown**, Students' Association Schools Engagement Officer, replacing Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka on the Committee for the forthcoming year. Ms Brown is responsible for supporting elected School Reps and her membership will foster linkages between Students' Association and University quality enhancement processes and allow the Students' Association to diversify its staff membership on University committees. The Convenor also welcomed **Dr Shereen Benjamin** joining the Committee as the new Associate Dean (Quality Assurance) College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science.

The Convenor thanked **Dr Huw Lewis** for his work on the Committee during the 2016-17 session. Dr Lewis had been co-opted for a year as a member with expertise in school quality processes, particularly important last year due to the new annual monitoring, reporting and review processes being implemented.

### b) Terms of Reference and Committee Priorities 2017-18

The Committee received and noted the Terms of Reference and summary of the planned priorities for 2017-18 which was approved by Senate in May 2017.

### c) Thematic Review

The Convenor reported that Professor Alan Murray would convene the forthcoming thematic review of support for mature students.

## For Discussion

## 3. School Annual Quality Reports 2016-17

The Committee received and discussed the report on the first meeting of the sub group tasked with reviewing School annual quality reports. It was noted that the Moray House School of Education report had been submitted after the sub-group meeting and therefore would be considered at the next meeting of the Committee in November.

<p><b>Action: College Deans of Quality to ensure that the outcomes of the Committee's discussions in regard to the School Annual Quality Reports 2016-17 are made available to and considered by the relevant College committee(s).</b></p>
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The Committee noted that the new process had been generally well received and therefore, it was agreed that there would be no major changes for 2017/18. It was noted that the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS) online report submission system had worked particularly well and could be considered as an example of good practice.

Themes of positive practice for sharing across the University were noted as follows:

- **Assessment and feedback** - many innovative practices such as a major project in CAHSS to implement online assessment and feedback, open note examinations, discussion-based teaching and the use of class participation in assessment, the use of

reflective feedback, video feedback, formative feedback, and clarification and communication of key dates in a variety of ways.

- **Academic Community** - initiatives to develop academic communities such as postgraduate research student fora, writing retreats and away weekends, community newsletters, a student-led journal, and peer support initiatives such as academic families and alumni peer-assisted learning.
- **Innovative Learning and Teaching and Curriculum Development** - evidence that schools have carefully considered and acted upon student feedback as part of a number of curriculum development initiatives across the University.
- **Enhancing and Management of Teaching** – schools were approaching this in a variety of ways, including integration of teaching scores within annual review and performance conversations (with supportive coaching) and online recording of peer observation of teaching.
- **Student Support** – student satisfaction rates with the Personal Tutoring system were high within a number of Schools and the annual quality reports outline examples of commitment and progress made, including programme group meetings, management of Personal Tutor/tutee ratios, and the provision of student mental health training. There were also examples of Schools supporting particular groups of students, for example, pastoral support for postgraduate research students, attendance monitoring to identify and support at risk students, and tailored and targeted support for particular student groups.
- **Support for Postgraduate Research Students** - schools have enhanced their processes for recruiting, training and developing postgraduate research students who teach. One school has attributed the support provided to postgraduate research students who teach with increased quality of tutorials and relevant National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Research Students measures.
- **Employability** - schools were supporting students to develop their employability and graduate attributes through various initiatives which include career boards, work-related learning, consultancy projects, and new modes of assessment linked to employability.

Areas for further development at University level were noted as follows:

- **Learning and teaching accommodation** - in the context of increasing student numbers and estates developments, insufficient suitable learning and teaching accommodation was a consistent theme throughout School annual quality reports. The Committee was in agreement that references to accommodation and space must emphasise the context and link to/impact on the student experience.

**Action: Committee Secretary to remit issues (and request a response) in regard to space management and the impact on the student experience to the Space Strategy Group.**

- **Timetabling** - also in the context of increasing student numbers and estates developments, several School annual quality reports highlighted issues with timetabling. Issues included, the timetabling of back-to-back classes which are in

buildings far apart and classes near disruptive estates work, and issues with the room booking system.

**Action: Committee Secretary to remit issues (and request a response) in regard to timetabling to Head of Timetabling Unit.**

- **Personal Tutor (PT) system** - student feedback on satisfaction with the PT system varies widely across schools and annual quality reports reflect on the inconsistency in the support provided to students by PTs. In CAHSS in particular, there was a need to clarify and communicate the division of responsibilities between PTs and Student Support Team members.

**Action: Committee Secretary to remit issues (and request a response) relating to the PT system to the Assistant Principal Academic Support and College Deans of Students.**

- **Consistency and clarity of assessment and feedback processes** - student feedback highlights a need for clarification of marking schemes and grade descriptors so that students are clear on what was expected of them in assessment. There was evidence of schools giving this careful consideration and that plans were underway to address this issue, both at School- and University-level (aligning with ELIR outcomes).

**Action: Committee Secretary to remit issues (and request a response) relating to the consistency and clarity of assessment and feedback processes to the Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback.**

- **Data to Support Quality Assurance and Enhancement Processes** - school annual quality reports highlighted challenges accessing and understanding the data available to support the annual monitoring, review and reporting process. Comments particularly focused upon the perceived accuracy of data and insufficient data for postgraduate research students. The Committee noted that the student data dashboard for undergraduate students had been well received, with a number of requests for postgraduate taught and research student data.

**Action: Committee Secretary to remit issues (and request a response) relating to data to Support Quality Assurance and Enhancement Processes Director of Student Systems and Administration.**

The Committee noted that Academic Services would collate a matrix of good practice examples. The themes of positive practice and areas for further development would be sent to the Senior Vice Principal Learning and Teaching. It was suggested that there may be correlations between school QA models and NSS results.

**Action: Committee Convenor to analyse School reports, QA models and NSS data to determine if there are any correlations.**

#### 4. Internal Review Themes 2016-17

The Committee discussed the themes that emerged from teaching/postgraduate programme reviews held in 2016/17.

**Action: College Deans of Quality to ensure that the outcomes of the Committee's discussions in regard to the Internal Review Themes 2016-17 are made available to and considered by the relevant College committee(s).**

The following areas of positive practice were noted:

- **Innovative learning and teaching** - examples of innovation in learning and teaching were identified throughout the reviews (in particular developments to enhance online learning).
- **Assessment and feedback** - reviews highlighted the wide variety of assessment methods and mechanisms used to provide feedback to students.
- **Student support** - the support of students by staff was commended in a number of reviews, with a variety of good practice examples being highlighted.
- **Building student communities** - there was evidence of examples of good practice in relation to student engagement, supported through a variety of practices, including facilitated cross-year and School initiatives, events such as lecture series, and peer support.

Areas for further development were noted as follows:

- **Learning and teaching** - benchmarking exercises were recommended in a number of reviews, to gain a greater understanding in a variety of areas. The Committee agreed that no further action was required to progress the individual benchmarking recommendations as they were being actioned by Schools.

**Action: Academic Services to monitor the 2017/18 reports to establish if benchmarking continues as a theme from reviews.**

- **Student support** - development of the Personal Tutor (PT) system was a predominant area for further development across the reviews in relation to student support. The Committee noted that the need to clarify roles in the PT system was a particular issue in the CAHSS and that this had also been highlighted the School Annual Quality Reports 2016-17 (as noted above).

**Action: CAHSS Dean of Quality to progress the issue of PT system roles and responsibilities at College level during 2017-18.**

**Action: Assistant Principal Academic Support to consider the other recommendations as part of the continuing work to enhance the system through the implementation of the Learning and Teaching Strategy and in response to the last Enhancement-led Institutional Review.**

The Committee noted that there was a number of additional recommendations from reviews related to go/study/year abroad. It was noted that the following work strands were already underway across the University in relation to study abroad and therefore no additional action would be required:

- The Service Excellence Programme would include work on redesigning the processes and systems for study/working away.
  - Edinburgh Global were liaising with the Colleges and existing Exchange Coordinators about developing a clearer role description and set of indicative tasks for staff within Schools supporting student exchanges.
  - The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences were holding discussions on this matter, with the aim of sharing good practice across the College.
- **Postgraduate tutors and demonstrators** - the training and support for postgraduate tutors and demonstrators as an area for further development produced a variety of recommendations across the reviews. It was noted that individual recommendations were being progressed by Schools. The Committee noted that the reports contained evidence that many Schools had enhanced their processes for recruiting, training and developing postgraduate research students who teach. It was further noted that the newly launched 'Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators' covered the recommendations and the impact would be evaluated in due course.
  - **Space** - the provision of space, for both staff and students, was a theme across a number of reviews. The Committee agreed that in the first instance these issues would be remitted to the Space Strategy Group. The Committee would then consider the response and request further action as appropriate. The College of Science and Engineering (currently undergoing a large estates development) would also specifically consider the issue of space as part of its plans for 2017/18.

**Action: Committee Secretary to remit issues in regard to space management and the impact on the student experience to the Space Strategy Group and request a response.**

- **Supporting and developing academic staff** - the Committee noted that a number of issues relating to the career development of academic staff were raised across the reviews.

**Action: Committee Secretary to remit issues relating to supporting and developing academic staff to Vice-Principal People and Culture.**

## 5. Students' Association Priorities 2017-18

The Committee discussed the Students' Association's priorities for 2017-18 as presented by the Vice President (Education):

- **Reducing the pressures of Semester 1** – the Students' Association will work with the University to ensure that students were provided with adequate time to prepare for the semester one examination diet. It was noted that the Students' Association was due to present a discussion paper to the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee with options for addressing this issue.
- **Joint Degrees** – the Students' Association will work with the University to ensure that systems were in place to support joint degree students and help foster a sense of belonging to their academic community. It was suggested that there could be more systematic consideration of joint degrees as part of the internal review process.

- **The Three C's: Communication, Community and Class Reps** – the Students' Association will work with the University to establish clearer representative structures and transparency in communications to amplify the student voice within the University.

## 6. Senate Committee Planning

The Committee discussed the arrangements for the forthcoming 2018-21 planning round and the following initial statement of priorities for student experience, learning and teaching:

- Enhancing the sense of shared community linking academic staff and students, and developing more effective ways of listening and responding to students' views;
- Improving the timeliness and quality of feedback on assessment;
- Enhancing the academic support we give to students;
- Recognising and rewarding excellence in teaching and learning;
- Developing new approaches to online learning that can provide an excellent student experience to large numbers of students;
- Strengthening support for tutors and demonstrators.

The Committee was in agreement that, in the light of the evidence from internal review and the school annual quality reports, the provision of suitable learning and teaching space to ensure sufficient standards in student experience are maintain should also be prioritised in the forthcoming planning round.

The Committee noted that, in addition to highlighting these priorities in planning round guidance, equality and diversity in relation to learning and teaching was an issue to consider. It was noted that there was already interest in various areas, for example the Students' Association, in engaging with equality and diversity issues in relation to the curriculum. Since the issues regarding equality in the curriculum are likely to vary between disciplines, a focus on local projects may more appropriate than an institutional initiative, although the Committee suggested that the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee also discuss and share good practices on the issue.

## 7. College of Science and Engineering Postgraduate Research Annual Report 2015-16

The Committee received and discussed College of Science and Engineering's postgraduate research annual report for 2015/16. It was noted that due to an internal College deadline, it had not been possible to include postgraduate research within the College annual quality report submitted in January 2017. It was further noted that the contents of the report aligned with the actions identified for the Committee at the February 2017 meeting. The Committee approved the report.

## 8. Enhancement-led Institutional Review - Theme Lead Reports

The Committee received and discussed the reports from the theme leads responsible for taking forward the areas for development from the University's Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) in 2015/16. The Committee noted that the report on the Student Data Dashboard remained outstanding and agreed that it should be submitted to the next meeting in November.



The Committee discussed the utility of the current reporting process in the longer term given that the year on report had now been submitted. The Committee agreed to monitor the effectiveness of the current reporting arrangements.

#### 9. MOOCs Annual Review 2016-17

The Committee received and discussed the annual report from the MOOC Strategy Group.

The Committee was in agreement that the primary responsibility for quality review of MOOCs rests with schools and this should be made explicit in the annual quality assurance guidance to schools. It was also agreed that there would be benefits in exploring ways to get a better institutional perspective on the quality of students' experience of MOOCs. It was suggested that more data on learners would be helpful, for example the MOOCs Strategy Committee could explore ways to track whether applicants for undergraduate or postgraduate programmes had previously undertaken MOOCs.

**Action: Committee Secretary to feed comments back to MOOCs Strategy Group.**

#### 10. PT System Oversight Group

The Committee received and noted an update on the work of the PT System Oversight Group, in particular the approval of the School Personal Tutoring Statements 2017-18. It was noted that the statement from the Deanery of Clinical Sciences remained outstanding and would be requested from the Deanery as a matter of urgency. Members also noted anecdotal evidence that student and staff awareness of the existence of the statements was limited.

**Action: PT System Oversight Group to request and consider a report from each school in regard to how the Personal Tutoring Statement is communicated to students and staff.**

The Committee noted that the Group had proposed that it should continue to oversee the mainstreaming of the PT system for at least a further year with the following meeting schedule for 2017-18:

- One meeting to consider most recent student satisfaction survey results. This would be held in November 2017 and report to the Committee at the meeting due to be held later that month.
- One meeting to consider and approve School PT Statements for 2018-19. This would be held in late June/Early July 2018 and report to the September meeting of the Committee.

The Committee approved the proposals to extend the lifespan of the Group by a further year and the meeting schedule for 2017-18. The Committee agreed that the Group should continue to focus on monitoring whether each School's approach to Personal Tutoring was effective, although the Committee recognised that the available evidence limited the Group's capacity to do this.

#### 11. Quality Framework

The Committee discussed and approved minor updates to the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy and Thematic Review Guidance documents to align with current quality processes in relation to College reporting.

**12. Internal Periodic Review - Portfolio Management and Review**

The Committee discussed and approved proposals to enhance the Internal Periodic Review process to include consideration of the ongoing sustainability of courses and programmes to inform decisions about their continuation, in the context of the wider School, College and University portfolio.

**For Information and Formal Business**

**13. Scottish Funding Council Annual Report 2016/17**

The Committee approved the contents of the report subject to a minor amendment correcting TPR/PPR cycle by one year.

**14. School Director of Quality Role Outline**

The Committee approved the updated version of the School Director of Quality Role Outline.

**15. Internal Review Reports and Responses**

The Committee approved the final report of the 2016-17 TPR Asian Studies.

The Committee considered the recommendations and confirmed that it was content with progress for the following:

- 14 week responses 2016/17:
  - Joint TPR & PPR of Economics
  - TPR European Languages and Cultures
  - TPR Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies
  - TPR Social Work
- Year on responses 2015/16:
  - PPR of School of GeoSciences Postgraduate Taught Programmes
  - TPR Applied Sport Science and Sport & Recreation Management
  - TPR Celtic and Scottish Studies
  - TPR of Mathematics
  - TPR of School of Veterinary Studies – BVM&S programme

**16. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

**17. Date of Next Meeting:**

Thursday 30 November 2017 at 2pm in the Hodgson Room, Weir Building, Kings Buildings

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

30 November 2017

## **UK Quality Code for Higher Education – Consultation**

### **Executive Summary**

This paper asks the Committee to comment on the joint University and Students' Association draft response to the consultation on the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

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

The paper is relevant to the Committee's responsibility for leading the University's engagement with the external quality assurance frameworks.

### **Action requested**

The Committee is asked to comment on the draft response.

### **How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

The Committee and other key stakeholders will continue to be informed of developments to the Quality Code by Academic Services.

### **Resource / Risk / Compliance**

#### **1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

Until the changes to the Quality Code are confirmed, the resourcing implications for the University are not known.

#### **2. Risk assessment**

The risks associated with the changes proposed are outlined in the draft response.

#### **3. Equality and Diversity**

Not applicable as this paper forms a draft response to an external consultation exercise.

#### **4. Freedom of information**

Open.

### **Key words**

Quality Code

### **Originator of the paper**

Professor Tina Harrison (Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance)  
and Nichola Kett (Academic Policy Manager, Academic Services)  
20 November 2017

## The UK Quality Code for Higher Education

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education "... sets out **Expectations** that higher education providers are required to meet to ensure: that appropriate and effective teaching, support, assessment and learning resources are provided for students; that the learning opportunities provided are monitored; and that the provider considers how to improve them."

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code>

The current Quality Code expectations are detailed in Appendix 1.

## Consultation

The UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA) is consulting on a new approach to the **Expectations** of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. The consultation seeks to ensure that the Quality Code remains the cornerstone for quality in UK higher education, that it protects the public and student interest, and that it maintains the UK's world-leading reputation for quality in higher education.

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/newsroom/consultations/consultation-on-the-uk-quality-code-for-higher-education#.WfxLnmdLG70>

## Draft Response

UKSCQA is inviting responses to the consultation and a draft of the joint University and Students' Association response is attached for comment. This has been created using comments from:

- Edinburgh University Students' Association
- Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
- College Deans of Quality
- School Directors of Quality
- College Quality Officers
- Academic Services
- Senior Lecturer in Student Engagement, Institute for Academic Development
- Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning
- Head of Academic Administration, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

## Next Steps

This draft response has also been submitted to University Court for comment at its meeting on 4 December 2017. Comments from the Senate Quality Assurance Committee and University Court will be used to create a response to the consultation which will be finalised by Professor Tina Harrison. The deadline for responses is 13 December 2017.

## DRAFT RESPONSE

### 1. Does this proposal provide a coherent framework for quality and standards in UK higher education?

No. The proposal would change the fundamental purpose of the Quality Code. Currently, the Quality Code, which has been developed collaboratively within and is co-owned by the sector, is used by institutions and external agencies to ensure that appropriate practices are in place to assure academic standards and the quality of the student experience across all aspects of the student lifecycle. The proposed expectations and core practices cover a narrower range of the student lifecycle and the proposed core practices are outcomes, many of which would be difficult to measure and evidence. In our view, this represents a major shift from viewing quality as a transformation process to an objective outcome.

### 2. Do the revised Expectations appropriately express the outcomes students and stakeholders should expect from higher education providers?

No. The starkest omission from the proposal is any mention of student engagement. The importance of working in partnership with students across all aspects of the student lifecycle must be central to the Quality Code. There has been significant work taking place across the sector on the importance of learning and teaching happening in partnership with students which is not reflected in the proposal. The proposal mentions student engagement as a possible supplementary practice, which “may form part of the regulatory framework” in some UK nations. Both the University and the Students’ Association are disappointed at this reduced status of student engagement given its importance in the University’s quality assurance and enhancement processes and Learning and Teaching Strategy.

Furthermore, the only real reference in the proposal to student engagement in quality – ‘Views and feedback from students are regularly sought and acted upon and providers offer feedback in return’ – encourages some level of *participation* from students but does not require the genuine *partnership* between students and staff which forms part of the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework.

There is also little reference to enhancement, which is the focus of the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework. Instead, the proposal appears to value a more assurance-led approach which is divergent from current Scottish Higher Education Institution sector practice.

### 3. Are the core practices for standards appropriate and flexible enough to: a. Serve the needs of all nations in the UK? b. Serve the needs of an increasingly diverse sector?

Yes, this is an area where there is similarity between the nations in terms of the importance of setting threshold academic standards within the relevant national framework.

Comments on text:

- Core practice 1 should read: Institutions set their threshold academic standards in line with the relevant national qualifications framework.
- Core practice 2 is unachievable and should read: Students achieve standards that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.

- 4. Are the core practices for quality appropriate and flexible enough to:**
- a. Serve the needs of all nations in the UK?**
  - b. Serve the needs of an increasingly diverse sector?**

No. Academic standards have a benchmark, however, quality does not have objective standards or benchmarks. The focus of the current Quality Code has been to support the development of effective practices to safeguard academic standards and the quality of the student experience rather than the focus on outcomes which is being proposed.

Due to the absence of a focus on enhancement, the proposal would not meet the needs of the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework. The core practices are static statements that do not reflect an enhancement-focussed approach.

The core practices emphasise the word 'deliver' which does not reflect the learning experience as relational and developmental. Institutions have a duty to provide a good quality of education, but the overuse of this term does not recognise the commitment to work in partnership with students. There is also no reference to the importance of institutions providing an inclusive academic experience for students.

Comments on text:

- Expectation 1: the three aspects which have been conflated within this one sentence are all significant and should be separate expectations. There is no corresponding core practice relating to the aspect of reliably assessing student achievement.
- Core practice 1: how would institutions demonstrate they had achieved this?
- Core practice 5: this is shifting the responsibility from institutions making available and communicating information about important processes and could imply that all students should understand the academic appeals and complaints procedures, even though in practice a minority of students use these processes. We would suggest, however, that it is necessary that all students should know how to access these procedures, even if they do not necessarily need to understand the entirety of each process until they access it. Additionally, there are a number of key processes that students may need to use throughout their time at university e.g. special/extenuating circumstances which will impact on more students than academic appeals and complaints. The outcomes should be used as a source of information for improvement.
- Core practice 7: the additional advice and guidance being developed will need to provide clarity of the limits of responsibility for the quality of the student academic experience where a provider works in partnership with other organisations.
- Core practice 8: students are not "matched" to appropriate courses by institutions, they apply to courses of their choice. Also, two significant aspects have been conflated into one sentence.

- 5. Does the proposal to develop supplementary practices outlined above:**
- a. Serve the needs of all nations in the UK?**
  - b. Serve the needs of a diversifying sector?**

There is not enough information provided for us to be able to reliably comment on this proposal. Most importantly, the status of supplementary practices needs to be made clear. The Scottish Higher Education Institution sector is characterised by a focus on enhancement and collaborative working and any Quality Code that meets the needs of all nations in the UK would need to recognise this.

Furthermore, it is unclear why the proposal chooses to create a hierarchy of practices which is not a feature of the current Quality Code. The decision to include 'core' and 'supplementary' practices creates an arbitrary distinction and implies that the latter practices are an optional part of the Quality Code.

## **6. General Comments**

Whilst we welcome the proposal for simplification, which will help students and staff engage with the Quality Code, the proposed expectations and core practices do not cover the same breadth of the student lifecycle as the current Quality Code. Moreover, the proposed five categories of information with different statuses have the potential to make the Quality Code difficult to navigate and apply.

We also welcome the consultative approach being taken by the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment. The value of the current Quality Code is in its co-ownership and co-regulation by the sector and it is essential that this approach continues.

There is no reference within the proposal to the following:

- Monitoring and review of academic provision and student support services
- External examining
- Enabling students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential

The Enhancement-led Institutional Review method requires Scottish institutions to map their practices to the Quality Code and the proposals would make this practice extremely difficult.

## Appendix 1 – Current Quality Code Expectations

### Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards

#### Expectation A1

In order to secure threshold academic standards, degree-awarding bodies:

- a) ensure that the requirements of The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in *England, Wales and Northern Ireland/The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland* are met by: positioning their qualifications at the appropriate level of the relevant framework for higher education qualifications ensuring that programme learning outcomes align with the relevant qualification descriptor in the relevant framework for higher education qualifications naming qualifications in accordance with the titling conventions specified in the frameworks for higher education qualifications awarding qualifications to mark the achievement of positively defined programme learning outcomes
- b) consider and take account of QAA's guidance on qualification characteristics
- c) where they award UK credit, assign credit values and design programmes that align with the specifications of the relevant national credit framework
- d) consider and take account of relevant Subject Benchmark Statements.

#### Expectation A2.1

In order to secure their academic standards, degree-awarding bodies establish transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how they award academic credit and qualifications.

#### Expectation A2.2

Degree-awarding bodies maintain a definitive record of each programme and qualification that they approve (and of subsequent changes to it) which constitutes the reference point for delivery and assessment of the programme, its monitoring and review, and for the provision of records of study to students and alumni.

#### Expectation A3.1

Degree-awarding bodies establish and consistently implement processes for the approval of taught programmes and research degrees that ensure that academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and are in accordance with their own academic frameworks and regulations.

#### Expectation A3.2

Degree-awarding bodies ensure that credit and qualifications are awarded only where: the achievement of relevant learning outcomes (module learning outcomes in the case of credit and programme outcomes in the case of qualifications) has been demonstrated through assessment both the UK threshold standards and the academic standards of the relevant degree-awarding body have been satisfied

#### Expectation A3.3

Degree-awarding bodies ensure that processes for the monitoring and review of programmes are implemented which explicitly address whether the UK threshold academic



standards are achieved and whether the academic standards required by the individual degree-awarding body are being maintained.

**Expectation A3.4**

In order to be transparent and publicly accountable, degree-awarding bodies use external and independent expertise at key stages of setting and maintaining academic standards to advise on whether: UK threshold academic standards are set, delivered and achieved the academic standards of the degree-awarding body are appropriately set and maintained.

**Chapter B1: Programme Design, Development and Approval**

Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes.

**Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education**

Recruitment, selection, and admission policies and procedures adhere to the principles of fair admission. They are transparent, reliable, valid, inclusive and underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. They support higher education providers in the selection of students who are able to complete their programme.

**Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching**

Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.

**Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement**

Higher education providers have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

**Chapter B5: Student Engagement**

Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.

**Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning**

Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.

**Chapter B7: External Examining**

Higher education providers make scrupulous use of external examiners.

**Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review**

Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities,

operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes.

#### **Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints**

Higher education providers have procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of learning opportunities; these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement.

#### **Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others**

Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively.

#### **Chapter B11: Research Degrees**

Research degrees are awarded in a research environment that provides secure academic standards for doing research and learning about research approaches, methods, procedures and protocols. This environment offers students quality of opportunities and the support they need to achieve successful academic, personal and professional outcomes from their research degrees.

#### **Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision**

Higher education providers produce information for their intended audiences about the learning opportunities they offer that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

30 November 2017

## **Annual Monitoring, Reporting and Review – Minor Changes**

### **Executive Summary**

This paper sets out proposals for minor changes to the Annual Monitoring, Reporting and Review Policy and associated templates in response to an evaluation of the first cycle of this process.

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

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

### **Action requested**

The Committee is asked to approve the proposed minor changes.

### **How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

The proposed changes have been outlined at the School Directors of Quality meeting on 25 October. Key stakeholders will be informed when the updated Policy and templates are available on the Academic Services website. Work to support Schools with the annual monitoring, review and reporting processes continues across the academic year.

### **Resource / Risk / Compliance**

#### **1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

There are no additional resource implications. Clarification of a number of points should ensure that staff are clear on the process and that it operates efficiently.

#### **2. Risk assessment**

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

#### **3. Equality and Diversity**

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on process and the proposed changes are minor and could not reasonably have any equality impact. Additionally, more prominence has been placed on equality and diversity data.

#### **4. Freedom of information**

Open.

### **Key words**

Annual monitoring, reporting and review

### **Originator of the paper**

Nichola Kett, Academic Policy Manager, Academic Services  
20 November 2017

### Changes Made to Processes for 2016/17

- Reporting was moved from course to programme level.
- Timing for the submission of School annual quality reports was brought forward to late August.
- School annual quality reports are now considered at the University-level rather than College level (Colleges still receive copies and have a role in their analysis).
- Existing report templates (School and College) were streamlined.

### Feedback

Feedback received from Colleges via their Deans, Quality Officers and College quality committees was generally positive. The challenges with the new timing for School annual quality reports were acknowledged, however, challenges with choosing other timings were also identified.

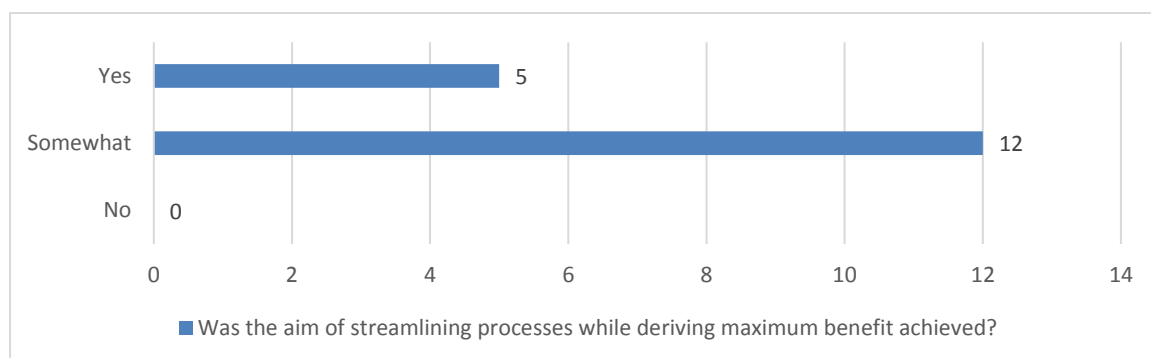
The Senate Quality Assurance Committee sub group that considered School annual quality reports noted that the process had been generally well received and proposed that no major changes should be made for 2017/18.

Positive feedback was received from University Court on the 2017 Scottish Funding Council report which contained the outcomes of the 2016/17 annual monitoring, review and reporting process.

### Evaluation

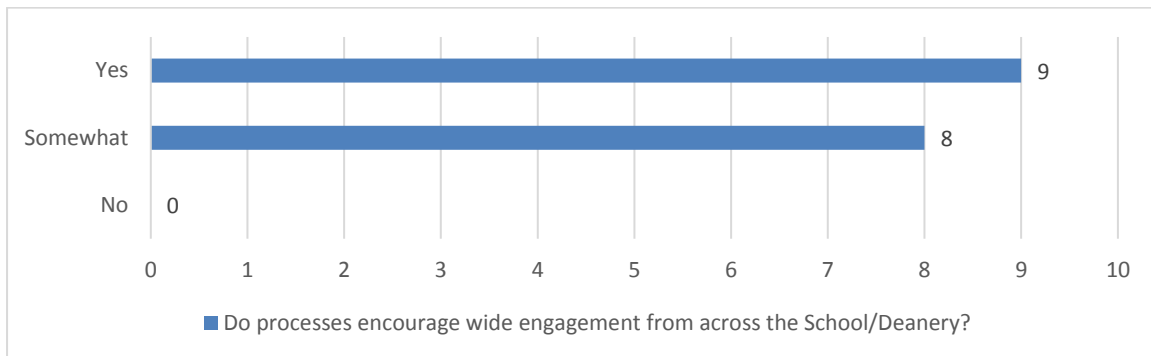
A survey of School Directors of Quality was carried out in October 2017:

#### Streamlining:



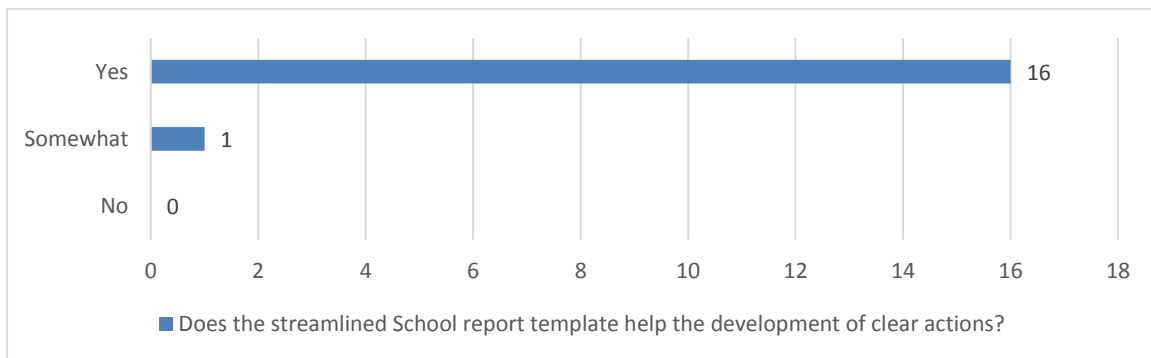
Most comments related to challenges with the timing. However, feedback from Colleges identifies challenges with choosing other timings.

#### Engagement across the School:



- Free text responses varied across Schools/Deaneries, but it can still be a challenge to engage a wide range of staff in annual monitoring
- Strong School annual reports evidenced quality assurance and enhancement processes embedded within School structures

**Clear Actions:**



Positive comments, e.g. *“The streamlining has helped enormously with this: it is now possible to see the wood for the trees, and actions are clearly identifiable and prominent.”*

**General Comments:**

School Directors of Quality mostly commented on the challenges associated with the new timescale for annual School reports.

**Changes for 2017/18**

References to transitional arrangements in 2016/17 have been removed from the Policy.

Wording has been changed to ensure consistency across the Policy and report templates, in particular to make clear that annual monitoring applies to all credit-bearing provision.

The text relating to Course Enhancement Questionnaires has been updated to reflect changes made to the Policy.

Sources of data: there is now a document called Data to Support Annual Quality Processes which lists all sources of data to be considered and their locations. Thus, long lists of data in the report templates have been removed and replaced with a reference to this document. References to the student data dashboard have been softened as this is one source of data (and not currently relevant for postgraduate taught and research).

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs): a requirement to undertake annual monitoring of MOOCs has been formalised and added to the Policy.

Grouping of standalone courses: an optional approach has been added to the Policy based on discussions with the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

Different suggested word counts for sections have been added based on an analysis of good practice examples and feedback from the SQAC Sub Group.

**Changes made as a result of actions agreed at the Senate** Actions from the SQAC Sub Group meeting of 6 September 2017:

- Personal Tutoring as the key institutional priority: it has been made explicit in the Policy and School annual quality report template that every report should include a reflection on personal tutoring.
- Data to provide clarity on what is meant by performance indicator of 80% student satisfaction with personal tutoring: the Personal Tutor Oversight Group discussed this matter at their meeting on 6 November 2017 and agreed that a graph presenting the overall scores from the National Student Survey, the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey and the International Student Barometer should be provided.
- Actions and good practice examples: guidance on what Schools should include as actions for College and University and good practice examples has been added.
- Author and contributors: the School annual quality report template has been amended to include a prompt for Schools to detail who authored and contributed to the development of the report (as in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences system).
- Equality and diversity data: the Data to Support Annual Quality Processes has been updated to include reference to available data. The statements on College benchmarked data provided for Schools in the Policy, annual programme monitoring template, and School annual quality report template have been updated to note that equality and diversity aspects will be highlighted where available.

**Changes made as a result of a recommendation from the Learning and Teaching Committee**

- From Learning and Teaching Committee March 2017: "Assistant Principal (Academic Standards and Quality Assurance) to consider whether there is potential for Schools to report on feedback and turnaround times via the Programme Monitoring Form." An additional heading and question has been added.

**Changes made as a result of recommendations from the Recruitment Strategy Group**

The University's Recruitment Strategy, approved in 2016, recommended a number of actions in order to 'Agree a common approach to portfolio management and review'. This included a recommendation in relation the annual review processes:

- As part of either the annual quality review process or the annual planning process, Schools should explore those courses with student cohorts of less than 10 over the last three years and consider whether they remain financially sustainable and / or have a clear strategic rationale.
- Three years after the introduction of a new programme, School management should revisit the original business case (including the FSG Programme Costing Template), revisit costings to ensure they remain appropriate, and review whether the programme is on track to be financially sustainable. Schools should have the flexibility to look at individual programmes separately, or to review their viability as part of a broader portfolio.

# Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting Policy



## Purpose of Policy

To outline the University's approach to annual monitoring, review and reporting.

## Overview

Describes the University's annual monitoring, review and reporting processes.

## Scope: Mandatory Policy

Applicable to all credit-bearing [programmes and courses provision](#).

## Contact Officer

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## Document control

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Approved:</b> 08.09.16	<b>Starts:</b> 08.09.16	<b>Equality impact assessment:</b> 25.05.16	<b>Amendments:</b> <a href="#">30.11.17</a>	<b>Next Review:</b> 2018/19
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## Approving authority

Senate Quality Assurance Committee  
This Policy was created from the University Quality Framework Review Proposals for Consultation which was approved on 26.05.16

## Consultation undertaken

Schools, Colleges, Senate Quality Assurance Committee

## Section responsible for policy maintenance & review

Academic Services

## Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

## UK Quality Code

UK Quality Code Chapter B8 Programme Monitoring and Review

## Policies superseded by this policy

## Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email [Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk) or telephone 0131 650 2138.

## Keywords

Annual monitoring, review, reporting

# Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting Policy



## Policy

This document sets out the quality assurance processes for annual monitoring, review and reporting in place across all credit-bearing provision in the University. The University is responsible for its academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience. It is committed to reflecting on and systematically reviewing its provision and taking action to enhance it. The University is also answerable to a number of external bodies for the quality of its provision.

The University's quality framework is thus informed by the requirements of:

- The Scottish Funding Council
- The Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code
- Expectations of external professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs)

The University's management of its academic standards and quality of the student experience is reviewed periodically by the Quality Assurance Agency (Scotland) Enhancement-led Institutional Review method.

### Annual Programme Monitoring

**WHAT:** Schools carry out annual programme monitoring, ~~implementing using~~ a process which meets both local contexts and institution-wide ~~principles requirements, considering and uses a standard~~ set of data and reporting using a standard. ~~Template~~

**WHEN:** All programmes must be monitored annually and reports provided to the School Director of Quality in time to inform the preparation of the School annual quality report (due in late August each year).

Monitoring and review of provision is ongoing throughout the year through formal evidence-based discussion of student performance and progression data, teaching review meetings, taught and research programme monitoring, consideration of external examiner reports and student feedback. These inform the school annual quality report.

In accordance with the Course Enhancement Questionnaire Policy all taught, credit bearing courses (undergraduate and postgraduate) that have students enrolled on them and are delivered by the University of Edinburgh, including the taught portion of research courses, should be surveyed using the University's standard survey tool and question sets. ~~This includes with the exception of~~ Student-led Individually-Created Courses (SLICCs), ~~study abroad or~~ placement courses, and dissertations. The standard core question set will be used in 2017/18 for these types of courses. For these exceptions, the Student Survey Unit will work with colleagues to agree alternate question sets that are appropriate to the nature of the courses.

When conducting the annual programme monitoring process, Schools consider the sustainability of their courses and programmes (eg whether they are recruiting appropriately, whether any staffing issues need attention) and the strategic relationship between the programmes and the School's wider portfolio. As part of this, either via the annual quality review process or the annual planning process, Schools should explore those courses with student cohorts of less than 10 over the last three years and consider whether they remain financially sustainable and / or have a clear strategic rationale. In addition, three years after the introduction of a new programme, Schools revisit the original business case (including the FSG Programme Costing Template), revisit costings to ensure they remain appropriate, and review whether the programme is on track to be financially sustainable. Schools should have the flexibility to look at individual programmes



# Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting Policy



separately, or to review their viability as part of a broader portfolio. This should either be done within the context of the annual quality monitoring processes or via an alternate School process.

## Operational outline:

- **Schools** will decide on the optimum clustering of their programmes for Annual Programme Monitoring (i.e. single and/or joint honours programmes, clusters of similar programmes), to enable effective evaluation and reflection whilst avoiding duplication of effort. Annual Programme Monitoring does not require a separate process and can take place in existing meetings, such as undergraduate/postgraduate/learning and teaching committees, or small groupings of programme directors and other relevant staff.
- **Schools** will consider the data listed in Data to Support Annual Quality Processes ~~use available data provided via the Student Data Dashboard~~ to support their reflection in a way that is meaningful to them. Other sources of data are listed in the template.
- Annual Programme Monitoring will include consideration of course monitoring including both core and elective courses relating to the programme(s). Credit-bearing courses offered by a school which do not form a core part of a single programme (e.g. common courses, stand-alone courses taught by staff from several schools) and courses taken by large numbers of students from outwith the programme must also be reviewed annually within the Annual Programme Monitoring process. Stand-alone courses may be grouped together in a meaningful way (to be determined by the school) and an annual programme monitoring form completed for each group.
- Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), although not credit bearing, should be subject to appropriate course-level monitoring. Consideration should be given to aspects such as overall numbers, engagement, performance on activities, completion and student feedback. School Directors of Quality should be made aware of the outcomes of the monitoring of MOOCs in time to inform the preparation of the School annual quality report (due in late August each year).
- **Schools** can continue to give consideration to the course level as relevant to the local context, however reporting will be at the level of the programme or programme clusters.
- Outputs of Annual Programme Monitoring must be recorded, and be available to School Directors of Quality to support their annual overview reporting.
- Annual Programme Monitoring can feed in to school annual and strategic planning.
- **Colleges** will support schools and provide appropriate opportunities as necessary for briefing and support, with a particular emphasis on delivering an effective, streamlined approach.
- Academic Services will establish principles and guidance based on the UK Quality Code. The guidance will include the data sources to be used as a basis for school reflections.
- The effectiveness of Annual Programme Monitoring arrangements will be evaluated in periodic review.

Commented [KN1]: Covered above.

Commented [KN2]: Unnecessary sentence. No additional 'principles' or 'guidance' needed beyond the existing Policy, report templates and Data to Support Annual Quality Processes document.

## School Annual Quality Report

**WHAT:** Schools report annually to Senate Quality Assurance Committee, on key themes and actions from in-year monitoring, review and reflection, providing greater institutional oversight of issues and good practice, with support from colleges, considering a standard set of data and reporting using a standard ~~template~~

**WHEN:** By late-August annually. Date will be confirmed by Academic Services. The first reports in the new format will be made in summer 2017, reporting on academic years 2015/16 and 2016/17 in order to catch up from the current retrospective timing. There will therefore be no requirement to prepare a school annual quality report under the previous format in

# Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting Policy



# Policy

~~semester 1 2016/17. During semester 1 2016/17 colleges will support schools to produce a brief update on their progress with key areas for action identified in reporting on 2014/15 activity.~~

## Operational Outline:

The school annual quality report draws on the school's ongoing processes for review and reflection on its provision. All reflections should be evidence-based.

- Using the school annual quality report template schools reflect on: what has worked well throughout the year; any new/ innovative developments throughout the year worth sharing more widely; any areas identified requiring attention/further development; what action is planned; progress with recommendations from Senate Quality Assurance Committee the previous year; action requested of college/University. Schools identify key themes and trends they consider significant.
- The template makes provision for reporting on 1 or 2 key institutional priorities. The current priority is the ~~institutional~~ performance indicator of 80% student satisfaction with personal tutoring and all reports must include a reflection on this.
- The annual reflection will draw on the school's annual monitoring and review processes where student performance and course-related issues are discussed, including annual programme monitoring based on the University template, Boards of Examiners' discussions, annual teaching review and programme review meetings.
- Themes identified in the annual report should contribute to the learning, teaching and research student experience element of the school annual plan.
- ~~Schools will maintain a School quality model which is a description of how annual monitoring, review and reporting operates. In the first report under the new format schools will include a description or process flow of their annual monitoring and review cycle leading up to the production of the school annual quality report. It will cover all credit-bearing provision, and state what data is considered as part of these. The description will state when and how the processes are carried out, and what roles are and responsibilities involved, and what data is used as evidence. The scope will include all monitoring and review processes, including those embedded in ongoing activity. Thereafter schools will only require to provide an update on their processes with their annual report if there are any changes. If changes are made to the School quality model an updated copy should be submitted with the completed annual quality report in August.~~ The process description will support continuity between ~~S~~chool ~~D~~irector of ~~Q~~uality appointments.
- The effectiveness of the school's monitoring and review arrangements will be evaluated as part of the periodic review process.

**Commented [KN3]:** We now have the Data to Support Annual Quality Processes document which covers this.

## Timing

Quality reporting will ~~therefore~~ be able to contribute to the learning, ~~and~~ teaching and research student experience element of the school annual plan. It is acknowledged that the ~~shorter~~ timescale will mean that any issues from the dissertation element of taught postgraduate provision will need to be reported on in the following year. However, action to resolve urgent issues at all levels of provision should take place at the earliest possible stage. Likewise, the majority of boards of examiners will have met by the time the annual report is being prepared.

Most progression data will be available in June for UG and PGT. The outcome of resits and of taught postgraduate dissertations will be considered ~~through college committees once available and will be key themes reported on~~ by schools in their next annual report. Postgraduate research

**Commented [KN4]:** Confirmed with College Deans of Quality (September 2017)

# Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting Policy



# Policy

issues which miss the summer reporting period can likewise be included in the next annual report. External examiners' views will be available through the minutes of Boards of Examiners meetings: again the emphasis should be on reporting major issues (all individual programme issues are now reported via the External Examiner [Reporting System](#)), commendations relating to positive or innovative academic practice, or significant recommendations for action.

Student engagement with quality processes ~~will continue~~ [throughout the academic year as at present](#), with issues identified during semester time from student-staff liaison committees or equivalent, student surveys and other mechanisms feeding into the school annual quality report. The ~~shorter~~ school annual quality report will lend itself to discussion of themes and actions being taken by the school in student-staff liaison committees at the start of the following academic year.

## What Happens Next

School annual quality reports will be considered by Senate Quality Assurance Committee ([SQAC](#)), which will focus on ~~outputs and~~ recommendations for [Schools to take forward, with support from colleges as appropriate to take forward with schools](#). ~~Colleges will retain their~~ [undertake peer review of school reports, where reports are shared across the College and - which helps to identify College themes - adds value to the annual process and will provide detailed monitoring and feedback to individual schools on recommended action.](#)

**Commented [KN5]:** Updated to reflect the nature of recommendations from the September 2017 cycle, which were predominately for the Schools to action.

**Commented [KN6]:** Wording updated to ensure that the complimentary nature of College peer review is reflected and to clarify that it is not a separate process.

## Operational outline:

- ~~From academic year 2016/17 s~~ Schools ~~will~~ complete their annual quality reports by late August and send them to Academic Services and the college dean for quality.
- Following receipt of the reports the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance will convene a meeting of [a sub group of](#) the college deans and the head of quality assurance and enhancement, Academic Services, to review the reports and prepare recommendations for consideration by ~~Senate Quality Assurance Committee~~ [SQAC](#) at its first meeting in September. This consideration will also inform the University's annual report to the Scottish Funding Council, ~~currently~~ due at the end of September.
- [College quality committees will consider the report of the sub group.](#)
- ~~Senate Quality Assurance Committee~~ [SQAC](#) will be responsible for tracking schools' ~~actions~~ [planned and actions](#) in response to [SQAC's](#) recommendations through schools reporting in their next annual quality report, and for reporting to schools on actions taken in response to issues they have raised for attention at University level. Colleges will similarly report to schools on actions raised for attention at college level.
- ~~Colleges will continue to carry out peer review of school reports with a view to supporting schools and enhancing provision and will provide detailed monitoring and feedback to individual schools on recommended action.~~

**Commented [KN7]:** This is what happened in September 2017 and ensures that the feedback loop is closed.

**Commented [KN8]:** Unnecessary sentence – detailed above.

## College Annual Quality Report

**WHAT:** Colleges ~~report annually to SQAC will submit College Quality Enhancement Plans annually to SQAC outlining their action plan for the support of teaching excellence and capacity building, their overview of performance data across the college and themes to inform SQAC's forward planning.~~ [using a standard Template](#)

**WHEN:** January (annually) so that the report is both informed by colleges' ongoing support of schools and can contribute to SQAC's forward planning.

# Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting Policy



THE UNIVERSITY  
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## Operational outline:

- Colleges will report annually to [the](#) SQAC meeting in February. This will be based on colleges' action plans for how quality activity will support teaching excellence and capacity building and on their overview of performance data across the college, and will contribute to SQAC forward planning. ~~In addition to the content above, college annual reports to SQAC in February 2017 will include an update on progress with addressing key themes identified from school annual reports on 2014/15 activity.~~

## College Role in Annual Reporting and Quality Processes

### Operational outline:

- Colleges will continue proactively to support schools in taking forward actions from annual reporting, including where colleges identify clustering of issues across schools where action would be more effective on a college-wide basis.
- Colleges will ~~monitor - support schools to introduce~~ Annual Programme Monitoring ~~where this does not already exist, and will monitor implementation~~ to ensure full coverage.
- In the first meeting of semester 1 following the August school quality report, college quality committees will identify good practice ~~and areas for further development~~ from school reports to ~~share across the contribute to a University event during semester 1.~~
- During ~~the year~~ Semester 1 annually and starting from Semester 1 2016/17, college quality committees will ~~monitor and~~ support schools' preparations for annual reporting ~~in August~~ by: providing and discussing college benchmarked data for schools' reflections on performance, including degree classification, ~~college level - themes from~~ external examiners' reports ~~themes, generated by EERS, EvaSys, and student surveys data. Equality and diversity aspects will be highlighted where available;~~ ~~discussing issues arising from school annual reports and directing schools' attention to areas requiring action, - assisting schools to frame their reporting in the context of longer term school and college planning, and carrying out peer review.~~
- ~~Colleges will communicate the annual outcomes of the Student Support Services Quality Assurance Framework annual reports via the deans for quality who are members of the SSSQAF sub-committee. College committees will discuss SSSQAF recommendations which have implications for schools, and will report to SQAC on actions taken.~~
- Colleges will ~~continue to~~ support and develop student engagement in quality processes.
- College committees will support discussion and sharing of good practice.

**Commented [KN9]:** Areas for further development would not be shared in this way but would be picked up through the sub group meeting and appropriate action/support identified. Sharing good practice can be done in many ways other than an event.

**Commented [KN10]:** College Quality Officers confirmed that extending this consideration of benchmarked data throughout the year better supports Schools. E.g. resit and PGT data in early semester 1 and other data in June.

**Commented [KN11]:** Unnecessary text - covered above.

**Commented [KN12]:** Now in another Policy

~~30 November 2017~~ 8 September 2016

# College Annual Quality Report

College of.....

Academic Year.....

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.

~~[Report of February 2017 to include update on progress with addressing key themes from school annual reports on 2014/15 activity.](#)~~

1. Reflection on progress with actions from the previous year

2. Overview of performance data across the college

3. Themes for SQAC forward planning

4. College action plan

The University of Edinburgh

**School Annual Quality Report**

**School of** .....

**Academic Year** .....

The school annual quality report should be a **concise** report informed by evaluation of the key themes from the school's monitoring and review of student learning and the student experience over the past year. The themes should be based on evidence from the range of available data and on discussion through school processes and committees of student performance and programme and course issues. A key focus of the report should be on actions already taken and planned in response to the issues identified. The report should cover all credit-bearing provision, including collaborative programmes, [and MOOCs](#). Schools are encouraged to use **bullet point** format. Reports should be sent to Academic Services copied to the college office by Friday ~~24~~<sup>25</sup> August 201~~7~~<sup>8</sup>.

[Author:](#)

[Contributors:](#)

**1. Progress with [actions planned in last year's report and any recommendations from last year's Senate Quality Assurance Committee sub group meeting in the past year](#).**

[Suggested word length: 500 words](#)

**2. What has worked well throughout the year?**

[Reflect on Data to Support Annual Quality Processes and report by exception \[LINK\]](#)

[Suggested word length: 500 words](#)

**3. Any new/innovative developments throughout the year worth sharing more widely?**

[Identify innovative good practice examples with the potential to be applicable to the wider University that are having a demonstrable positive impact on the student learning experience. Around 1-3 examples.](#)

[Suggested word length: 200 words](#)

**4. Any areas identified requiring attention/further development?**

[Suggested word length: 300 words](#)

5. Actions planned and requested
<p><u>Suggested word length: 300 words (sections A and B)</u></p> <p>Section A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions planned by the school based on the analysis in sections 1-4.</li> </ul>
<p>Section B</p> <p><u>These should be actions that the Schools cannot progress themselves, that are of an appropriately high level and importance to be considered by the College or University, and that are informed by the above reflections. Around 1-3 key actions (where appropriate) under each bullet point.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions requested of the college based on the analysis in sections 1-4.</li> <li>• Actions requested of the University based on the analysis in sections 1-4.</li> </ul>

## Guidance

- ~~The report in August 2017 will cover academic years 2015/16 and 2016/17, and will give an update on progress with actions from 2014/15.~~
- **Scope:** the report covers all taught and research credit-bearing provision ~~leading to an award by the University. This includes~~ collaborative provision and credit-bearing CPD. For ease of reporting, each section may be split into taught and research-related themes. Reporting on research provision should be at programme level (e.g. training, performance) rather than by individual student.
- ~~**Word length:** the emphasis is on a concise report which can be in bullet point format. Suggested word length for each section of 300 words.~~
- **Current institutional priority:** performance indicator of 80% student satisfaction with personal tutoring. Please report in the appropriate section on school performance (section 2, 3 and/or 4) and any major themes arising/actions to be taken (section 5). All reports must include a reflection on this.
- **Data sources:** ~~the BI suite reports and the forthcoming Student Data Dashboard are the core source of student performance and progression data. Other core data sources to be used in schools' processes for monitoring and review of provision are boards of examiners discussions, themes from external examiners reports, annual programme review/teaching review meetings, benchmarked degree classification data, EvaSys, student surveys (ESES, NSS, PTES, PRES, ISB), student feedback through SSLCs and equivalents, outcomes of accrediting body reviews. For UG resit results, PGT dissertation results and PGR progression and completion data, the most recently available results should be used. See the Data to Support Annual Quality Processes document for sources of data to be considered. For UG resits, PGT progression and dissertation outcome data and PGR progression and completion data, the most recently available results should be used. During the year College quality committees will support schools' preparations for annual reporting by providing and discussing college benchmarked data for schools' reflections on performance, including degree classification, college level external examiners report themes, EvaSys and student surveys data. Equality and diversity aspects will be highlighted where available. Schools should note in their annual reports any enhancements that could be made to data for quality purposes. See the Data to Support Annual Quality Processes for sources of data.~~ See the Data to Support Annual Quality Processes document for sources of data to be considered. For UG resits, PGT progression and dissertation outcome data and PGR progression and completion data, the most recently available results should be used. During the year College quality committees will support schools' preparations for annual reporting by providing and discussing college benchmarked data for schools' reflections on performance, including degree classification, college level external examiners report themes, EvaSys and student surveys data. Equality and diversity aspects will be highlighted where available. Schools should note in their annual reports any enhancements that could be made to data for quality purposes. See the Data to Support Annual Quality Processes for sources of data.
- **External Examiners' comments:** reporting on external examiners' comments in the school annual report should be by exception rather than a summary of all comments, i.e. where external examiners raise substantial issues of good/innovative practice or areas for development. College quality committees will discuss an analysis of external examiner themes annually.
- **School quality model:** This is a description of how annual monitoring, review and reporting operates within the School. Along with the first school annual quality report in summer 2017 schools will provide a description of their annual monitoring and review cycle for all credit bearing provision leading up to the production of the school annual quality report. The description will state when and how the processes are carried out, and what roles and responsibilities. If changes are made to the School quality model an updated copy should be submitted with the completed report, are involved, and what data is used as evidence. The

**Commented [KN1]:** Suggest deleting this as it is all contained within the Data to Support Annual Quality Processes document.

**Commented [KN2]:** Suggest this is deleted as we are clear on data that is to be considered as part of annual monitoring, review and reporting.

~~scope will include all monitoring and review processes, including those embedded in ongoing activity. Thereafter schools will only require to provide an update on their processes with their annual report if there are any changes.~~

~~June-November 2017~~



## **Annual Programme Monitoring**

- The UK Quality Code for Higher Education Chapter B8 “Monitoring and Review” requires universities to monitor (i.e. look at all relevant information) and review (i.e. identify actions to enhance) all their undergraduate and postgraduate programmes
- Annual programme monitoring is part of the University’s quality framework. All undergraduate and postgraduate programmes should be formally monitored every year to reflect on:
  - the learning opportunities students have experienced
  - student performance and academic standards
  - continuing [sustainability \(eg whether they are recruiting appropriately, whether the business case remains appropriate, whether any staffing issues need attention\)](#), currency and relevance
- Enhancements of the student learning experience are identified and implemented through programme monitoring
- Annual programme monitoring supports [the University’s strategic aim of excellence in education](#) and college and school planning.

### **The process**

- This template contains the minimum features for all programme monitoring across the University. Schools may add to it if they wish, while ensuring that additions are not burdensome/duplicate existing processes.
- All programmes must be monitored annually within the academic year covered by the report. All credit-bearing provision resulting in an award by the University must be monitored, including collaborative provision, [and MOOCs](#). Programme monitoring can be part of a continuous engagement by staff and students throughout the academic year or part of a formal event at a particular time of the year. There is no set format for an event: it may be a small meeting of the programme director and other relevant colleagues, or it may be part of a scheduled meeting, e.g. a teaching committee.
- Schools will decide on the optimum clustering of their programmes for Annual Programme Monitoring, to enable effective evaluation and reflection whilst avoiding duplication of effort. The template may be used to report on clusters of programmes. Each section may be broken down into taught and research provision if wishes. Reporting on research provision should be at the programme level (e.g. training, performance) rather than by individual student.
- Annual Programme Monitoring will include consideration [of course monitoring of including](#) both core and elective courses relating to the programme(s). Credit-bearing courses offered by a school which do not form a core part of a single programme (e.g. common courses, stand-alone courses taught by staff from several schools) and courses taken by large numbers of students from outwith the programme must also be reviewed annually within the Annual Programme Monitoring process. [Stand-alone courses may be grouped together in a meaningful way \(to be determined by the school\) and an annual programme monitoring form completed for each group.](#)
- Programme monitoring must be evidence-based. [See the Data to Support Annual Quality Processes document for sources of data to be considered.](#) [Sources will include the Student](#)

Data Dashboard, including data on progression and achievement; benchmarked degree classification data; external examiner reports; student survey data; student-staff liaison committees or equivalent; the relevant subject benchmark statement; accrediting body reports where relevant; TPR/PPR recommendations. For UG results, PGT progression and dissertation outcome data and PGR progression and completion data, the most recently available results should be used. During the year cColleges quality committees will support schools' preparations for annual reporting by providing and discussing provide-college benchmarked data for schools' reflections on performance, including degree classification, college level external examiners report EERS themes, and EvaSys, student surveys data. Equality and diversity aspects will be highlighted where available. See the Information Portal Quality Assurance Toolkit for sources of data.

- There is no set time to monitor and review a programme but there must be a formal record showing that a programme has been monitored and reviewed and relevant action taken. The key outcomes from Annual Programme Monitoring should inform school annual quality reporting (due annually in late August) and strategic planning and schools should devise their own mechanisms for ensuring this. The School Director of Quality should receive a copy of completed forms in order to inform the quality processSchool annual quality report.

### Programme Monitoring Template

<b>Programme/s</b>
<b>Academic year</b>
<b>Reviewed by (e.g. programme director + state other colleagues involved; teaching committee) + contact for any queries</b>
<b>Date of review</b>
<b>Areas for Reflection</b>  <b>Marketing/recruitment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is marketing appropriate?</li> <li>• Is the programme/programme cluster recruiting appropriately?</li> </ul> <b>Curriculum design and currency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the programme/programme cluster promote the achievement of learning outcomes appropriately?</li> <li>• Do the courses relate sufficiently well to the overall aims of the programme/s? Are there any gaps in course provision in relation to programme aims?</li> <li>• Are the assessment types appropriate?</li> <li>• Does the programme/programme cluster support student employability?</li> <li>• Is the system of student support, including Personal Tutors, working effectively?</li> <li>• Is the learning environment inclusive? Are all mainstreamed adjustments in place?</li> <li>• Are all placements appropriate and working well?</li> </ul>

- Is there good or innovative practice which could be implemented more widely?

**Learning resources and facilities**

- Are resources/facilities/equipment adequate?

**Student performance**

- Is the student performance as expected and in line with benchmarks?
- Are there any courses or aspects of the programme/programme cluster where student performance has not been as expected?
- Are there any notable trends/differences across years or by student characteristics?

**Staffing and sustainability**

- Are there any staffing issues that need attention?
- Is the programme/programme cluster sustainable [and recruiting appropriately?](#)

**Relationship to the wider school portfolio/college/university strategy?**

- What is the strategic purpose of the programme/programme cluster within the wider portfolio?
- Does programme planning involve reflection on school/college/university strategic aims?

**Progress with internal/external review recommendations (as appropriate)**

- Progress with actions as a result of the most recent TPR/PPR, where relevant to the programme/s.
- Progress with actions as a result of accreditation reviews, where relevant to the programme/s.

**Feedback turnaround times**

- Reflect on the feedback turnaround times for the programme/s. Is feedback being provided to students within 15 working days or in time to be of use in subsequent assessments within the course (whichever is sooner)?

**What issues were discussed?**

1. Update on actions from previous year's review
- 2.
- 3.

**What actions are planned?**


- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Which School Committee(s) will this report be taken to? (if review not carried out through a committee)**

[November 2017](#)

[May 2016](#)

**DATA TO SUPPORT ANNUAL QUALITY PROCESSES – WHERE TO FIND IT (November 2017)**

Data		Programme	School	Undergraduate	Postgraduate taught	Postgraduate research
<b>Performance<sup>①</sup> and progression</b>	General	✓	✓	<p>Admissions, courses (results and average marks) and programmes (outcomes)</p> <p align="center"><a href="#">Student Data Dashboard<sup>1</sup></a></p> <p>For further detail: Reports available through 'Reporting + Analytics' MyEd channel &gt; Business Intelligence (BI) Suite &gt; Documents tab Folders &gt; Public Folders &gt; SASG: Student Systems &gt; Officially Dev and Maintained &gt; Student &gt; Quality Assurance</p> <p><b>Reports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student applications</li> <li>• Entrants report</li> <li>• Progression</li> <li>• Course results</li> <li>• Completion rate of entrants (UG)</li> <li>• Widening participation</li> </ul>	<p>Reports available through 'Reporting + Analytics' MyEd channel &gt; Business Intelligence (BI) Suite &gt; Documents tab Folders &gt; Public Folders &gt; SASG: Student Systems &gt; Officially Dev and Maintained &gt; Student &gt; Quality Assurance</p> <p><b>Reports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student applications</li> <li>• Entrants report</li> <li>• Completion rate of PGT entrants</li> </ul>	<p>Reports available through 'Reporting + Analytics' MyEd channel &gt; Business Intelligence (BI) Suite &gt; Documents tab Folders &gt; Public Folders &gt; SASG: Student Systems &gt; Officially Dev and Maintained &gt; Student &gt; Quality Assurance</p> <p><b>Reports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student applications</li> <li>• Entrants report</li> <li>• PGR progression and outcomes</li> </ul>
	Benchmarked degree classification data <sup>①</sup>	✓	✓	<a href="#">Quality Assurance Toolkit</a>	N/a	
	Boards of examiners discussions		✓	Minutes of meetings		
<b>External examiners reports</b>	✓		Individual reports and responses available through the <a href="#">External Examiner Reporting System</a> (EERS)			Minutes of the relevant College Committee
<b>Themes from external examiners' reports<sup>①</sup></b>		✓	Thematic analysis available through 'Reporting + Analytics' MyEd channel > Business Intelligence (BI) Suite > Explorer > EExamThematic Analysis 			
<b>Annual programme review/teaching review meetings</b>		✓	Completed annual programme monitoring <a href="#">templates<sup>2</sup></a>			

<sup>1</sup> [Equality and diversity data available: gender, ethnic origin and widening participation](#)

<sup>2</sup> All programmes must be monitored annually and reports provided to the School Director of Quality in time to inform the preparation of the School annual quality report (due in late August each year)

**DATA TO SUPPORT ANNUAL QUALITY PROCESSES – WHERE TO FIND IT (November 2017)**

Data	Programme	School	Undergraduate	Postgraduate taught	Postgraduate research
<p><b>Student Surveys<sup>①</sup></b></p> <p><i>See <a href="http://edin.ac/2yyAYB5">edin.ac/2yyAYB5</a> for information on how CEQ results are distributed.</i></p> <p><i>The results of CEQs (core course questions) are added to the Student Data Dashboard [timing TBC] and College and School summary reports (all core questions) are provided by Student Systems [mechanism/timing TBC].</i> ★</p>	✓	✓	<p><a href="#">Student Data Dashboard</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course enhancement questionnaires (core course questions) and National Student Survey (programmes)</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Student Surveys wiki</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Student Survey</li> <li>Edinburgh Student Experience Survey</li> </ul> <p>Student Surveys Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International Student Barometer</li> </ul>	<p>Course enhancement questionnaire reports</p> <p><a href="#">Student Surveys wiki</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey</li> </ul> <p>Student Surveys Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International Student Barometer</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Student Surveys wiki</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Postgraduate Research Experience Survey</li> </ul> <p>Student Surveys Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International Student Barometer</li> </ul>
<b>Student feedback through Student-Staff Liaison Committees and equivalents</b>	✓	✓	Record of meeting		
<b>Accrediting body reports</b>	✓		As appropriate		
<b>Accrediting body review outcomes</b>		✓			
<b>Relevant subject benchmark statement</b>	✓		<a href="#">Quality Assurance Agency website</a>	N/a	
<b>Taught/Postgraduate Programme Review recommendations</b>	✓		<a href="#">Academic Services' website</a> or contact <a href="mailto:internalreviewsupport@ed.ac.uk">internalreviewsupport@ed.ac.uk</a>		
<b><a href="#">Personal Tutor Student Satisfaction</a></b>		✓	<a href="#">Quality Assurance Toolkit</a>		

① During the year college quality committees will support schools' preparations for annual reporting by providing and discussing college benchmarked data for schools' reflections on performance, including degree classification, college level external examiners report themes, and student surveys data. Equality and diversity aspects will be highlighted where available.

**Timing:** For UG resit results, PGT dissertation results and PGR progression and completion data, the most recently available results should be used.

★ **Staff guidance on course enhancement questionnaires:** <http://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/data-matters>

# University Quality Framework – Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting Flowchart

PURPLE BOX INDICATES HYPERLINK

## Programme (no reporting requirement below programme level)

See the Data to Support Annual Quality Processes document for sources of data to be considered

### Consideration of course monitoring

Including both core and elective courses and courses which do not form part of a single programme and/or are taken by large numbers of students from outwith the programme

**Annual Programme Monitoring**

Schools decide on the optimum clustering of programmes  
Existing meeting structures can be used  
Effectiveness will be evaluated in periodic review

Report – completed in time to inform School annual quality report template

## School

**School Director of Quality**

Effectiveness will be evaluated in periodic review

**School Annual Quality Reporting**

See the Data to Support Annual Quality Processes document for sources of data to be considered

**School Quality Model/Description**  
Resubmit when there are any changes

Report – late August template

School annual and strategic planning

## College

College Quality Committees provide and discuss College benchmarked data

**College Annual Quality Reporting**

Report – January template

**College Dean for Quality**

Peer review of School reports

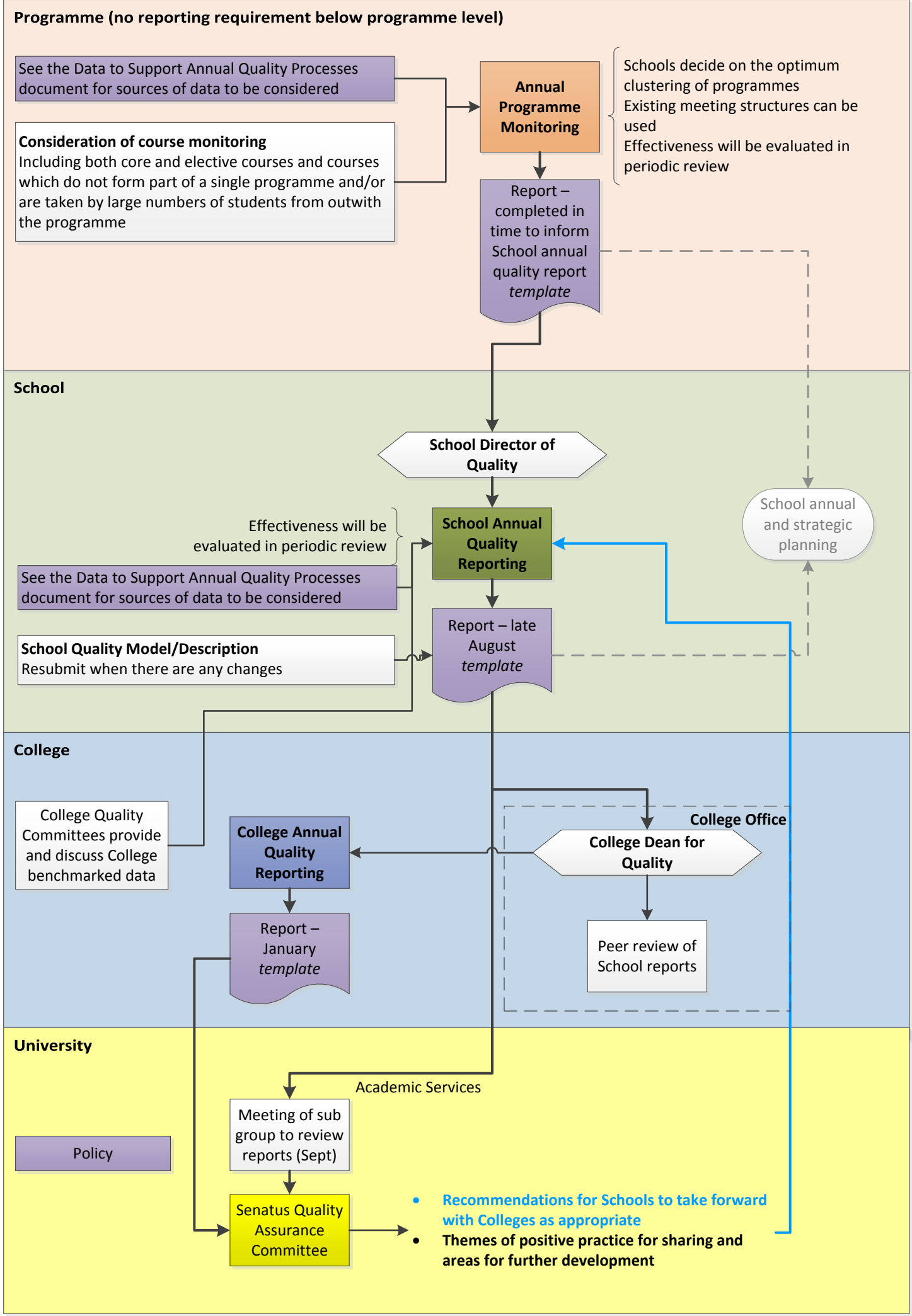
## University

Policy

Meeting of sub group to review reports (Sept)

**Senatus Quality Assurance Committee**

- Recommendations for Schools to take forward with Colleges as appropriate
- Themes of positive practice for sharing and areas for further development



The University of Edinburgh  
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

30 November 2017

**Undergraduate Taught External Examiner Reports:  
Thematic Analysis 2016/17**

**Executive Summary**

The paper comprises an analysis of data from the External Examiner Reporting System (EERS). It covers undergraduate programmes for the academic year 2016/17 and provides comparison with 2015/16.

**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 are asked to ensure that the outcomes of the Committee's discussions are made available to and considered by the relevant College committee(s).

**How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

The Committee is invited 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  
21 November 2017

## Undergraduate External Examiner Reports: Thematic Analysis 2016/17

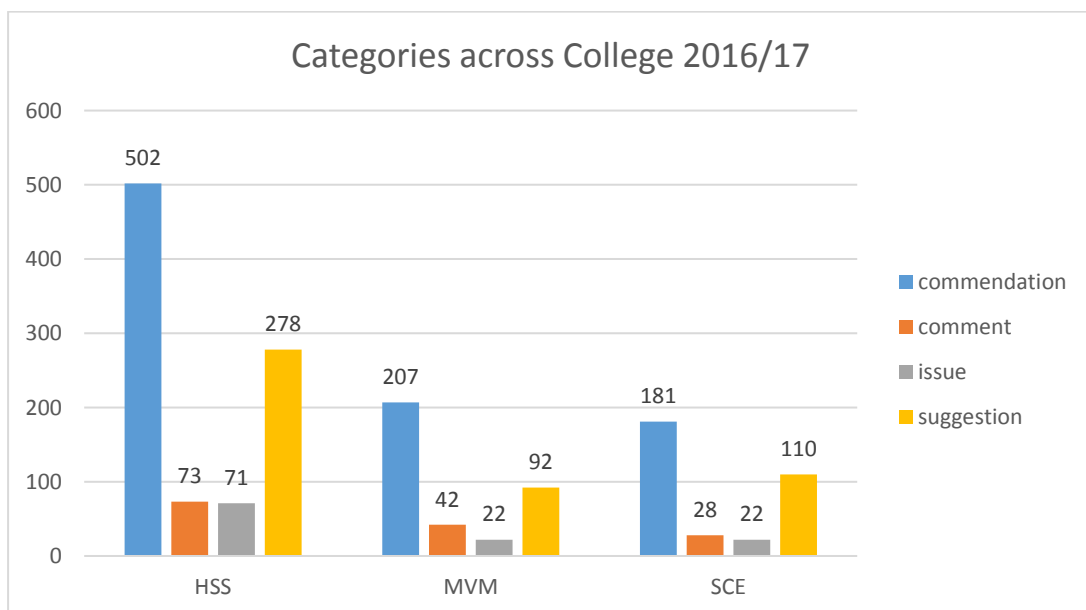
### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides a thematic analysis of External Examiner reports for undergraduate programmes. Analysis was conducted based on data available on 14 November 2017.
- 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) to take as result.

### 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 reporting across all categories has increased slightly in 2016/17 compared with the previous year reflecting the increase in the number of reports received.
- 2.2 All Schools have a good percentage of commendations from their External Examiner reports, with the majority receiving above 55% of total comments as commendations.

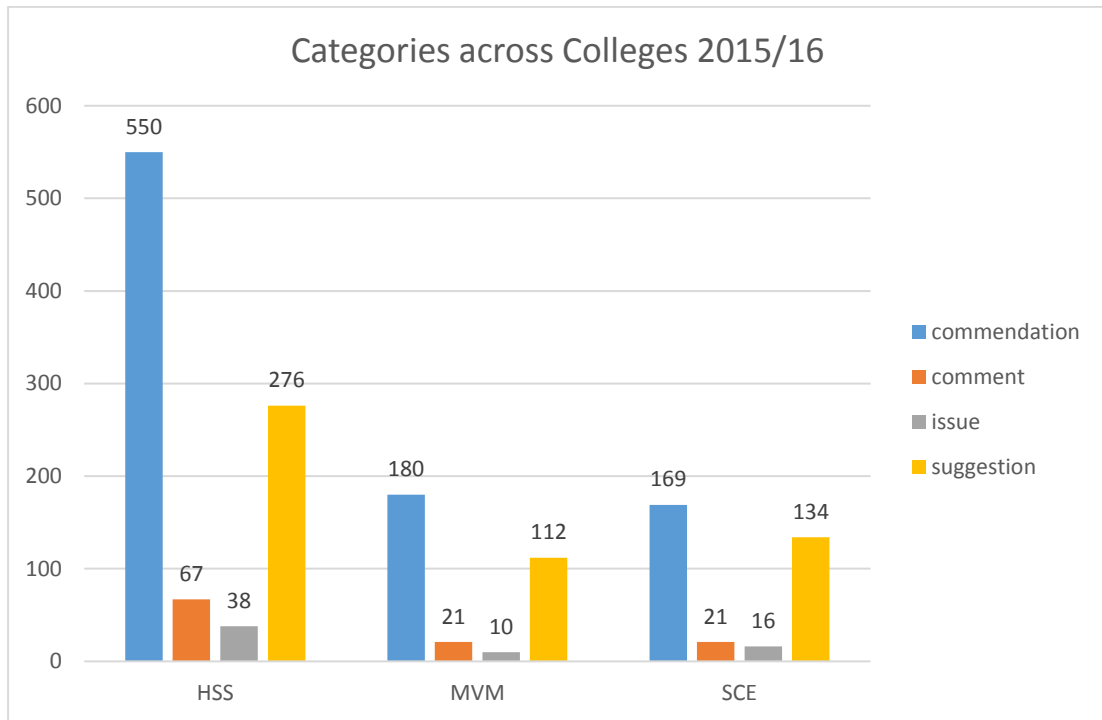
Figure 1



HSS (College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences), MVM (College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine), SCE (College of Science and Engineering)



Figure 2



HSS (College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences), MVM (College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine), SCE (College of Science and Engineering)

### 2.3 Commendations

The main theme commended across all three Colleges was The Assessment Process with the sub-theme of Student Feedback most commented on. Some examples of External Examiners' comments are given below:

“On the modules that I looked at, feedback was consistently excellent; always appropriate and useful for students both in improving their work within a particular module and more generally.”

“I continue to see a very impressive level and quality of feedback given to course students - I continue to believe that the feedback is exceptionally good and best practice.”

“The feedback was outstanding - absolutely exemplary. The staff work incredibly hard to ensure that all students receive detailed feedback that is constructive and forward looking (e.g. how to improve). Excellent.”

### 2.4 Suggestions

The Assessment Process sub-theme of Student Feedback also attracted the highest number of suggestions from External Examiners. Comments were spread across the three Colleges. The majority of suggestions related to improving the consistency of the amount and quality of feedback provided to students.

## 2.5 Issues

Overall, 117 issues were raised. The main theme was Provision of Information with 45 comments made across all three Colleges. The sub-theme of Boards of Examiners had the most comments at 13; these related to scheduling problems and the timing of receipt of papers prior to meetings. Schools have responded to all comments raised in this area.

## 3. Additional analysis of issues, suggestions and comments

Analysis showed two main additional themes emerging consistently across Schools and Colleges.

### 3.1 Moderation

External Examiners recorded comments in relation to moderation noting that it was sometimes difficult to identify evidence of moderation and that it was not always clear which samples of work had been moderated.

### 3.2 Induction

External Examiners comments showed a varied experience of induction with a minority stating that they had received no or minimal induction. A few comments compared their experience of induction at other institutions and suggested similar School or University level induction would be beneficial at Edinburgh.

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

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

*Table 1: Number of undergraduate reports by College*

	2016/17	2015/16
College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS)	159	147
College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM)	59	55
College of Science and Engineering (CSE)	41	37
Total number of reports	259	239

- 4.2 Outlined in the figures below are the number and stage of undergraduate reports in each College for 2016/17 and 2015/16

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

	Report Stage	2016/17	2015/16
<b>AHSS</b>	Response Submitted (complete)	73	127
	Draft Response (response outstanding)	61	9
	Draft Report (report outstanding)	17	8
	Cancelled	5	2
	Submitted Offline	0	1
	Allocation (see below)	3	0
<b>MVM</b>	Response Submitted	49	44
	Draft Response	3	1
	Draft Report	6	5
	Submitted Offline	1	5
<b>SCE</b>	Response Submitted	32	30
	Draft Response	3	4
	Draft Report	4	2
	Cancelled	2	1

- 4.3 CAHSS are continuing to contact Academic Response Co-ordinators to ensure any outstanding draft reports are received and that responses are completed as soon as possible. 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. In 2016/17, the number of reports submitted offline has reduced from the previous academic year. (CMVM advise that two additional reports will be submitted offline which are not included in the figures above. This is due to an ongoing issue of external examiners not being able to access the system. The College is working with Student Systems to resolve this issue for 2017/18.)

## 5 Comments identified by Academic Response Coordinators as Institutional matters

- 5.1 Academic Response Coordinators can decide whether an issue, suggestion or commendation is a School, College or Institutional matter and escalate it accordingly. In 2016/17 only two suggestions were flagged for escalation to institutional level. One of these was a **suggestion** for adding a “not applicable” option to “Issues raised in a previous report” in the online system. The other was a **suggestion** relating to building works noise during a Board of Examiners meeting.

Table 4: Institutional escalation themes 2016/17

Issues raised in previous reports (suggestion)	1
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Board of Examiners Meetings (suggestion)	1
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*Table 5: Institutional escalation themes 2015/16*

Academic Standards (1 issue, 1 suggestion)	2
Issues raised in previous reports (commendation)	1
Provision of information (commendation)	1

**Susan Hunter**  
Academic Services  
21 November 2017

The University of Edinburgh  
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

30 November 2017

## **Annual Report on Complaint Handling 2016-17**

### **Executive Summary**

In line with the requirements of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and the University's Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP), this paper reports on the handling of complaints to the University for the academic year 2016-17.

### **Action requested**

College representatives are asked to ensure that the outcomes of the Committee's discussions are made available to and considered by the relevant College committee(s).

### **How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

The Investigations Manager will be responsible for taking forward points relating to data collection and further analysis.

### **Resource / Risk / Compliance**

#### **1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

There are no immediate resource implications.

#### **2. Risk assessment**

There are no risks in the report per se, which is for information only. Risk management is a key element in the successful handling of all complaints, especially those which carry the potential for reputational damage to the University and/or claims for compensation.

#### **3. Equality and Diversity**

SPSO carried out an EIA before publishing the model CHP. This report covers complaints received, some of which relate to matters where equality and diversity is a consideration.

#### **4. Freedom of information**

This paper is open; data from it will be published on the University's complaint handling web pages.

### **Key words**

Complaint

### **Originator of the paper**

Jean Grier, Investigations Manager, November 2017.

## **Annual Report on Complaint Handling 2016-17**

### **Description of paper**

1. In line with the requirements of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and the University's Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP), this paper reports on the handling of complaints to the University for the academic year 2016-17.

### **Action requested**

2. College representatives are asked to ensure that the outcomes of the Committee's discussions are made available to and considered by the relevant College committee(s).

### **Recommendation**

3. There are no recommendations at this stage.

### **Background and context**

4. The CHP has two stages. Stage 1 Frontline Resolution should be used in the majority of cases, with likely outcomes being an on-the-spot apology, an explanation or other action to resolve the complaint very quickly (within five working days). Stage 2 Complaint Investigation is appropriate where attempts at Frontline Resolution have failed, or where the issue is sufficiently complex, serious or high risk from the outset that Frontline Resolution would not be appropriate. The CHP specifies that the following will be reported internally:

- 1) 'performance statistics detailing complaint volumes, types and key performance information, for example on time taken and stage at which complaints were resolved'
- 2) 'the trends and outcomes of complaints and the actions taken in response including examples to demonstrate how complaints have helped improve services'

### **Discussion**

5. For the purposes of complaint reporting, the University has around 50 'areas' – each of the Schools, College Offices, and designated support services. Areas report quarterly on complaints resolved at Frontline. All Stage 2 complaints are managed centrally by the Investigations Manager.

6. During the 12 month period 1 August 2016 – 31 July 2017, areas reported a total of 467 complaints (356 from students with the remainder from members of the public and a very small number from staff members). This is a slight increase on the previous year's figure of 449, but still lower than the 559 complaints recorded in 2014-15.

7. It is believed that the majority of Frontline cases were resolved within the five-day time limit, but data on this was not being recorded consistently by areas. Mechanisms for logging complaints have still not been developed as fully as we had hoped, and further work will be done on this during the coming year.

8. In total, 342 'complaints' were raised through the central [complaints@ed.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@ed.ac.uk) mailbox, showing a continuing increase from previous years (294 in 2015-16, 205 in 2014-15 and 156 in 2013-14.) Of these:

- 96 (78 in previous year) cases were referred to the appropriate areas for Frontline resolution and are thus also counted in the 467 total for the year.
- In 36 (28) cases, the 'complaint' was resolved through an explanation.
- 13 (16) complaints were not considered – 5 of these because of 'unacceptable behaviour' on the part of the complainants, 7 because they were time-barred and 1 because it was an attempt to re-open a complaint which had been completed through the University's procedures.
- The SPSO contacted the office regarding 22 cases, many of which were appeal cases rather than complaints. Of the complaints they reviewed, SPSO endorsed the University's handling in all but one of the cases. In one complaint case, the SPSO upheld two aspects of the complainant's case which had already been upheld at stage 1 of the University's consideration of the complaint.
- A few cases were referred for investigation under another procedure – student conduct (18), staff capability/disciplinary (16), or academic appeal (5).
- 22 cases were referred back to complainants for more information or for third party DPA clearance.

The number of requests under FoI or DPA legislation showed a significant increase, with 32 requests this year (18 in previous year).

There were no readily discernible trends in the range of issues complained about. Following the erroneous email to final year students regarding cancellation of graduation, we anticipated a large volume of complaints on that matter. Student Administration fielded a large volume of enquiries about the email; these were not logged individually due to the fast-moving situation and pressures on staff at that time, but were probably in the range of 200+, with many enquirers having realised that the email was erroneous.

Small trends may be discernible in a couple of areas: the number of 'complaints' being referred to the appeals procedure was only 5 (compared with 9 and 10 in the previous two years), which may reflect better signposting of appropriate procedures. The number of cases referred for consideration under the Code of Student Conduct increased to 18 (12, 6) and the number of cases referred for consideration through HR routes increased to 16 (3, 3). The increase in conduct and HR cases may reflect better publicity around dignity and respect and the 'No one asks for it' campaign, designed to raise awareness around reporting of sexual violence issues, and launched in September 2016.

A welcome development last year has been the number of occasions on which staff members have consulted the Investigations Manager for advice on cases at an early stage, either to give a 'heads-up' on an imminent complaint, or to check that their proposed frontline approach to a complaint seems appropriate. That trend has continued, and these cases account for the majority of cases not specified above.



9. During the academic year, a total of 9 (8, 13) cases went to Stage 2 Complaint Investigation (though one was subsequently withdrawn), meaning that 99% of complaints were again resolved at Frontline.

10. Investigations should be completed within a maximum of 20 working days, unless an extension is given for good reason. None of the cases investigated this year was completed within that time frame. Of the 9 investigations, 4 were completed within around 6 weeks, 2 within 12-14 weeks and one took around 5 months. One complaint has been withdrawn. In all but one case, the delay was largely due to the complainant – either due to absence or difficulty contacting the complainant, slowness of response from complainant, or because investigation was put on hold at some point at the request of the complainant. In one case, the absence of the investigator on sick leave contributed to delays in completing the investigation.

11. The breakdown of Stage 2 investigation outcomes over the past three years is as follows:

• Complaint fully upheld	0 (1, 1)
• Complaint partially upheld*	2 (1, 1)
• Complaint not upheld	6 (4, 11)
• Complaint withdrawn	1 (0, 0)
• Resolved by other means	0 (1, 0)
• Still under consideration	0 (1, 0)

\*Many complaints cover several issues. Where any of these are upheld, the outcome for the investigation as a whole is recorded as 'partially upheld'.

One of the complaints which was partially upheld related to failure to make adjustments for disability. Two complaints upheld/partially upheld the previous year were also disability-related, and information from those complaints was provided to the review of the Student Disability Service. The disability-related complaint in 2016-17 covered issues which dated back some years. The other complaint which was partially upheld included matters which the School had failed to resolve to the complainant's satisfaction at Stage 1, as well as some new material which the School had not had the opportunity to consider at Stage 1. The elements which were upheld at Stage 2 related to the new matters; the investigation largely endorsed the School's handling of the other issues.

Two years ago this report noted that 'Whilst it is risky to draw conclusions from a single year's data, the fact that none of the Stage 2 investigations upheld complaints which had previously been considered at Frontline might suggest that Frontline resolution is indeed finding appropriate solutions where those exist.' It would again appear that frontline resolution is working well in the majority of cases.

12. Improvements to services may arise due to investigation of a complaint, whether the complaint is upheld or not. Examples of such improvements in the past academic year include:

- a renewed emphasis on the importance of adhering to the *Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students*, particularly in relation to the need to

conduct annual reviews for part-time students on the same schedule as for full-time students.

- A review of systems following the erroneous bulk email which was sent out in relation to graduation, to ensure that such an issue could not recur.

13. As of last year, the SPSO now issues 'annual letters' to institutions, and it is clear from the data that the University of Edinburgh sees a significantly higher number of cases going on to the SPSO for review than does any other institution, even when adjustments are made for size of institution. Of cases referred to SPSO in 2015-16, 17 relate to unsuccessful academic appeals, 4 to complaints, and 1 to a conduct hearing. This higher referral rate may be as a result of better signposting to SPSO by UoE; some analysis of this data will be done during this academic year and included in next year's report. The important point to note is that SPSO largely endorsed the University's handling of all cases which were investigated by them last year.

### **Resource implications**

14. There are no immediate resource implications. The appointment of a part-time (0.4 FTE) Complaints Assistant, in part to compensate for the Investigations Manager's reduction to 0.8 FTE) has been a great help in keeping matters running smoothly, and should enable further work to be done on data collection and analysis over the coming year.

### **Risk Management**

15. There are no risks in the report *per se*, which is for information only. Risk management is a key element in the successful handling of all complaints, especially those which carry the potential for reputational damage to the University and/or claims for compensation. Internal Audit is currently reviewing the handling of student complaints, and their report is expected shortly.

### **Equality & Diversity**

16. SPSO carried out an EIA before publishing the model CHP. This report covers complaints received, some of which relate to matters where equality and diversity is a consideration.

### **Next steps/implications**

17. The Investigations Manager will be responsible for taking forward points relating to data collection and further analysis.

### **Consultation**

18. The information in this report has also been provided to CMG.

### **Further information**

19. *Author*  
Jean Grier  
Investigations Manager  
16 November 2017

### **Freedom of Information**

20. This paper is open; data from it will be published on the University's complaint handling web pages.

The University of Edinburgh  
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

30 November 2017

**Report on the  
Annual Review of Student Support Services**

**Executive Summary**

The paper is the report from the light touch review of Student Support Service annual reports. It contains an outline update on progress with recommendations from 2015/16. Services covered by the review were invited to submit updates on their recommendations. Three services opted to submit a full report and these were considered by report readers. The report has been further streamlined this year to seven pages, down from 16 pages last year.

**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**

For discussion and to note progress on recommendations to services from the previous year.

**How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

Reader commendations and areas for further consideration were communicated to Student Support Services by Academic Services. Responsibility for implementation of recommendations is identified within the reports and will be monitored in the following year's annual reporting process.

**Resource / Risk / Compliance**

**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

Resource implications are implicit in existing planning by support services.

**2. Risk assessment**

No risk assessment is included in the paper as it reports on recommendations and progress with recommendations made to services. Services carry out risk assessment on areas for development.

**3. Equality and Diversity**

Equality impact is considered by services as part of the annual reporting process.

**4. Freedom of information**

The paper can be included in **open** business.

**Originator of the paper**

Susan Hunter, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services  
22 November 2017

## **Report on the Annual Review of Student Support Services**

### **1. Introduction**

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#### **1.1 2016/17 annual reporting**

Quality Assurance Committee agreed in April 2017 that it would be beneficial for Student Support Service review recommendations to inform decisions and provide evidence for the planned Service Expectation Review (SER) with further potential for inclusion in the Resource Allocation Model. The Committee also agreed that the Student Support Service reporting template should be revised to align with the SER template to reduce the reporting burden on Services. The Committee was in agreement that there should be no break in reporting during the realignment but instead a lighter touch approach would be adopted in transition for 2016/17 reporting.

To allow recommendations endorsed by Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) to feed into Service Expectation Review would mean beginning the Student Support Service review process earlier. Therefore, a Service reporting deadline of September/October with November sign off by QAC was agreed to allow recommendations to be included in the SER process which will run during January/February.

For the light touch review for 2016/17 reporting, services were invited to submit progress updates on their recommendations from their 2015/16 reports. In addition, three services – Finance, Institute for Academic Development, and Student Counselling Service – elected to submit a full report and these were reviewed by members of the Student Support Services Annual Review Sub-committee.

No sub-committee meetings were held for the light touch review 2016/17.

#### **1.2 2017/18 annual reporting**

Academic Services, in consultation with the Deputy Secretary Student Experience and Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance, has developed a revised reporting template. This will be circulated to Student Support Services at the end of June 2018 with a reporting deadline at the beginning of October 2018. This will allow reports to be reviewed by readers and discussed at a sub-committee meeting before submission to the November 2018 QAC meeting. A readers reporting template has also been developed (and was trialled for reader reports on the three full service reports submitted for 2016/17). The reporting timeframe for 2017/18 is attached as Appendix 1.

## 2. Themes Arising from 2015/16 Service Reports

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Action points from themes identified in the last review included:

### 2.1 Underserved student groups

Student Systems were asked to consider access to (demographic) data for services to help in reflecting on service provision. However, no resource is currently able to be allocated to this.

### 2.2 Health and well-being

Comments on the University's role in developing space, with consideration of well-being and moving from a process-oriented to a student-centred approach to support health and well-being, were passed to Space Strategy Group for consideration. The Group is ensuring its approach aligns with the University's Learning Teaching Strategy and will develop a student-centred strategy. The Estates Department also considers student well-being in planning future developments.

## 3. Summary of service reports

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Service reports are available for all participating Services and sub-committee members on the Student Support Services Annual Review wiki (restricted access):  
<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SSSAR/Student+Support+Services+Annual+Review+Home> (EASE log in required).

All Services had considered and responded to the recommendations made in the previous year's report.

### Action for QAC:

To note the progress on recommendations from light touch review reports.

### 3.1 Services submitting a full report

Reader reports were provided for information to the three services which elected to submit a full report. Key points noted by readers are summarised below. No areas for consideration have been identified as part of this year's light touch review.

#### 3.1.1 Finance

Finance has made considerable effort in developing systems to gather user feedback. The service has also been successful in achieving a number of external awards and endorsements. The Service Excellence Programme (SEP) will have an impact on Finance's service priorities, for example payment of fees, and SEP has been identified as both a risk and mitigating factor in achieving the service's goals.

### **3.1.2 Institute for Academic Development (IAD)**

A key strand of IAD's activity is its successful training partnerships with Schools and it plans to increase School and College collaborations. The service also plans to continue development of models of IAD support and resources that can be adapted locally. With continued growth in participation in IAD activities, there is a need to balance activity against budget and staff resources.

### **3.1.3 Student Counselling Service**

Student Counselling was reaccredited by the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy in 2016 and also demonstrates strong commitment to staff training and development as part of its accreditation. The service has introduced new innovations, including its website development and the successful introduction of the Big White Wall. Student Counselling continues to experience an ongoing challenge of responding to increased demand which outstrips resources.

## **3.2 Services submitting an update on progress**

These Services submitted progress updates on recommendations made in the previous year's report which are summarised below. The summary highlights one success and one challenge identified by each service in their progress updates. Complete updates on progress with recommendations for all services are available on the [Student Support Service Annual Review wiki](#) (EASE log in required).

### **3.2.1 Accommodation Catering and Events (ACE)**

ACE experiences challenges in student engagement with its surveys and reports that local Resident Assistants and Wardens put a lot of effort into encouraging participation to ensure results are meaningful. The service reports increased student use of Upay Chilli which provides strategic progress in keeping pace with student expectations on methods of payment.

### **3.2.2 Advice Place**

The Advice Place would welcome opportunities to be invited to more School-based training events and find it challenging to negotiate the different Student Support Officer roles across Schools. The service has benefited from the availability of better University website information and student induction which has reduced the number of enquiries on services offered elsewhere. The Advice Place continues to support an increasing number of students with complex issues and notes particular challenges for international students in relation to finding accommodation on arrival and during resits.

### **3.2.3 Careers Service**

The Careers Services saw a 12% increase in postgraduate research student interaction through a variety of information sharing initiatives. The service reports limited progress on formal internal feedback which it plans to work on through Service Effectiveness Survey data and its new communications and marketing strategy.

### **3.2.4 Chaplaincy**

The Chaplaincy continues to engage with the University and wider community on addressing concerns around hate crime. The service works with the Students' Association, Police Scotland and others in organising and participating in events on saying no to hate crime. The Chaplaincy reported on provision of a variety of online resources which have a varying degree of uptake from online distance students including the successful streamed Carol Service and noting less success with Google hang-outs.

### **3.2.5 Edinburgh Global**

Edinburgh Global engaged with Colleges to develop Exchange Coordinator roles and relaunched the Exchange Coordinator Network in September 2017. The service reports a range of barriers to student outward mobility including demand for international experiences outstripping opportunities. The Go Abroad unit has developed a framework to assist Schools and College to respond to this demand.

### **3.2.6 Information Services (IS)**

IS reported on the range of support and resources produced to assist with the roll-out of lecture recording, including student helpers engaged to support academics during the first two weeks of semester 1. IS reports a rapid uptake of Lynda.com and is currently reviewing the service and costs.

### **3.2.7 Sport and Exercise**

Sport and Exercise again had an increased gym membership take up and has extended opening hours at the Pleasance. The service will continue to analyse gym membership take up across years to try to understand the reduction in student involvement after first year.

### **3.2.8 Student Disability Service**

The Student Disability Service held a very successful open day in August 2017 and continues to engage with Schools and the Students' Association on support for disabled students. The service also introduced a number of measures, including evening appointments, to address waiting times during 2016/17 but notes continued increases in students declaring a disability and complex student situations as key factors affecting waiting times for certain appointment types.

### **3.2.9 Student Recruitment and Admissions (SRA)**



SRA reported that the launch of the University Student Recruitment Strategy will be key in ensuring success in a volatile landscape for recruitment. SRA will remain active and engaged in all markets. The service reports the need for agile communications to support external messages and enhanced digital content to address challenging lead times for printed publications.

### **3.2.10 Student Systems & Administration**

Students Systems has a strong partnership with Information Services Group (ISG), particularly in Service Excellence where colleagues from ISG are embedded within the team. Resource planning is underway across Student Systems and Administration and Service Excellence to ensure no impact to core services whilst enabling resources to support change.

Susan Hunter, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services  
22 November 2017

## Appendix 1

### Student Support Service Review Timeframe for 2018

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
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 <sup>1</sup>	Academic Services
	Draft recommendations returned to Service Directors	Academic Services
First week November	Readers' meeting <sup>2</sup>	Academic Services
Second week November	Full sub-committee meeting <sup>3</sup>	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
First week December	Approved recommendations returned to Service Directors	Academic Services

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<sup>1</sup> 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

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

<sup>3</sup> 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

30 November 2017

## **Student Voice Policy**

### **Executive Summary**

This paper asks the Committee to approve a new Student Voice Policy which has been created through consolidating existing policies and overview information and formalising mid-course feedback as a policy requirement.

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

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

### **Action requested**

The Committee is asked to approve the new Policy.

### **How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

The Policy will be made available on the Academic Services and Student Voice webpages. An email will also be sent to key stakeholders to notify them of the Policy.

### **Resource / Risk / Compliance**

#### **1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

In relation to mid-course feedback, resource implications will vary according to the School context and methods chosen but clearly do exist (although not quantified). Feedback to date suggests that the positive benefits justify this resource but dialogue will continue to monitor this, primarily through the Directors of Teaching Network.

#### **2. Risk assessment**

There are risks associated with ineffectively gathering and responding to student feedback.

#### **3. Equality and Diversity**

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was carried out on the new Policy and identified no major equality and diversity implications. There is potential for inappropriate comments and unconscious bias through feedback provided by students but actions have been taken to mitigate these risks which are outlined in the EqIAs for [Course Enhancement Questionnaires](#) and the [Student Voice Policy](#).

#### **4. Freedom of information**

Open.

### **Key words**

Student feedback, student voice

### **Originator of the paper**

Gillian Mackintosh and Nichola Kett, Academic Services  
21 November 2017

## Background

The Student Voice Policy has been created by collating:

- Key principles from the Learning from and Responding to the Student Voice Policy and Code of Practice.
- Overview information on student representation (from Edinburgh University Students' Association).
- Policy content from the Principles and Operational Notes for Student Staff Liaison Committees (the operational notes have been removed to form a separate guidance document).
- Overview information on student surveys and course enhancement questionnaires (from Student Systems).
- Overview information on student participation in periodic review processes.
- Overview information on the Student Partnership Agreement (approved at Senate on 4 October 2017) which replaces the University and Students' Association statement on student engagement.
- Overview information on the Student Panel (from Student Systems).

The rationale for compiling this information into a succinct Policy is to provide clarity for students and staff on the activities undertaken in relation to listening and responding to the student voice. The new Policy is complimented by a recently developed set of student-facing Student Voice webpages <https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/academic-life/student-voice>

## Formalising Mid-Course Feedback as a Policy Requirement

The new Policy formalises the requirement for Schools to undertake mid-course feedback for all undergraduate courses.

In semester 1 2016/17, Senior Vice-Principal Charlie Jeffery wrote to Heads of School in the light of the National Student Survey results outlining a number of priority actions for 2016/17 including the introduction of mid-course feedback at Honours level. SVP Jeffery had previously discussed the idea of introducing mid-course feedback at the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) meeting on 8 September 2017. Feedback was sought from College Deans, School Directors of Teaching, and the Students' Association and the majority of comments were positive. Given the broadly positive feedback regarding the introduction of these arrangements at Honours level, at its meeting on 25 May 2017 Senate Quality Assurance agreed that mid-course feedback be rolled out across all undergraduate courses at all levels.

## Further Development of the Policy

The University is undertaking work on aspects of the student voice and this may result in changes to the Policy in future. In particular, the Student Staff Liaison Committee principles will be reviewed once the outcome of changes being proposed to student representation by the Students' Association is known.

At its meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2017 Senate Learning and Teaching Committee discussed and approved a paper on 'Enhancing the Student Voice through the development of the Class Representative System'. The committee were supportive of the recommendations which are set out below for Senate Quality Assurance Committee to note:

1. Endorsing the new representative system. Possibly by imposing a cap on representative numbers per department – proportionate to the number of students enrolled.
2. Signposting a specific member of staff within each school to facilitate the representatives and SSLC's (e.g. take minutes, whilst the school rep chairs)

3. Help to close the feedback loop by distributing the minutes and action points from student-staff meetings to website and LEARN
4. Creating a section on LEARN for each programme, so that the reps have an online platform to gather and distribute feedback
5. Providing reps with NSS and CEQ information, to help shape their discussions at SSLC and School-wide meetings

Further detail on changes to the policy and to the operation of Student Staff Liaison Committees will be reported to the Senate Quality Assurance Committee.



# Student Voice Policy

## Purpose of Policy

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

## Overview

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

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

## Scope: Mandatory Policy

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

## Contact Officer

Gillian Mackintosh

Academic Policy Officer

[Gillian.Mackintosh@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Gillian.Mackintosh@ed.ac.uk)

## Document control

Dates	Approved:	Starts:	Equality impact assessment:	Amendments:	Next Review:
	30.11.17	30.11.17	02.11.17		2018/2019
Approving authority	Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)				
Consultation undertaken	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Student Systems				
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Academic Services				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations					
UK Quality Code	UK Quality Code Chapter B5: Student Engagement				
Policies superseded by this policy	Principles and operational notes for Student Staff Liaison Committees Learning from and Responding to the Student Voice Policy Learning from and Responding to the Student Voice Code of Practice				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email <a href="mailto:Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk">Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk</a> or telephone 0131 651 4490.				
Keywords	Student voice, Student Staff Liaison Committee, SSLC, Edinburgh University Students' Association, student representation, surveys, feedback, engagement, internal periodic review				



# Student Voice Policy

## Introduction

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

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

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

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

## Key Principles for Learning from and Responding to the Student Voice

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

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

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

**The benefits of surveying student opinion must outweigh the costs<sup>2</sup>.**

**Students should ensure that their feedback does not breach the University's Dignity and Respect Policy<sup>3</sup>.**

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

<sup>1</sup> Student Surveys Ethics Committee <http://edin.ac/2gyAUHf>

<sup>2</sup> See [LINK](#) for an example cost/benefit analysis

<sup>3</sup> Dignity and Respect Policy <http://edin.ac/1Cq0VZY>



# Student Voice Policy

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

## Communicating Action taken in Response to Feedback

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

## Mechanisms for Listening and Responding to the Student Voice

The following mechanisms underpin the University's approach to listening and responding to the student voice:

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

## Student Representation

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

Further information: student website <http://edin.ac/2qz69C2> and Students' Association <https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation/studentrepresentation/>

## Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLC)

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

SSLCs provide a formal mechanism for communication and discussion between academic and administrative staff and representatives of the student body, on all matters related to improving degree programmes (at all levels of study including undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research) and the student experience. It is suggested that SSLCs would benefit from taking a programme-level approach to focus on the learning experience within courses and how they holistically contribute to the degree programme. Schools are encouraged to have a formal written remit for SSLCs.





# Student Voice Policy

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

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

Operational Guidance [\[add link\]](#)

## Student Surveys and Course Enhancement Questionnaires

**Student surveys** are a key element in seeking feedback from students and obtaining information to improve services and the student experience. Results are analysed and recommendations for change made based on the findings. Some of the findings may prompt further research to gain more of an understanding of how students feel about particular issues. Important student surveys include: the National Student Survey; the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey; the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey; and Course Enhancement Questionnaires.

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

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

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

## Mid-course feedback from Students

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

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



# Student Voice Policy

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Further information:

- Examples for students <http://edin.ac/2i1J0Z5>
- Guidance for staff <http://edin.ac/2dOmswH>

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

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

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

## Student Partnership Agreement

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

The University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh University Students' Association enjoy a long and productive partnership. This agreement builds on the strength of that partnership. It highlights how the wider University, including all students and staff, can effectively work together to enhance the student experience. It sets out our values, our approach to partnership and the priorities we have agreed to work on together.

Further information: <http://edin.ac/2i1plDg>

## Student Panel

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

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

Contact: Student Surveys Unit [student.surveys@ed.ac.uk](mailto:student.surveys@ed.ac.uk)

**30 November 2017**

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

30 November 2017

**Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC)  
Operational Guidance**

**Executive Summary**

This paper asks the Committee to approve the Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance which has been created through separating the policy content from the Principles and Operational Notes for Student Staff Liaison Committees and moving it to the new Student Voice Policy.

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

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

**Action requested**

The Committee is asked to approve the guidance.

**How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

The guidance will be made available on the Academic Services and Student Voice webpages. An email will also be sent to key stakeholders to notify them of the guidance.

**Resource / Risk / Compliance**

**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

The collation of student representative names for the Students' Association and the consideration of meetings with remote participants will involve staff resource. Full student engagement is essential to the enhancement of the student experience.

**2. Risk assessment**

There are risks associated with ineffectively responding to student feedback.

**3. Equality and Diversity**

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was carried out on the Principles and Operational notes for SSLCs in September 2015 and identified no major equality and diversity implications. There have been no changes to the operational guidance since the EqIA was carried out.

**4. Freedom of information**

Open.

**Key words**

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

**Originator of the paper**

Gillian Mackintosh, Academic Services  
21 November 2017

**Further Development of the Guidance**

The University is undertaking work on aspects of the student voice and this may result in changes to the guidance in future. In particular, the guidance will be reviewed once the outcome of changes being proposed to student representation by the Students' Association is known. (Senate Learning and Teaching Committee paper: Enhancing the Student Voice through the development of the Class Representative System- [LTC 17/18 C](#))

# Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

## Purpose of Guidance

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

The guidance supports the Student Voice Policy.

## Scope: Guidance is not Mandatory

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

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

## Document control

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Approved:</b> 03.09.15	<b>Starts:</b> 01.07.13	<b>Equality impact assessment:</b> 11.09.15	<b>Amendments:</b> 30.11.17	<b>Next Review:</b> 2018/2019
<b>Approving authority</b>	Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)				
<b>Consultation undertaken</b>	The Students' Association, current School Directors of Quality, a group of Academic and Administrative staff supporting SSLCs				
<b>Section responsible for guidance maintenance &amp; review</b>	Academic Services				
<b>Related policies, procedures, guidelines &amp; regulations</b>	<a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf">http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview/annual-monitoring-review-and-reporting">http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview/annual-monitoring-review-and-reporting</a> <a href="https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/tprprsubjectareasschoolsstudentinvolvement.pdf">https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/tprprsubjectareasschoolsstudentinvolvement.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/data-protection/guidance-policies/student-information">http://www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/data-protection/guidance-policies/student-information</a> <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/guidanceschoolcommsrep.pdf">http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/guidanceschoolcommsrep.pdf</a> <a href="https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/activities/postgraduate/about/odl/">https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/activities/postgraduate/about/odl/</a> <a href="https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation/yourrepresentatives/classreps/">https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation/yourrepresentatives/classreps/</a>				
<b>UK Quality Code</b>	UK Quality Code Chapter B5: Student Engagement				
<b>Guidance superseded by this guidance</b>	Principles and operational notes for Student Staff Liaison Committees				
<b>Alternative format</b>	If you require this document in an alternative format please email <a href="mailto:Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk">Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk</a> or telephone 0131 651 4490.				
<b>Keywords</b>	SSLC, Student Staff Liaison Committee, Student Representation, Edinburgh University Students' Association, External Examiners.				



# Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

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

The following principles outline how SSLCs operate:

<b>1.</b>	<b>Role</b>	SSLCs provide a formal mechanism for communication and discussion between academic and administrative staff and representatives of the student body, relating to all matters connected with improving the degree programmes (at all levels of study including UG, PGT and PGR) and the student experience. It is suggested that SSLCs would benefit from taking a programme –level approach to focus on the learning experience within courses and how they holistically contribute to the degree programme.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Remit</b>	SSLCs should be encouraged to have a formal written remit  It is suggested that the remit is published on the School/Subject area/ Research Centre/Institute website
<b>3</b>	<b>Membership</b>	Meetings can be attended by Student Representatives for the courses/programmes being discussed, Elected School Representatives Course /Year Organisers, Programme Conveners, School PG Programme Directors, Research Centre or Institute staff, Personal tutors, School Directors of Quality, Administrative staff, School IT representatives & other relevant staff to discuss programme/course issues.
<b>4</b>	<b>Frequency of meetings</b>	At least one formal meeting should be held in each semester, this should be agreed in consultation with School staff and Student Representatives and ideally avoid clashing with courses students may be taking typically within the School.  All SSLC members should be informed of the date, time, location of the meeting, inviting any additional items to be added to the agenda Schools are encouraged to publish the dates of the meetings ahead of the meeting It is suggested that this happens at least two weeks in advance of the meeting
<b>5</b>	<b>Agenda items</b>	Agenda should be available in advance of the meeting  Suggested agenda items are listed in section 5.3
<b>6</b>	<b>Meeting format</b>	Schools are encouraged to have student chairing of meetings or co-chairing with staff.  Schools are encouraged to select a member of staff to support the student chair  <a href="#">ODL Student Representatives and Students</a> should have the opportunity to participate virtually or otherwise input into electronically  Exact format will vary between Schools however an example of a basic format is available below
<b>7</b>	<b>Minutes</b>	Schools are encouraged to publish minutes on the School/subject area webpages



# Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

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## 1. Role

Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs; or Course, Teaching or Programme Committees in some schools or Postgraduate Research Forums in some Schools) are meetings at which Student Representatives, Programme/Course/Year Organisers, Academic and Administrative staff supporting teaching and learning discuss course, programme, and School issues and activities.

To increase the effectiveness of student representation and support from Schools and the Students' Association, it is suggested that SSLCs would benefit from taking a programme-level approach. This would draw on Student Representatives' feedback and mid-semester feedback to identify areas of improvement within the learning experience within courses and how courses holistically contribute to the degree programme. Therefore, it is suggested that Schools move away from having tutorial-level Student Representatives and instead focus on course-level or ideally programme-level Student Representatives with approximately one Student Representative per 50 students on the course or programme.

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

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

## 2. Remit

### 2.1 Formal Written Remit

SSLCs should be encouraged to have a formal written remit which should be reviewed annually by Student Representatives and staff to ensure that it reflects current learning, teaching and research matters in their School or subject area.

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

### 2.2 Student engagement

Following the publication of the UK Quality Code Chapter B5: Student Engagement, the code states that 'Higher education providers create and maintain an environment within which students and staff engage in discussions that aim to bring about demonstrable enhancement of the educational experience'. SSLCs are one way in which students and staff should engage in



# Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

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discussions to improve student life at the University of Edinburgh, including the online learning environment for students not studying on campus.

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

## 3. Membership

### 3.1 Suggested membership

SSLC meetings are attended by Student Representatives, Course /Year Organisers, Degree Programme Conveners, School Postgraduate Programme Directors, staff representing Research Centres or Institutes, Personal tutors, School Directors of Quality, Administrative staff supporting teaching and learning, School IT representatives and other relevant staff to discuss programme and course issues. It is suggested that the relevant elected Undergraduate / Postgraduate School Representative is also invited to SSLCs to be given the option to attend, and that they would receive SSLC communications.

### 3.2 Student Representatives

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

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

The Students' Association holds elections in March (followed by By-Elections in October for postgraduate positions and any unfilled positions) each year to elect Undergraduate and Postgraduate School Representatives. These elected School Representatives should be invited as members of SSLC meetings in their School, or at minimum be informed of the business conducted. Their contact details can be obtained at [www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation](http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation) or by emailing [schools@eusa.ed.ac.uk](mailto:schools@eusa.ed.ac.uk). Where appropriate, presidents of relevant academic societies within the School or subject area could also be invited to SSLC meetings; their details are available via [www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/societies](http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/societies).

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





# Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

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Please refer to [Guidance for Schools regarding communication between Student Representatives and students](#) and the [Policy on Disclosure of Student Information](#)

## 4. Frequency of meetings

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

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

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

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

Therefore Schools should operate whichever system is most appropriate to their structure. Schools are encouraged to publish the dates of meetings on the School/Subject area webpage ahead of the meeting and email all members with this information.

## 5. Agenda items

### 5.1 Sharing information

Staff are expected to share information with students. This could include information such as themes arising from student surveys, themes from External Examiners reports, Part 3 External Examiner reports (Postgraduate Research), course evaluation and review documentation, School Annual Quality Reports, and TPR/PPR reports. Student Representatives and staff should collaborate to identify trends, areas for improvement and suggestions to enhance the student experience. Students' views should be sought on new programmes and courses as well as on changes to existing ones and the SSLC could provide a forum for this type of discussion.

### 5.2 External Examiner summary reports at SSLCs

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

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

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



## Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

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

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

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

Postgraduate Taught External Examiner reports are received at the end of November and the summary reports will be submitted for consideration at SSLCs in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester.

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

The consideration of summary reports is an opportunity to be involved in discussion of potential improvements to courses and programmes recommended by the External Examiners.

During the SSLC meeting, Students should consider the themes and responses in the summary report and be encouraged to provide comments and suggestions.

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

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

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

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

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

### 5.3 Suggested Agenda items

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

- the School Annual Quality report - The shorter school annual quality report will lend itself to discussion of themes and actions being taken by the school in student-staff liaison committees at the start of the following academic year
- themes arising from Student Surveys, course evaluation questionnaires
- Internal Periodic Review preparation, where appropriate
- Internal Periodic Review reports, where appropriate
- themes from External Examiner summary reports
- Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation reports, where appropriate



# Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

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- Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR), where appropriate
- student- generated items
- standing items
- staff ideas and communications
- Student Partnership Agreement - priorities and any local activities which advance these priorities

## 6. Meeting format

### 6.1 Chairing of meetings

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

### 6.2 Example of meeting outline

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

Agenda

Minutes of the last meeting

Matters arising

Agenda items suggested by students and by staff

Any other business (AOB)

Date of Next Meeting: The date and time of the next meeting should be agreed and recorded by the minute-taker.

### 6.3 Online Distance Learning (ODL) Student participation

At School level, online distance learning (ODL) Student Representatives and students should have the opportunity to participate virtually or otherwise input into SSLCs electronically.

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

Meeting organisers should consider the following when arranging the timing of meetings:

- the availability of students who have work commitments ,
- time zone considerations.
- allow students plenty of notice of the meeting
- ensure in advance that students can access whichever system is being used

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

**Collaborate**, for instance, is an IS-supported system designed to support online classes and meetings. Any member of staff or student can set up Collaborate sessions via MyEd, and a wide range of guidance materials is available and accessible online.



# Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance

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- <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/learning-technology/communication/collaborate/collaborate-students>

**Skype** is not centrally supported but is widely used by staff and students, and like Collaborate requires just a computer/tablet and a webcam. Other similarly 'technology light' tools and environments exist and are valued because they are free, and can be used with a lot of flexibility.

- <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/mscdetech/11.+Skype>

**Video conference** three video conference (VC) suites exist in centrally bookable rooms, and other VC suites are situated in Schools around the university. The VC system is hosted by JANET, and requires registration. Online tutorials are available via the JANET VC webpages, and local support is offered via LTSTS.

- <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/computing/comms-and-collab/videoconferencing>

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

## 6.3 Communication following the SSLC

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

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

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

## 7. Minutes

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

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

## 8. Equality

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

## 9. Examples of Good Practice



## **Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance**

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- The use of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) for students to discuss the issues they want to raise. A meeting is then held over Skype using text so that the students can take a transcript for their minutes. (The Royal (Dick) Veterinary School of Veterinary Studies)
- Class Reps holding a student-led meeting prior to a SSLC meeting to prepare agenda items
- Teaching staff attending Student Staff Liaison Committees for courses other than their own can share information and good practice.

30.11.17

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

30 November 2017

**Internal Periodic Review: University Remit, Reflective Report  
template and guidance 2018/19**

**Executive Summary**

The paper proposes revised versions of the University Remit and Reflective Report template and guidance to ensure compliance with the Scottish Funding Council guidance to higher education institutions on quality from August 2017-2022. In addition, to include consideration of the ongoing sustainability of courses and programmes to inform decisions about their continuation, in the context of the wider School, College and University portfolio ([QAC 17/18 1M](#))

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

The paper is relevant to the University's Strategic Goal of 'excellence in education' and the Strategic Theme of 'Outstanding student experience'.

**Action requested**

The Committee is asked to approve the remit, template and guidance.

**How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

The Schools/subject areas to be reviewed in 2018/19 and other relevant stakeholders will be advised of the revised remit and reflective report guidance and template. The documents will be made available on the Academic Services webpage.

**Resource / Risk / Compliance**

**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

Relevant school staff (recruitment and marketing staff, Director of Professional Services) will be asked to attend a meeting during the review visit to discuss portfolio management and review. There may be an impact on staff resource if the inclusion of Course Evaluation Questionnaire results are to be included as part of the supporting documentation.

**2. Risk assessment**

No risks associated.

**3. Equality and Diversity**

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was carried out on the internal review process on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2017. The proposed changes are minor and could not reasonably have any equality impact. [https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/impact-assessment/a-z-assessments/Internal\\_Periodic\\_Review\\_Process\(Academic\\_Services\).pdf](https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/impact-assessment/a-z-assessments/Internal_Periodic_Review_Process(Academic_Services).pdf)

**4. Freedom of information**

Open.

SQAC: 30.11.17  
H/02/28/02

**SQAC 17/18 2K**

**Key words**

Internal Periodic Review, Teaching Programme Review, TPR, Postgraduate Programme Review, PPR, university remit, reflective report.

**Originator of the paper**

Gillian Mackintosh, Academic Services  
23 November 2017

# The University of Edinburgh

## Internal Periodic Review

### University Remit For AY 2018/19

The University remit provides consistent coverage of key elements across all of the University's internal reviews (undergraduate and postgraduate).

It covers all credit bearing provision within the scope of the review, including:

- Provision delivered in collaboration with others
- Transnational education
- Work-based provision and placements
- Online and distance learning
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Provision which provides only small volumes of credit
- Joint degrees
- Massive Open Online Courses MOOCs (non-credit bearing)

Under each of the headings, the Reflective Report should highlight areas of good practice as well as areas for further development and action planned.

#### 1. Strategic overview

The strategic approach to:

- the management and resourcing of learning and teaching experience,
- the forward direction and the structures in place to support this.
- developing business cases for new programmes and courses,
- to managing and reviewing its portfolio,
- to closing courses and programmes.

#### 2. Enhancing the Student Experience

The approach to and effectiveness of:

- Supporting students in their learning
- Listening to and responding to the Student Voice
- Learning and Teaching
- Assessment and Feedback
- Accessibility, Inclusivity and Widening Participation
- Learning environment (physical and virtual)
- Development of Employability and Graduate Attributes
- Supporting and developing staff

#### 3. Assurance and Enhancement of provision

The approach to and effectiveness of maintaining and enhancing academic standards and quality of provision in alignment with the University Quality Framework:

- Admissions and Recruitment
- Assessment, Progression and Achievement
- Programme and Course approval
- Annual Monitoring, Review and reporting
- Operation of Boards of Studies, Exam Boards, Special Circumstances
- External Examining, themes and actions taken
- Alignment with SCQF (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) level, relevant benchmark statements, UK Quality Code



- Accreditation and Collaborative activity and relationship with Professional/Accrediting bodies (if applicable)

### **Subject specific remit**

Subject specific remit items are proposed by the School/subject area and are issues or areas of development that they wish the review team to consider and comment on.

In some cases these remit items may fit under the headings of the university remit but the School/subject area may wish the review to explore a particular aspect in further detail to support their learning and teaching strategy.

For each of the agreed remit items it would be helpful for the school/subject area to articulate these items further in the reflective report to provide the review team with a clear steer to enable them to consider and comment on the items.

| 30 November 2017

# The University of Edinburgh

## Internal Periodic Review

### Reflective Report Template 2018/19

Teaching Programme Review/Postgraduate Programme Review [delete as appropriate] of:  
[insert name and date of review]

Name of School/subject area	
Names and roles of those who prepared the report including a summary of the dissemination/consultation phase and student input	
Head of School sign off	

#### 1. Strategic overview

This section should briefly detail the strategic approach to

- the management and resourcing of learning and teaching experience,
- the forward direction and the structures in place to support this.
- alignment with the [University Learning and Teaching Strategy](#)
- developing business cases for new programmes and courses,
- managing and reviewing the portfolio,
- closing courses and programmes.

Briefly outline and comment on the following, you may wish to summarise information in table format:

- Nature of programmes offered
- Student numbers
- Notable characteristics (e.g part-time or full-time, Widening Participation entrants, gender, ethnicity), composition and key trends in student population, including future discernible trends
- Teaching resources – number of full time equivalent staff, school and professional and support staff resources
- Recruitment approaches
- Key messages from monitoring of performance data, in particular relating to Retention, and progression, completion, attainment and achievement rates,
- Degree outcomes and reference to destination of leavers data and any other local sources of information.

Subject specific remit items:

Please list the subject specific remit items below. Please provide a brief commentary to support the inclusion of the items and to provide the review team with a clear steer to enable them to consider and comment on the items during the review visit.

#### 2. Enhancing the student experience

Each section should briefly outline practice and reflect upon effectiveness for all levels of provision and modes of delivery. Comment on different categories of students where these are likely to be significant. Information should include:

2.1 Supporting students in their learning – all aspects of support relevant to students' learning including:

- Pastoral and academic support including the Personal Tutor system
- ~~Support for key stages and transitions in the student journey: –~~  
e.g. pre-arrival, induction, ongoing transition support, transition to and from study abroad.
- Peer support
- Support for students on Joint Degrees
- ~~Provision of feedback to students on their learning~~
- Engagement with Mental Health Strategy
- Other student support provision relevant to context e.g international students.

2.2. Listening to and responding to the Student Voice

- How the School/subject area engages students in their learning, including building and supporting academic communities
- The mechanisms for listening to and responding to the student voice including student representative structures, Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs), other mechanisms for student feedback including surveys such as National Student Surveys, Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQs), Mid-Course feedback
- The actions taken in response to student feedback
- Engagement with Student Partnership Agreement

2.3 Learning and Teaching

- Overview of curriculum design and development
- ~~How the School/subject area demonstrates that programme design and learning outcomes are consistent with Subject Benchmark Statements and Scottish Credit and Qualifications Frameworks (SCQF)~~
- Evaluation where relevant of placements, work based learning provision, study abroad, 2+2
- Management of Joint Degrees
- Engagement with current Enhancement Theme [Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience]
- Reflect on national and international good practice e.g. how does provision compare with similar practice outside the UK

2.4 Assessment and Feedback

- Overview of assessment methods
- Approach to and effectiveness of feedback to students
- Commentary on feedback turnaround times: Feedback on formative and summative in-course assessed work will be provided within 15 working days of submission, or in a time to be of use in subsequent assessment, within the course, whichever is sooner, Regulation 16 Taught Assessment Regulations 2016-17

2.5 Accessibility, Inclusivity and Widening Participation

- Implementation of the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy
- Approach to making the curriculum accessible for all students
- Provision of an accessible curriculum in collaborative/placement provision
- Engagement with the University's Equality and Diversity Strategy

- Approach to Diversity e.g. opportunities to enrich the learning experience?
- Involvement in disability/equal opportunity committees
- Managing Widening Participation (WP) and involvement in specific WP projects e.g. Pathways to the Professions, Support for Care Leavers and Lothians Equal Access Programme for Schools (LEAPS)
- Consideration of strategies for articulation and advanced standing, for the recognition of prior learning and through flexible pathways to awards including Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and work-based learning.

## 2.6 Learning environment (physical and virtual)

- Managing the physical and virtual learning environment – e.g. facilities for small group teaching and peer learning, opportunities to foster academic communities through use of social or blended social/academic space

## 2.7 Development of Employability and Graduate Attributes

- The School/subject area approach to development of graduate attributes
- How the School/subject area takes account of the views of graduates and/or Industry on the relevance of provision for their careers
- Preparing students for their future career

## 2.8 Supporting and developing staff

- The School's approach to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to enhance Learning and Teaching e.g. Higher Education Academy (HEA), Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PgCAP), The Edinburgh Teaching Award (EdTA).
- Early career staff
- Ongoing development and support throughout academic career
- Support and training for tutors and demonstrators
- Support and training for External/Associate staff
- Support and training for Professional and Support staff

## 2.9 Reflective summary – enhancing the student experience

Provide a brief reflective summary highlighting areas that are working well, areas for further development and actions planned.

# 3. Assurance and Enhancement of provision

## 3.1 Setting and maintaining academic standards

This section should provide an overview of the School Quality Assurance Model by briefly outlining the approach to the following processes in setting and maintaining academic standards:

- Admissions and Recruitment
- Assessment, Progression and Achievement
- Programme and Course Approval
- Annual Monitoring, review and reporting
- Operation of Boards of Studies, Exam Boards, Special Circumstances
- External Examiner Reporting system
- Alignment with Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), relevant subject benchmarks, UK Quality Code
- Accreditation and Collaborative activity and relationship with Professional/Accrediting bodies (if applicable)

## 3.2 Key themes and actions taken

Briefly outline and comment on how key themes are considered and how actions taken ~~are in response are considered and~~ acted upon to enhance the student experience in the following areas:

- External Examiners reports and responses
- Annual monitoring, review and reporting
- Accreditation and Collaborative activity and relationship with Professional/Accrediting bodies (if applicable)

### 3.3 Reflective summary – Assurance and Enhancement of provision

Provide a brief reflective summary highlighting areas that are working well, areas for further development and actions planned. Please provide examples to support this.

#### Appendix 1 Status of recommendations from previous review

Provide a brief recap of the recommendations made by the previous review and their status i.e. completed/not completed. An explanation should be given for any uncompleted recommendations.

November 2017

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Periodic Review 2018/19

Reflective Report Guidance and Supporting Documentation list  
DRAFT

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<b>Report framework /context</b>	<p>The reflective report template is structured according to the headings of the University remit</p> <p>It is a confidential, internal document produced specifically for the purpose of the review and is not circulated further as part of any committee reporting processes</p> <p>Apart from the external members of the review team, it is unlikely that the members will have prior detailed knowledge of the subject area/School. While the report should take account of this factor, it is important that evaluation predominates over description</p>
<b>Report author</b>	<p>The responsibility lies with the Head of School to delegate the writing of the report to the appropriate member(s) of staff. The report should be signed off by the Head of School before submission</p>
<b>Dissemination of report</b>	<p>In preparation for the visit, the TPR/PPR liaison should circulate the report within the School/subject area to the relevant members of staff and students who will be meeting with the review team</p>
<b>Reflection on effectiveness of provision</b>	<p>To derive maximum benefit from the review, subject areas/Schools are encouraged to use the Reflective Report as an opportunity for candid reflection on the effectiveness of their provision. The spirit of the University's internal review process is intended to be collegial, constructive and supportive of enhancement across the University. The report can therefore be used as an opportunity to discuss aspects of concern or seek guidance from the expertise gathered in the review team</p>
<b>Engagement with students in the preparation and development of the report</b>	<p>Students should be consulted and involved in the preparation of the reflective report. Feedback should be obtained from students on whether the report is a fair reflection of the provision and of the student experience. Schools/subject areas will be asked by the review team to comment on how they have engaged students in the preparation of the report</p>
<b>Reflective summaries &amp; dissemination of good practice</b>	<p>The reflective summaries at the end of each section provide an opportunity to reflect on how effective the School/ subject area feels it is managing each of the areas in the section. Schools/subject areas should highlight</p>

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areas that are working well, areas for further development and action planned.

Examples of good practice will also allow innovations to be disseminated across the University. Such examples are included in the annual report to the Scottish Funding Council and can be promoted by the Quality Assurance Agency to the Scottish HEI sector

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**Support with preparation of report**

Schools/subject areas ~~–are encouraged to engage with the College Academic Administrator (Quality) can request a session with Academic Services~~ on how to approach preparing the report and engaging students in the process. Reflective reports from previous reviews are available by contacting Academic Services. It should be noted that these reports are provided for reference purposes only and not for wider circulation.

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**Data to support evidence**

Data is available for Schools/subject areas to consider and reflect upon as part of the evidence base for the review –see appendix 1 below

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**Internal Periodic Review 2018-19**

**Appendix 1 -Supporting documentation list**

The following documentation should be used where relevant to support the writing of the reflective report and will be uploaded to wiki page.  
Where Academic Services are responsible for providing the documentation, this will be forwarded to Schools/Subject area after the remit meeting to allow for review and reflection.

Documentation	TPR	PPR (PGT review)	PPR (PGR review)	Where to find it	Who provides
School Annual Quality Reports	√	√	√	Reports from previous 3 completed academic years.	School/subject area  Academic Services can access reports from School Annual Quality Report wiki page
External Examiners summary reports	√	√	X	Summary reports for the following academic years: 2017-18 2016-17. 2015-16.  Reports available through: 'Reporting + Analytics' MyEd channel >Business Intelligence (BI) Suite> documents tab >Folders> Public folders > SASG: Student Systems >Officially Dev & maintained > Student > External Examiners > Summary report for internal review  Filters can be applied to drill down to subject area	Academic Services
<b>Statistical data:</b>					Academic Services
Completion rates of entrants (4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Year UG and 1 year PGT)	√	√	X	Reports available through: 'Reporting + Analytics' MyEd channel >Business Intelligence (BI) Suite> documents tab >Folders> Public folders > SASG: Student Systems >Officially Dev & maintained > Student >Quality Assurance	
Course results	√	√	X		
Entrants	√	√	√		
PGR Progression and outcomes	X	X	√		
Progression	√	√	X		
Student Applications	√	√	√		



Widening Participation	√	X	X		
School/Subject area Background data for First Destination statistics taken from annual Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey	√	√	√	Data from Careers Service – contact Lee Bunce, Statistics and Systems Coordinator, Careers Service	
Students studying abroad report	√	√	√	<a href="https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/IP/Quality+Assurance+Toolkit">https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/IP/Quality+Assurance+Toolkit</a> Reports for School and subject area can be downloaded.	
Undergraduate Degree Classification (current year)	√	X	X	<a href="https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/IP/Quality+Assurance+Toolkit">https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/IP/Quality+Assurance+Toolkit</a>	
Equality and Diversity Student report (current year)	√	√	√	Student report can be downloaded from the <a href="#">Equality Diversity Monitoring and Research Committee (EDMARC)</a>	
Any relevant reports from Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)	√	√	√	Any relevant reports from PSRBs (unless the review is being held jointly with the PSRB, when the report will be circulated with core documentation)	School/subject area
NSS (National Student Survey) results and reflection	√	X	X	Results from previous academic year and a reflection on the actions taken in response and their effectiveness.  Results can be found on <a href="#">Student Surveys wiki</a>  Reflections can include: if an area with a low score has shown improvements, what this was attributed to, any subject specific factors such as survey timing when students are away from University on placement, programme of action to address results	School/subject area
PRES (Postgraduate Research Experience Survey) results and reflection	X	X	√	Results from previous academic year and a reflection on the actions taken in response and their effectiveness.  Results can be found on <a href="#">Student Surveys wiki</a>  Reflections can include: if an area with a low score has shown improvements, what this was attributed to, any subject specific factors such as survey timing when	School/subject area

				students are away from University on placement, programme of action to address results	
PTES (Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey) results and reflection	√- where a review includes PGT	√	X	Results from previous academic year and a reflection on the actions taken in response and their effectiveness.  Results can be found on <a href="#">Student Surveys wiki</a>  Reflections can include: if an area with a low score has shown improvements, what this was attributed to, any subject specific factors such as survey timing when students are away from University on placement, programme of action to address results	School/subject area
<a href="#">Student Staff Liaison Committee meeting minutes</a>	√	√	√	<a href="#">Previous academic year – a link to School/subject area webpage is acceptable **</a>	<a href="#">School/subject area</a>
<a href="#">Course Enhancement Questionnaire results</a>	√	√	X	<a href="#">Summary of results from previous year</a>	<a href="#">School/subject area</a>
Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) subject benchmark statement	√	√	X	<a href="#">Quality Assurance Agency website</a>	Academic Services
<b>Additional information (to be uploaded to the wiki page)</b>	<b>TPR</b>	<b>PPR (PGT review)</b>	<b>PPR (PGR review)</b>	<b>Where to find it</b>	<b>Who provides</b>
University remit	√	√	√	Academic Services internal review support	Academic Services
Subject specific remit items	√	√	√	Academic Services internal review support	Academic Services
List of programmes and courses	√	√	√	List of programmes and courses agreed at remit meeting	Academic Services
Review team membership	√	√	√	Academic Services internal review support	Academic Services
Previous report & responses	√	√	√	Academic Services internal review support	
School Personal Tutor Statement	√	√	X	School website if available or contact Liaison person	School/subject area

**Commented [MG1]:** Propose to include in supporting documentation

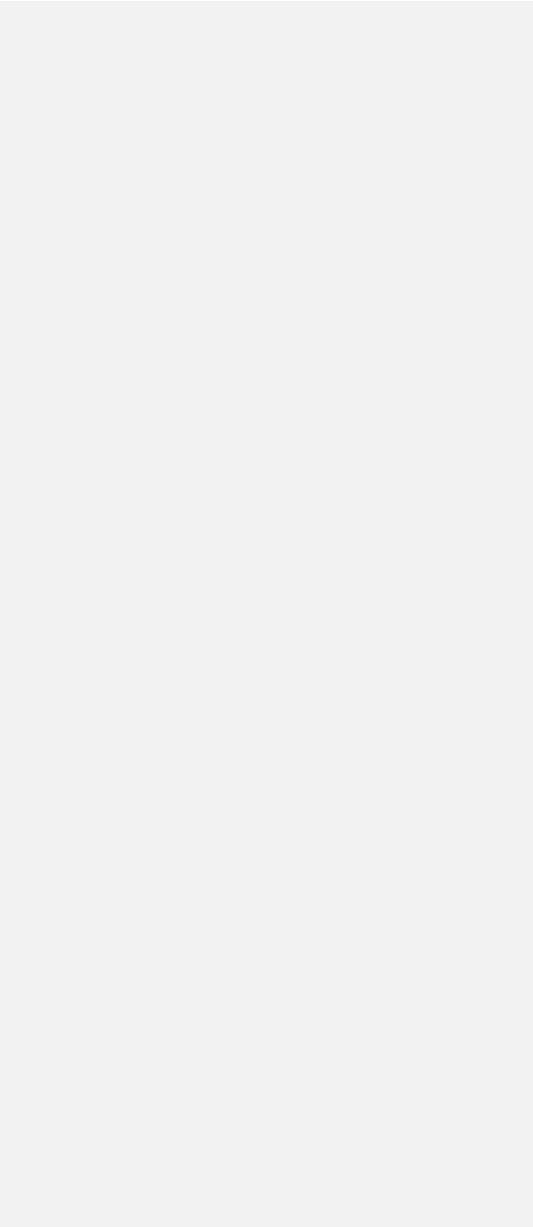
**Commented [MG2]:** QAC are asked to discuss whether these should be included as supporting documentation

School/ subject area organisation chart	√	√	√	This should show lines of reporting and committee structures within the School/subject area. This is very helpful to the review teams' understanding of decision-making processes.	School/subject area
Current School/ subject area staff information	√	√	√	This should include a list of all current School/subject area academic and administrative staff and specifically:  <b>For UG/PGT reviews</b> to include a list of Programme Directors, Course Organisers and Administrative staff related to the courses.  <b>For PGR reviews</b> to include a list of staff acting as principal or co-supervisors plus numbers of students supervised, to include dates of most recent supervisor training and any other development.	School/subject area
Programme Handbooks (or equivalent)	√	√	√	A link to the current version should be provided.	School/subject area
Programme Specification information	√	√	X	A link to the current programme specification should be provided for each programme under review. Definitive programme information is contained in the DRPS - <a href="http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/">http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/</a>	School/subject area
Glossary of Terms	√	√	√	It is useful to produce a brief Glossary of Terms for the review team e.g. acronyms used	School/subject area
<a href="#">Link to Student Voice webpage</a>	√	√	√	<a href="#">Information for the review team to outline the University's approach on gathering and using student feedback to enhance courses and the quality of our degree programmes</a>	<a href="#">Academic Services</a>
<a href="#">Link to Student Representation webpage</a>	√	√	√	<a href="#">Information for the review team to outline the University's approach on Student Representation</a>	<a href="#">Academic Services</a>
<a href="#">Link to Quality Assurance webpage</a>	√	√	√	<a href="#">Information for the review team on the University's Quality Framework</a>	<a href="#">Academic Services</a>

**Information to be made available to review team on request:**

Specific External Examiner reports and responses can be made available on request if a particular response requires further follow up.

November 2017



The University of Edinburgh  
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

30 November 2017

**Personal Tutor System  
Oversight Group**

**Executive Summary**

This report updates the Committee on activities in relation to the mainstreaming of the Personal Tutor (PT) system within School QA processes.

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

The paper is relevant to the University's Strategic Goal of 'excellence in education' and the Strategic Theme of 'Outstanding student experience'.

**Action requested**

The Committee is asked to note and comment on the ongoing activities to mainstream the PT system within School QA processes.

**Resource / Risk / Compliance**

**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

No resource implications are identified.

**2. Risk assessment**

No risks are associated with the paper as it ensures alignment with current University policy.

**3. Equality and Diversity**

Equality and diversity was considered in the development of the Personal Tutoring system and this paper does not make any substantive changes to University policy or practice. Therefore equality impact assessment is not required.

**4. Freedom of information**

Yes.

**Key words**

Personal Tutor

**Originator of the paper**

Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee  
**Personal Tutor System Oversight Group**

Meeting held on **Monday 6 November 2017**  
at **9am** in the **Raeburn Room, Old College**

**Notes**

**Present:**

**Professor Alan Murray**, Convenor, Assistant Principal Academic Support;  
**Bobi Archer**, Vice President Education, Students' Association;  
**Dr Shereen Benjamin**, Associate Dean Quality Assurance, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences;  
**Brian Connolly**, Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services;  
**Dr Jeremy Crang**, Dean of Students, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences;  
**Nichola Kett**, Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team, Academic Services;  
**Dr Gordon McDougall**, Dean Quality Assurance, College of Science and Engineering;  
**Dr Antony Maciocia**, Dean of Students, College of Science and Engineering;  
**Professor Geoff Pearson**, Dean of Students, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine.

**Apologies:**

Professor Jeremy Bradshaw, Assistant Principal Researcher Development and Director of Quality Assurance, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine.

**Consideration of Schools' Operation of the Personal Tutor System**

The Group received and considered the following evidence relating to the operation of the Personal Tutor (PT) system:

**1. Student Survey Results**

Personal Tutor-related Student Survey Results from the National Student Survey (NSS); Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES); International Student Barometer (ISB).

**2. Free Text Comments**

All PT-related free text comments from the NSS 2016 and 2017.

**3. University Quality Processes**

Personal Tutor related data from Internal Reviews undertaken during 2016/17 and outcomes of discussions at Senate Quality Assurance Committee, including consideration of School Annual Quality Reports.

Each Dean was invited to consider the data in relation to their College. The following was noted:

- **College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS)**

In CAHSS, the new Dean of Students and College Office undertook a series of school visits to understand how the PT system was functioning in each School. The CAHSS Dean of Students noted that smaller schools (e.g. Divinity and Health in Social Science) seem to consistently perform better than their larger, more diverse peers (e.g. LLC). It was suggested that this may be due to smaller PT/Tutee ratios however examples of schools with high ratios and high levels of student satisfaction were also noted (e.g. Chemistry). The importance of local context was discussed. Factors such as homogenous school structures and student cohorts (i.e. single subjects/disciplines), as well as workload models providing the PT role with sufficient time and space to flourish and become valued, seem to correlate with strong localised performance in relation to student satisfaction with the PT system.

**Action: CAHSS Dean of Students to continue to work with schools to address issues relating to the low levels of student satisfaction with the PT system in some areas of the College.**

- **College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM)**

In CMVM, the Group noted that student satisfaction scores for undergraduate medical students continued to be lower than other areas of the College. The CMVM Dean of Students noted that there seemed to be a cultural issue within the medical programme which was leading to students feeling under supported. This may be due to the complex nature of the PT system, with support split between University PTs and clinical staff based within the National Health Service, or the workload allocation within a highly pressured clinical context. It was noted that the impending Teaching Programme Review (TPR) and the General Medical Council (GMC) review were likely to provide more detailed insight into the specific causes of this student dissatisfaction. The Group suggested that a way forward for the College may be to identify highly regarded PTs within the medical programme, assess what they are regarded to be doing well within their local context, and to then share this good practice with their colleagues.

**Action: CMVM Dean of Students to liaise with Medical School management to discuss issues relating to the low levels of student satisfaction with the School's PT system.**

- **College of Science and Engineering (CSE)**

In CSE, high levels of student satisfaction were noted in the Schools of Chemistry, Physics and Astronomy, and Maths. It was noted that these schools have relatively homogenous structures and student cohorts (i.e. single subjects/disciplines). The CSE Dean of Students noted that there appeared to be no correlation between UG and PGT satisfaction levels, with the latter usually more satisfied with the level of support provided.

### **The Student Perspective**

The Students' Association Vice President Education shared student feedback on the PT system with the Group. The following was noted:

- **Expectations**

Students share and compare personal experiences which tends to lead to shared expectations and perceptions of a standardised PT system.

The Group noted that the organisation of the system within the University framework is fundamentally local and specific at the point of delivery to students. The inherent tension between the perception of a standardised system and the experience of inconsistent local delivery can give rise to negative perceptions of the system of support as a whole. It has often been noted (in free text comments and previous focus groups) that students whose individual experience of the PT system is good, still regard the system negatively due to the bad experiences of their peers. Furthermore, this can be exacerbated by the exceptional performance of one or two individual PTs acting above and beyond the call of duty.

The Group noted that the Senior Tutor Network had been consulted (in March 2016) on how the University could ensure that the PT role was recognised in a consistent and robust way within School workload allocation models. The Network had recommended that PT activity should be modelled as follows:

- 4 hours/tutee (can be split between PT and support team);
- 1 day training for new PTs;
- Half-day/annum training for all PTs.

It was understood that the PT role would be recognised as one of the core common activities in school workload allocation models. However, PT activity does not appear to be included in the University's recently approved principles and operational guidance for the development and implementation of academic work allocation models.

**Action: AM to check on the status of PT activity in the new principles and operational guidance for the development and implementation of academic work allocation models.**

- **School Personal Tutoring Statements**

Students report that that they have not been made aware of the statement by their school.

The Group received and considered a report from each school detailing how each statement had been communicated to students at the start of the current academic session, 2017-18.



The School Personal Tutoring Statement performs a twofold function: acting as a School produced guide for PTs and tutees (by setting out exactly what each should expect of the other in relation to the general features of the PT system across the University and the specific elements delivered locally by the School) and acting as a light touch QA mechanism for the University (to ensure that each school is broadly in line with the rest of the institution by meeting the minimum PT system framework requirements, as set out in the template).

The University does not stipulate exactly how schools should communicate the statements to students only that each student should be made aware of it via their programme and course handbooks. However, as part of the annual review of PT statements (conducted by the Group towards the end of each academic session, in preparation for the start of the following session) Senior Tutors are promoted to ask their PTs to reference their school's statement during the initial meeting with their tutees, and ensure that students are informed as to exactly where they can find the statement on the school website.

The Group noted that all schools had communicated the statements to students however some had been more proactive in their attempts to raise awareness than others. It was noted that nearly all had focused their efforts on Welcome Week (as directed by the University) and that this may not be the ideal time to raise awareness of the statement as the message was likely to get lost in the maelstrom of communications to students at that busy time in the academic calendar.

**Action: AM and BC to examine ways to improve the communication of School Personal Tutoring Statements.**

The Group also noted that some schools were not meeting the minimum PT system framework requirement to ensure that students are made aware of School Personal Tutoring Statements via their programme and course handbooks.

**Action: BC to ask Senior Tutors to ensure that links to School Personal Tutoring Statements are placed in programme and course handbooks.**

- **Training**

Students want a PT who is knowledgeable about their programme and course options, support services and academic procedures, and also their subject in order to ensure advice and guidance is relevant.

Training for PTs is organised and delivered at School level in line with the framework approach adopted by the University. The [Academic and Pastoral Support Policy](#) (which sets out the academic and pastoral support available to students across the University, including the PT system) states that Schools and Colleges must ensure that adequate opportunities are in place for briefing, training and development, and that these opportunities are taken. However, as this is a local responsibility it is

difficult for the University to ensure a consistent approach, particularly as attendance is not mandatory and therefore the training may not reach those PTs in need of it most.

**Action: Dean of Students to examine the approaches to training of each School within their College and report findings to the next meeting of the Group.**

The Assistant Principal Academic Support noted that PT peer learning and monitoring systems based around the idea of 'group practice' were being employed in areas across the University to help support staff in a PT role. PTs are assigned to groups with at least one senior/high performer and these groups then help train new PTs, provide peer observation and feedback for continuing PTs, and allow for discreet qualitative monitoring of the system. This is particularly helpful in large, multidisciplinary schools which seem to struggle more with student satisfaction levels. It was noted that Group Practice was approved by Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC) in 2016-17 as an optional enhancement to the PT system.

The CAHSS Dean of Quality suggested that it would be useful to identify areas with high rates of attendance at PT meetings, assess what they are doing to maintain this student engagement, and to then share this good practice with colleagues across the University. Members also noted that the 'Here to Help' guide seemed to be a very useful reference resource for students and suggested that a similar hardcopy reference booklet for PTs would be a welcome support resource. The 'Here to Help' guide is published by Student Systems and Administration (previously the central Academic Registry) and provides new students with an overview of the wide range of support the University offers. The Group agreed that it would be useful to share good practice in the form of a leaflet designed specifically for PTs.

**Action: AM, NK, BC to examine the options for a leaflet guide for PTs, one side noting examples of good practice and the other providing guidance akin to 'Here to Help'.**

- **Continuity**

Students prefer to have the same PT throughout their studies at the University in order to allow for more consistency and to help foster a more personal relationship.

The Group agreed that a change of PT may be beneficial at specified points in the student journey, for example at the transition to UG honours or PG dissertation. However, Schools must be more systematic and supportive in regard to managing PT changes, for example scheduling an additional meeting if the change occurs during an academic session.

A communication to this effect was circulated to Senior Tutors in response to discussions at last year's meeting of the Group. It noted the importance of ensuring continuity of support in regard to the way the transitions are managed for:

- **Study Away Students** (i.e. PTs must remain in contact with their students when they are away from Edinburgh and supporting arrangements and mechanisms in relation to the interaction with the Exchange Coordinator role in Schools must be transparent and well communicated)
- **PT changes instigated by the School** (i.e. changes must be managed in a systematic and supportive way, such as scheduling an additional meeting if the change occurs during an academic session).

- **Joint Degrees**

Students studying for a joint degree, with a subject area in a school other than the one they are matriculated to, would like to have a formal, alternative point of contact/support in their other subject area. The Group agreed that there was a tendency for the needs of students on joint degrees to get lost between the cracks between subject areas particularly in regard to communications.

**Action: Deans of Students to continue to discuss with Schools the viability of providing a formal, alternative point of contact/support for students on joint degrees.**

- **Special Circumstances**

Students sometimes may not want to discuss sensitive personal information (e.g. relating to gender) with their PT.

The Group noted that students are entitled to request a change of PT and that Schools are required to make it clear in their Personal Tutoring Statement the exact process by which students can request this change.

- **Contact**

Students had previously identified more contact with their PT as an issue.

The Group noted that this had been one of the main drivers behind the change to the 4,3,1,1, (1) model of scheduled meetings in 2015-16, which increased contact time for new students. An analysis of this year's free text comments relating to contact time indicated that this was no longer a major issue of concern for students.

### **Data for PT system commentary in School Annual Quality Reports**

The Group agreed that a graphical presentation of data (similar to Paper 1a – Student Survey Results) would be the most appropriate for PT system commentary in School Annual Quality Reports.

**Date of the next meeting:** The Group noted that the next meeting would be held in late June/Early July 2018 (exact date to be confirmed) to consider and approve School PT Statements for 2018-19.

**Brian Connolly**  
Academic Services  
November 2017

The University of Edinburgh  
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

30 November 2017

**Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)  
Accreditation Committee 2016/17**

**Executive Summary**

The College of Science and Engineering manages accreditation arrangements with Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) on behalf of the University. An Accreditation Committee meets in February each year to consider/confirm continuing accreditation.

This paper summarises the business of the 2016/17 SRUC Accreditation Committee. The Accreditation Committee is due to meet again in February 2018.

The University also partners with SRUC in the delivery of joint MSc and PhD programmes; it should be noted that this paper refers only to undergraduate SRUC degree programmes accredited and awarded by the University of Edinburgh.

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

Aligns with the University's strategic objective of Leadership in Learning.

**Action requested**

The Committee is invited to note and comment on the contents of the paper.

**Resource / Risk / Compliance**

**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

Accrediting SRUC degree programmes has resource implications for the College of Science and Engineering, which enters student records into EUCLID and manages the annual SRUC Accreditation Committee; the College invoices SRUC annually for these services. There are also resource implications for Student Administration, which manually produces degree certificates for accredited programmes and for the support services to which SRUC students on accredited programmes are currently entitled access.

**2. Risk assessment**

In order to preserve the University's reputation, it is essential to ensure that degrees accredited by the University of Edinburgh meet the same high standards of academic quality and student experience that we would expect from our own programmes. The annual SRUC Accreditation Committee provides a framework to assure the University that the SRUC degree programmes we accredit continue to meet these expectations.

**3. Equality and Diversity**

As this paper reports on past activity, there are no Equality and Diversity considerations and an EqIA is not necessary at this time. Advice will be taken on

whether an EqIA is necessary in relation to any future amendments to the MoA (see section 3).

**4. Freedom of information**

Open.

**Key words**

Rural, Accreditation

**Originator of the paper**

Alex Laidlaw, Head of Academic Affairs / Dr Gordon McDougall, Dean QA  
College of Science and Engineering

## SRUC Accreditation Committee 2016/17: Report to Senate Quality Assurance Committee

### 1. Accreditation Arrangements

The University of Edinburgh accredits and awards the undergraduate BSc Environmental Resource Management<sup>1</sup> on behalf of Scotland's Rural College (SRUC). The College of Science and Engineering manages the SRUC Accreditation Committee on behalf of the University. Membership of the 2016/17 Committee is provided in Appendix 1.

The BSc Environmental Resource Management was introduced to replace three SRUC UG degrees previously accredited by Edinburgh: BSc Sustainable Environmental Management, BSc Rural Resource Management, and BSc Environmental Protection.

The BSc Rural Resource Management and BSc Environmental Protection degrees were withdrawn from academic year 2015/16. However, the BSc Sustainable Environmental Management will not be withdrawn until the remaining students have graduated in 2017/18. The expectation is that Edinburgh will only accredit the BSc Environmental Resource Management from 2018/19.

The next meeting of the SRUC Accreditation Committee is scheduled for 21 February 2018. It is anticipated that, in future, Senate QA Committee will receive annual reports on SRUC accreditation in around February/April.

### 2. 2016/17 Accreditation Committee

The SRUC Accreditation Committee last met in February 2017. Information considered by the Committee included the 2015/16 SRUC Annual Report, the SRUC Education Manual and relevant External Examiner reports (for 15/16). The Committee was assured by the information provided by SRUC, which demonstrated that appropriate policies and procedures were in place to ensure the quality of academic programmes delivered.

**The Committee therefore confirmed it was content for the University of Edinburgh to accredit the following SRUC undergraduate degree programmes for 2016/17:**

- **BSc Environmental Resource Management**
- **BSc Sustainable Environmental Management (until remaining students graduate)**

Other items discussed by the Committee included:

#### SRUC Academic Board

Dr Gordon McDougall, Dean QA, CSE, agreed to join SRUC's Academic Board as an academic representative of the University of Edinburgh.

#### University of Edinburgh Senate

On behalf of Academic Services, an invitation to join the University's Senate was extended to SRUC's new Principal, Prof Wayne Powell.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.sruc.ac.uk/courses/123/environmental\\_resource\\_management\\_bsc\\_bsc\\_hons](https://www.sruc.ac.uk/courses/123/environmental_resource_management_bsc_bsc_hons)

### SRUC Education Manual/Academic Progression

Although work on the SRUC Education Manual has experienced significant delays, the Committee was assured that the final document would be presented to its 2017/18 meeting. In the meantime, the Committee received an extract from the draft Manual that provided welcome clarity about academic progression requirements for students.

### Application for Degree Awarding Powers

Applying for DAP continues to be an institutional priority for SRUC. It is hoped that the outcome of SRUC's next ELIR, in 2019, will inform a decision about the appropriate timing of this application.

### Future Accreditation

The University of Glasgow currently accredits SRUC degrees in Veterinary Nursing and Poultry Science; however, SRUC is interested in forging closer relationships with CMVM in these areas going forward.

### Student Satisfaction

SRUC colleagues expressed disappointment at the Overall Satisfaction score of 76% achieved in NSS 2017, which was down from a peak score of 89 in 2014. The Accreditation Committee was very supportive of the proposed development of an Action Plan to address issues of particular concern around Assessment and Feedback. The Committee also noted that SRUC was in the process of finalising its Student Partnership with SRUC Students' Association (SRUCSA); SRUCSA's President attended the Accreditation meeting.

### External Examiners

The SRUC Accreditation Committee routinely receives reports from External Examiners appointed to SRUC programmes accredited by the University of Edinburgh. The 2015/16 report from the External Examiner for the BSc Environmental Protection raised some significant concerns, but the Committee was ultimately satisfied that SRUC's formal 'Academic Response' to the External Examiner had fully addressed issues raised. It was further noted that the BSc Environmental Protection was withdrawn from 2015/16. However, particular attention will be given to External Examiner reports at the 2018 Accreditation Committee to ensure that similar issues are not arising with the newer BSc Environmental Resource Management programme.

## 3. Future Developments

SRUC students on degrees accredited by the University are currently recorded in EUCLID, where they appear as fully matriculated students. Concerns were raised in the wake of the 2016 UKVI audit about continuing to record SRUC students on accredited degree programmes in EUCLID, due to potential issues relating to data integrity and possible perceptions of sponsorship duty for non-EEA students with visas sponsored by SRUC rather than Edinburgh.

In addition, recording SRUC accredited students in EUCLID has resource implications for both Edinburgh and SRUC, as well as creating administrative challenges for both institutions. The awarding of Edinburgh degrees to students on accredited SRUC programmes is a manual process, which does not require EUCLID. The current MoA provides SRUC accredited students with access to University of Edinburgh support services (e.g. Counselling, Disability, Careers). It is understood that there is very minimal use of these services by SRUC students; given the growth in Edinburgh's



student population and the increasing pressure on support services, it may be appropriate to consider whether we wish to review these arrangements. Library access for SRUC students on accredited programmes would not be affected by these changes.<sup>2</sup>

The current Memorandum of Agreement with SRUC, signed in 2015/16, will be reviewed during 2017/18 to update the list of accredited degree programmes to reflect recent changes. This provides a timely opportunity to renegotiate the broader MoA, including administrative and support arrangements.

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Alex Laidlaw / Gordon McDougall  
College of Science and Engineering  
November 2017

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<sup>2</sup> Library access for SRUC students and staff is governed by a separate agreement:  
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/library-museum-gallery/using-library/borrowing-a-book/other-libraries/join-sruc>

**APPENDIX 1: MEMBERSHIP OF SRUC ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE 2016/17**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>ROLE</b>
James Bamkin	Student Representative, President of SRUC Students' Association
Dr Kyrsten Black	Assistant Principal Higher Education, SRUC
Professor Jeremy Bradshaw	Assistant Principal Researcher Development and Director of Quality Assurance, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, University of Edinburgh
Niall Evans	Head of Countryside and Environment, SRUC
<i>Professor Tina Harrison (Apologies received)</i>	<i>Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance, University of Edinburgh</i>
David James	Assistant Principal Further Education, SRUC
Alex Laidlaw	Head of Academic Affairs, College of Science and Engineering, University of Edinburgh
Dr Gordon McDougall (Convener)	Dean of Quality Assurance, College of Science and Engineering, University of Edinburgh
Sarah Wyse (Secretary)	QA Administrator, College of Science and Engineering, University of Edinburgh

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

30 November 2017

**Enhancement Themes Institutional Plan**

**Executive Summary**

This paper presents the University's institutional plan for the Enhancement Theme, Evidence for Enhancement, Improving the Student Experience.

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

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

**Action requested**

The Committee is asked to note the institutional plan.

**How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

See the 'Dissemination of Work' section of the report.

**Resource / Risk / Compliance**

**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

None at this stage as the plan does not propose any additional activities/projects.

**2. Risk assessment**

Risks would be considered as part of individual activities/projects.

**3. Equality and Diversity**

Equality and diversity would be considered as part of individual activities/projects.

**4. Freedom of information**

Open.

**Key words**

Enhancement theme, evidence for enhancement

**Originator of the paper**

Nichola Kett, Academic Policy Manager, Academic Services  
22 November 2017



## Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

### Institutional Plan for: University of Edinburgh

#### Context

This plan reflects the early stage of the Enhancement Theme and outlines in broad terms the approach the University will take to engaging with the Theme. The plan will be considered by the Institutional Team at its first meeting on 14 December 2017.

#### Institutional team

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Professor Tina Harrison (staff), Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance		
TLG staff representative	Nichola Kett (staff), Academic Policy Manager, Academic Services		
TLG staff representative alternate	<i>Will depend on meeting content</i>		
TLG student representative	Bobi Archer (student), Vice President Education, Edinburgh University Students' Association		
Edinburgh University Students' Association representative	Megan Brown (staff), Academic Engagement Coordinator		
Student Systems representative	Lisa Dawson (staff), Director of Student Systems		
Learning, Teaching and Web representative	Melissa Highton/Anne-Marie Scott (staff), Director/Deputy Director		

Governance and Strategic Planning representative	Lynda Hutchison (staff), Governance and Strategic Planner		
College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences representative	Dr Lisa Kendall (staff), Head of Academic and Student Administration,		
Academic Services representative	Gillian Mackintosh (staff), Academic Policy Officer		
College of Science and Engineering representative	Dr Gordon McDougall (staff), College Dean, Quality Assurance,		
College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine representative	Dr Claire Phillips (staff), Vet School Director of Quality		
Institute for Academic Development representative	Dr Jon Turner (staff), Director		

**Planned activity: Year 1**

**Overall outcomes/activity**

- To be gathering the right data to be able to evaluate and effectively enhance the student experience.
- For that data to be easily accessible, understood and used by staff to evaluate and effectively enhance the student experience.
- To have had active engagement of students and staff in the work of the Enhancement Theme.
- To have shared good practice internally and externally.
- To have worked collaboratively across the sector.

**Year 1 outcomes/activity**

**Institutional Team**

The University has a number of existing and planned activities relating to the Enhancement Theme (detailed below), many of which have their own governance, representative and reporting structures. Therefore, the Institutional Team will have oversight of these key institutional activities relating to the Enhancement Theme, with the aim of sharing information and identifying links and synergies. They will support engagement with and work on the Enhancement Theme within the University and the sector, including the requirements set by the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland. They will also facilitate communication on the Enhancement Theme across the University and promote the use of data for enhancing the student experience.

**Alignment of Activities with Sector Strands**

The activities align with the following priorities for implementation from the [University's Learning and Teaching Strategy](#): 'working in partnership with students' and 'nurturing a learning community that supports students'.

**Optimising Evidence**

- Continuing to develop systematic access to data to support quality assurance and enhancement processes, including the development of the student data dashboard
- Developing strategic performance measurement dashboards

**Student Engagement**

- Implementing the priorities of the Student Partnership Agreement
- Analysing peer learning and support data (Students' Association)
- Analysing Teaching Awards data (Students' Association)
- Participating in student representative diversity work (Students' Association with sparqs)
- Enhancing student representation (led by the Students' Association)
- Developing minimum standards for the use of virtual learning environments
- Analysing student survey data

**Student Demographics and Success**

- Finalising and implementing the Widening Participation Strategy
- Developing learning analytics policy, procedure and governance
- Carrying out the thematic review of mature students (including students as parents/carers)
- Interim evaluation of lecture recording implementation

- Developing employability and enterprise supporting data

#### Dissemination of work

**Internally:** email communications; Institutional Team; Senate Quality Assurance Committee; Teaching Matters website; Learning and Teaching Conference; and a wiki.  
**Externally:** Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC); Theme Leaders' Group (TLG); Enhancement Themes conference; and the University's website.

#### Collaborative cluster work

As it has not yet been confirmed what the collaborative clusters will be, we are unable to confirm our intended level of involvement. Areas of interest for the University are: student voice; data skills for non-specialists (quantitative and qualitative); student surveys (what works); learning analytics (beyond retention); and sharing evaluation expertise. Our enhancement activities are outlined above.

#### Wider inter-institutional collaboration

Due to the early stage of the Enhancement Theme, we have not yet held discussions with other institutions about potential collaborative work. It is anticipated that this will be facilitated through SHEEC and TLG meetings. Areas of interest and enhancement activities are outlined above.

#### Supporting staff and student engagement

Staff and students will be kept informed of the work of the Theme through the communication methods outlined above. Support and guidance can be provided by the Institutional Lead and Theme Leaders Group staff member. Students will be supported through the Students' Association. We are exploring with the Students' Association how we can creatively engage students with the work of the Theme as it develops. We also anticipate that we will provide funding towards Enhancement Theme-related projects/activities (either existing, planned or new).

#### Evaluation

Progress will be monitored through Institutional Team meetings. Consideration will be given to evaluation of impact as the areas of work develop.

<b>Plan author:</b>	Professor Tina Harrison and Nichola Kett
<b>Date:</b>	17 November 2017

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

30 November 2017

**Quality Matrix**

**Executive Summary**

This paper presents a matrix of responsibilities across key quality assurance and enhancement processes. This document was created by Academic Services and has been shared with and well-received by College Quality Officers.

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

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

**Action requested**

The Committee is asked to note the matrix.

**How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?**

The matrix is a working document that will continue to be used by Academic Services and College Quality Officers.

**Resource / Risk / Compliance**

**1. Resource implications (including staffing)**

None. The matrix presents current Policy and practice.

**2. Risk assessment**

None. The matrix presents current Policy and practice.

**3. Equality and Diversity**

Equality Impact Assessments have been carried out on individual policies and practices.

**4. Freedom of information**

Open.

**Key words**

Quality, matrix

**Originator of the paper**

Nichola Kett, Academic Policy Manager, Academic Services  
16 November 2017



## University of Edinburgh – Matrix of Quality Responsibilities

	SCHOOL/DEANERY	COLLEGE	INSTITUTIONAL-LEVEL	SUPPORT SERVICE
<b>ANNUAL MONITORING, REVIEW AND REPORTING</b>				
Programme level	X Decide on clusters and send reports to SDoQ	X Support Schools and ensure full coverage		
School level	X SDoQ submits School annual report to Academic Services cc College	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CDoQ members of the SQAC sub-group that reviews school reports</li> <li>• Take forward recommendations from SQAC with Schools, including clustering of College-wide issues</li> <li>• Colleges report to Schools on action taken on College-level issues raised</li> <li>• Identify good practice from School reports</li> <li>• Provide benchmarked data</li> <li>• Peer review of reports<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sub-group reviews reports and prepares recommendations for SQAC</li> <li>• SQAC responsible for tracking actions through the following year's school report</li> <li>• SQAC reports to schools on action taken on University-level issues raised</li> </ul>	
School quality model description	X Create, maintain and ensure Academic Services are provided with an up-to-date version		X Academic Services considers new and updated versions	
College level		X Submit annual report to SQAC	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports are considered by SQAC and actions remitted</li> <li>• Actions tracked through the following year's College report</li> </ul>	
Institutional-level			X Outcomes reported via annual SFC report	

<sup>1</sup> Revisit. Policy: "...adds value to the annual process and will provide detailed monitoring and feedback to individual schools on recommended action."

## University of Edinburgh – Matrix of Quality Responsibilities

	SCHOOL/DEANERY	COLLEGE	INSTITUTIONAL-LEVEL	SUPPORT SERVICE
<b>INTERNAL PERIODIC REVIEW (teaching/postgraduate programme reviews)</b>				
Management of internal periodic review processes		X Contribute review team administrators	X Academic Services	
Operation – date, scope, subject-specific remit items, team membership	X	X Scope and remit meeting	X	
Engagement of staff and students	X			
Documentation – reflective report and supporting documentation	X Head of School/Subject Area or nominee	X Provide commentary on quality assurance and enhancement processes	X Some supporting documents provided by Academic Services	
Visit	X Staff and students meeting the team, logistics		X Review team	
Report	X Check for factual errors		X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review administrator drafts, team provide comments</li> <li>• Approval by SQAC</li> <li>• Circulation of final report</li> </ul>	
Addressing recommendations, reporting to SQAC and informing School/subject area staff and students on action taken to address recommendations	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writes 14 week and year on reports</li> <li>• Thereafter progress towards meeting recommendations is reported on through annual programme monitoring</li> </ul>	X College quality committees receive 14 week and year on responses <sup>2</sup>	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Services reviews 14 week and one year on reports to ensure that recommendations have been adequately addressed</li> <li>• Reports presented to SQAC for confirmation that they are content with progress</li> </ul>	
<b>EXTERNAL EXAMINERS</b>				
Nomination	X to Colleges			
Appointment		X On behalf of the University	X	

<sup>2</sup> Not in policy

## University of Edinburgh – Matrix of Quality Responsibilities

	SCHOOL/DEANERY	COLLEGE	INSTITUTIONAL-LEVEL	SUPPORT SERVICE
			CSPC where the EE does not meet criteria with respect to standing and/or experience (on basis of College recommendation)	
Notification of appointment		X Can be delegated to Schools		
Determining how to set fees		X		
Arranging for payment of fees and expenses		X Can be delegated to Schools		
Briefing and provision of information to EEs, students and the public	X			
Termination	X Recommend to College for contractual non-compliance	X Responsible for monitoring EEs' compliance with their contracts		
EE reports	X Robust mechanisms in place for handling reports and taking appropriate action in response		X SQAC sets deadline for EE reports	
Responding to EE reports	X A senior person designated by the HoS will respond to each EE report (expectation that this will be within 6 weeks)	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee the operation of processes in Schools of responding to reports</li> <li>• Handling issues/suggestions that pertain to the College so that appropriate action is taken</li> <li>• Identifying issues/suggestions with institutional level implications and raising these at appropriate forums at an institutional level</li> <li>• Ensure that issues judged to be particularly serious</li> </ul>	X APASQA considers issues judged to be particularly serious or important	

## University of Edinburgh – Matrix of Quality Responsibilities

	SCHOOL/DEANERY	COLLEGE	INSTITUTIONAL-LEVEL	SUPPORT SERVICE
		or important are copied to the APASQA		
Analysis EE reports	<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use data from EERS to identify themes and issues that require action</li> <li>Source of data considered during annual monitoring, review and reporting</li> <li>Make themes and summary response available to student representatives and follow up action at School committees</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>Source of data considered during annual monitoring, review and reporting</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>Themes reported to SQAC annually</p>	
Causes for concern - <i>where an EE has raised a matter of serious concern directly with the APASQA</i>			<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>APASQA responds in writing, outlining any actions to be taken</p>	
<b>PROFESSIONAL, STATUTORY AND REGULATORY BODY ACCREDITATIONS</b>				
Management of accreditations	<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>Or subject area</p>			X
Oversight of accreditations and follow-up actions	X	<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>Via Quality committee<sup>3</sup></p>		X
Reports and review outcomes	<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>Source of data considered during annual monitoring, review and reporting</p>			X <p>Reflect on through SSSAR and (as appropriate) SS thematic review processes</p>
Report on programmes that have been reviewed the previous academic year			<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>Via SFC report</p>	
<b>SCOTLAND'S RURAL COLLEGE</b>				
Annual report		<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>Report annually to SQAC</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>SQAC considers report</p>	
<b>ENHANCEMENT-LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW (ELIR)</b>				
Lead – <i>support provided by Academic Services</i>			<p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>APASQA</p>	

<sup>3</sup> Not in policy

## University of Edinburgh – Matrix of Quality Responsibilities

	SCHOOL/DEANERY	COLLEGE	INSTITUTIONAL-LEVEL	SUPPORT SERVICE
Involvement – <i>e.g. preparation of reflective analysis, collation of advanced information set and other information requested by the Panel, attending briefing meetings and meetings with the panel</i>	X	X	X	X
<b>STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES ANNUAL REVIEW</b>				
Oversight of the review process			X SQAC Monitoring and review delegated to a sub-committee	
Submit report (includes update on actions from last year)				X
Consideration of reports – <i>two meetings are held (one with readers and one of the full sub-committee)</i>			X Meeting 1: SQAC sub-committee readers meet to discuss commendations and areas for consideration which are finalised by the APASQA	X Meeting 2: sub-committee meets to discuss themes* and good practice examples from the reports – any actions identified are remitted by Academic Services
Reporting on outcomes		X College Deans report on outcomes and College committees discuss recommendations which have implications for schools	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report discussed and approved by SQAC</li> <li>• *The sub-committee identifies themes for consideration by SQAC for future thematic reviews</li> </ul>	X Individual feedback reports sent to services
Addressing areas for consideration			X Academic Services will track University-level actions	X
<b>STUDENT SUPPORT THEMATIC REVIEW</b>				
Management of thematic review processes			X Academic Services	
Selection of review panel members			X APASQA in consultation with the Deputy Secretary Student Experience	
Operation – scope, remit, timelines, evidence required, methodological approach to consultation			X Review panel	

## University of Edinburgh – Matrix of Quality Responsibilities

	SCHOOL/DEANERY	COLLEGE	INSTITUTIONAL-LEVEL	SUPPORT SERVICE
Documentation – brief report and supporting documentation	X Depending on areas included in the review	X Depending on areas included in the review	X Depending on areas included in the review	X Depending on areas included in the review
Engagement of staff and student			X Academic Services coordinates	
Report	X Check for factual errors (depending on areas included in the review)	X Check for factual errors (depending on areas included in the review)	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review administrator drafts, panel provide comments</li> <li>• Approval by SQAC</li> <li>• Circulation of final report</li> </ul>	X Check for factual errors (depending on areas included in the review)
Addressing recommendations, reporting to SQAC and informing student service users of the review outcome and action taken to address recommendations	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to 14 week and year on reports</li> <li>• After this, SQAC agrees an appropriate approach to ongoing monitoring of recommendations</li> </ul>	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to 14 week and year on reports</li> <li>• After this, SQAC agrees an appropriate approach to ongoing monitoring of recommendations</li> </ul>	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 week and one year on reports presented to SQAC for consideration and approval</li> </ul>	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to 14 week and year on reports</li> <li>• After this, SQAC agrees an appropriate approach to ongoing monitoring of recommendations</li> </ul>

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

30 November 2017

## Internal Periodic Review Responses

### Executive Summary

The following 14 week responses from Internal Periodic Reviews 2016/17:

TPR Asian Studies

TPR Design

TPR Ecological and Environmental Sciences

### 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

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

TPR/PPR	Recommendation	Comment
TPR Asian Studies	1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10	We look forward to hearing about progress on these particular recommendations in the year on response
TPR Design		We look forward to hearing about progress on the recommendations in the year on response
TPR Ecological and Environmental Sciences (including with management)		We look forward to hearing about progress on the recommendations in the year on response

### 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**

Teaching Programme Review, TPR, 14 week response,

**Originator of the paper**

Gillian Mackintosh  
Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services  
23 November 2017



Internal Review

14 week response report on recommendation actions

TPR of: Asian Studies

Date of review: 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2017

Date of 14 week response: 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017

The subject area is responsible for reporting on progress with all recommendations, including those remitted to other areas of the University for action. Please report on progress towards meeting each recommendation. Any urgent recommendation should be highlighted along with a deadline for response. If any recommendation has been fully addressed please record the action taken and date completed. Any barriers to progress should be highlighted on this report.

Recommendation	Timescale for completion	Comment on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion	Completion date
1. Recommend that the School Senior Management Team enter into discussions with Estates and Buildings regarding the bringing together of Asian Studies staff accommodation and the proximity of teaching rooms to staff, whilst noting the importance of maintaining Asian Studies as an independent subject area.	It is not possible to outline a clear timescale for completion. Changes to the office space for Asian Studies is dependent on the completion of other building projects.	There has been no discussion at senior management level since the Asian Studies TPR took place in April. The School management team is expecting that any future plans for accommodating staff will allow all staff in any given department to be together. This case was previously put forward to senior management on a number of occasions as a priority and the School management team fully agrees that departments need to be together.	
2. The Review Team recommended that the School give Language teaching staff reserved time and budget for career development opportunities. This is crucial in maintaining the current high standards in language pedagogy given the rapid changes in this field	Completed. This issue has already been considered (see "Comment on progress"). The School will review its approach should there be a change in budgetary constraints.	The Workload Allocation Model for language-teaching staff currently includes a remit of time for Continuing Professional Development. In terms of the finance side of CPD, this is a School-wide issue and while the School management team would be supportive of providing more opportunities for language-teaching staff, there are budget constraints which prevent this from happening.	September, 2017
3. Recommend Asian Studies deferring consideration of establishing new degree programmes for advanced language students. Undertake thorough consultation with other Universities, students and industry in regards to sector wide issues and practices	Completed. Action taken.	Following the recommendation from the Review Team, we have deferred this consideration and are planning an exploratory workshop on this issue within language teaching with colleagues from other Universities and languages in 2018.	June, 2017
	In progress. The first meeting for the working group will be in December,	There is general agreement within Chinese Studies that this would be a good idea. We are currently in the process of forming a working group to discuss and	

<p>4. Recommend Chinese Studies introduce a mini-dissertation in Chinese modelled on the success of the mini dissertation in Japanese</p>	<p>2017. We should be able to make the necessary changes for the 2018-19 AY.</p>	<p>formulate how this mini-dissertation could be integrated into our programmes. This is likely to require some restructuring of several Year Two courses, all of which will require ratification by the Board of Studies. We are confident that we can make these changes in time for the next academic year.</p> <p>In the interim, the syllabus for the Research Skills element of Chinese 2B has been changed to provide more focus on the dissertation-writing process.</p>	
<p>5. Recommend the establishment of an Asian Studies PG Tutor Induction workshop based on the existing informal course level practices. This will ensure consistency in delivery of a high standard of teaching and learning</p>	<p>Completed. No action will be taken (see "Comment on progress").</p>	<p>Training for PG Tutors is now centralised and provided by the School and takes place at the start of each semester. This change was implemented in order to ensure quality across all departments and to help foster a sense of community among the PG Tutors themselves. The School will continue to monitor the needs of PG Tutors and respond to concerns as they arise. In discussion with the School, Asian Studies strongly feels that there is no need to develop a formalised training workshop and Course Organisers will continue as before to provide support and help develop teaching at the course level. The Handbook for PG Tutors is now given to all PG Tutors, regardless of contract type and is also available through Sharepoint on the LLC site.</p>	<p>September, 2017</p>
<p>6. Recommend Asian Studies afford greater flexibility in the use of PG Tutors in the range of lecturing and supervision they can provide whilst ensuring that they have the relevant training and support, including access to the staffroom</p>	<p>Completed. More opportunities are being provided this academic year (2017-18) for PG Tutors to mark essays and exams. No further action will be taken unless there are changes to the relevant regulations which will allow more flexibility in how we provide teaching opportunities for PG Tutors.</p>	<p>Practice across the School is in line with regulations set by Human Resources and College and within these remits, lecturing is not standard practice for PG Tutors. However, the Head of School is willing to feed this issue back for discussion. Asian Studies has made extra efforts this year to encourage more PG Tutors to be involved in essay and exam marking and we are exploring the idea of supervision responsibilities for PG Tutors. For training and support, please see point 5 above.</p> <p>In terms of Staffroom access, this issue was previously discussed with staff across the School. The building (50 George Square) is already at capacity. If the School were to provide access for Asian Studies PG Tutors, then it would need to do so for all PG Tutors in the School. Some larger departments have significant numbers of PG Tutors and it would be considered impractical to open this space up for additional staff.</p>	<p>September, 2017</p>

<p>7. Recommend Asian Studies introduce clearer administrative structures and information sharing between Chinese studies and Japanese studies. Although this often happens in practice, this needs to be documented and disseminated</p>	<p>Completed (see "Comment on progress").</p>	<p>A step towards this has been taken by arranging an additional Asian Studies staff meeting each semester in which information can be formally shared between Chinese Studies and Japanese Studies. Minutes from these meetings are made available to all Asian Studies staff. In addition, the meetings of all working groups (language courses, strategy, website, etc.) within Asian Studies are minuted and shared with group members following meetings. We are aware that there is a need for information-sharing without adding additional meetings where this is not deemed necessary.</p>	<p>September, 2017</p>
<p>8. The Review Team recommended that a review of workload allocation models (WAM) is carried out to identify any imbalances in the delivery of teaching and Personal Tutoring which should be addressed by the Head of Subject area.</p>	<p>Action taken. Further review of workloads will be completed by June, 2018 and adjustments made if necessary.</p>	<p>The expectation is that staff WAMs will be published annually and that they follow the principles outlined in the relevant guidelines. Some adjustments have already been made to staff workloads for this academic year (2017-18). These will be reviewed at the Annual Appraisal in May, 2018. The workshop on language teaching mentioned under point 3 should help to address methodological problems of WAMs for Asian languages. On the basis of this a fuller review can then take place.</p>	
<p>9. Recommend School Support for the final year students in preparing second year students for the Year Abroad by regularising the meetings and ensuring appropriate quality checks</p>	<p>Completed. Additional meetings were scheduled for the start of Semester 1, 2017 for Year Abroad returnees on Chinese Studies programmes. A further meeting will take place in Week 10 to outline a timeline for preparation for the Year Abroad.</p> <p>Further training has already been added to the Japanese Studies programmes in terms of the dissertation.</p> <p>We will monitor progress in this area and make further adjustments as necessary.</p>	<p>This is not a School-level matter. The issue has been discussed within Asian Studies and it was decided that we will revisit procedures in utilising the experiences of fourth-year Year Abroad returnees. We should also give consideration to communicating information about the Year Abroad to the second-year cohort earlier in Semester 1 so that second-year students do not only talk to fourth-year returnees before the formal meetings in Semester 2. The issue of quality-checks also relates to Pastoral visits to Year Abroad institutions (see point 2.4.5 below on the decision by Japanese Studies to consider reducing the number of host institutions in Japan).</p> <p>On the Chinese Studies side, it was agreed at our annual teaching Review Meeting in June that the Year Abroad Coordinator would talk to fourth-year returnees about their comments to second-year students as this can sometimes have an impact on uptake at some host universities. As a result, a series of meetings was set up in the first half of Semester 1 this academic year for a discussion between the Year Abroad Coordinator and the students according to Year Abroad host institution.</p>	<p>September, 2017</p>

		<p>Students were advised to reflect on their own experiences and asked to be circumspect about what they relayed to second-year students.</p> <p>On the Japanese Studies side, a joint class was offered in Semester 1 of this academic year to bring fourth-year returnees and second-year students together. A separate guidance session including Japanese Studies second-year and fourth-year students together with exchange students from the host universities was also set up half-way through Semester 1. There are also plans to extend information-sharing about the Year Abroad to first-year students.</p>	
<p>10. Recommend that Asian Studies explore ways of improving its ethnic diversity by targeted outreach activities</p>	<p>Action taken. A clearer School-level plan will be in place at the start of Semester 2, this academic year (2017-18) and a fuller strategy should be in place for Asian Studies (in response to the School plan) for the 2018-19 academic year.</p>	<p>As a subject area, Asian Studies is already engaged in outreach activities in local primary and secondary schools but we recognise that we could do more to engage in targeted outreach with the aim of improving our ethnic diversity.</p> <p>Outreach activities which we employ as part of our recruitment strategy are detailed in Section 2.3 of the Analytical Report. These outreach activities are also a vehicle for promoting our programmes to a wider audience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chinese Studies engages with the Confucius Institute to promote Chinese language and culture in primary and secondary schools.</li> <li>• Chinese and Japanese Studies staff make use of opportunities to speak in schools about various aspects of Chinese language and culture.</li> <li>• Asian Studies has partnered with the Confucius Institute to run an annual conference on learning and teaching Chinese language. This conference is aimed specifically at secondary school teachers in Scotland. In its broadest sense. It is hoped that promoting the learning and teaching of Chinese in schools can also help reach a broader demographic of students in the long term.</li> <li>• Japanese Studies staff are involved with the “Introduction to Japanese Culture and</li> </ul>	

		<p>Language Teaching in Primary education (J-Clan)".</p> <p>The School is currently developing a clear strategy with regards to targeted outreach in Edinburgh and has identified good practice within all departments with the aim of promoting these as part of a coherent approach. Ongoing activities which other subject areas are involved in include outreach in secondary schools and Edinburgh College which has a diverse student body and from which the School recruits a good number of students each year. Speed-networking event have been running for several years within the School. These events provide opportunities for secondary school pupils to meet LLC students on language degrees and to find out what is involved in studying languages. There is also a Student Ambassadors programme which involves LLC students on language programmes visiting school to promote languages (as opposed to teach languages) and share their Year Abroad experiences via blogs, Skype etc. These are events which Asian Studies could be involved in and we need to consider how better to engage in targeted outreach activities in order to enhance the ethnic diversity within our student body.</p>	
<p>Please report on steps taken to feedback to students on the outcomes of the review</p>	<p>Students on Chinese and Japanese Studies programmes within Asian Studies were invited to the final feedback session of the Teaching Programme Review in April.</p> <p>A summary of student-related issues and follow-up from the TPR will be communicated to students by heads of Chinese/Japanese at the end of Semester 1.</p> <p>A full report of actions taken on recommendations relating to learning and teaching (recommendations 4, 6, 9, 10) will be fed back to Class Reps at the SSLC meeting in Semester 2.</p>		

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Review

14 week response report on recommendation actions

TPR of Design

Date of review: 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017

Date of 14 week response: 10<sup>th</sup> October 2017

The subject area is responsible for reporting on progress with all recommendations, including those remitted to other areas of the University for action. Please report on progress towards meeting each recommendation. Any urgent recommendation should be highlighted along with a deadline for response. If any recommendation has been fully addressed please record the action taken and date completed. Any barriers to progress should be highlighted on this report.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Timescale for completion</b>	<b>Comment on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion</b>	<b>Completion date</b>
1. The involvement of a broader range of students in Design electives, as well as Design students' ability to engage with the wider University, will bring significant timetabling challenges. It is recommended that work be done to consider the timetable for implementation, addressing the balance of core to elective courses and how these will be timetabled throughout the working week both within Design and across the University. Consideration should be given to the consequences of flows in and out of the Subject Area and how these might need to be addressed, for example through quotas.	18 months	The two Undergraduate Directors in conjunction with UGTO and Design Management team are currently working collaboratively on this. To achieve this the School of Design ran a series of workshops at the School Away Day in early September – options for timetabling electives were discussed and Design Management Group are currently analysing the feedback from the workshops. We plan to have timetables in place by February 2018 with a full roll out of the new curriculum timetables for the start of teaching in September 2018	July/August 2018
2. It is recommended that the Subject Area devise a nuanced spatial strategy that supports its studio ecologies, recognising similarities and differences between disciplines.	36 months	An ECA-wide space strategy has been developed, and moves arising from this are currently being carried out. This includes space for studio-electives as well as providing cohorts of students such as Film with their own designated space. One new elective space (room 3.23 Evolution House) has been introduced in September 2017. Building work to all main spaces within ECA presents logistical difficulties for the next 2 -3 years as spaces are	February 2020

		refurbished and reopened and others are closed in order to be refurbished.	
3. It is recommended that a nuanced understanding be reached of a Design-specific work allocation model (WAM) based around the University model, which reflects an understanding of the distinctive qualities of the Subject Area and the activities that are inherent in and central to its teaching	18 months	A Design-specific WAM is currently being discussed with all colleagues across Design. To date a pilot WAM form is being tested through a series of 'case studies' with a cross section of academics on different grade-scales. The current acting Head of Design will have the case studies completed by December 2017. The new curriculum will enable a clearer vision of time allocation for individual disciplines within the subject area.	August 2018
4. It is recommended that the School review its Personal Tutor model (with due regard to the University model) in light of the need to support students who may choose significant engagement in courses outside Design as part of their learning journey	12-14 months	The ECA Senior Tutor is currently addressing Personal Tutor provision across ECA, including the further development of a robust training programme for PTs to assist them with supporting students in course selection. The ECA Senior Tutor and support colleagues will run a series of workshops for School of Design academics in Semester 2 of the 2017/18 academic cycle. A series of similar workshops were held for School of Art PTs in 2016/17 and positively received.	March/April 2018
5. It is recommended that consideration be given by ECA and the Students' Association to providing more localised access to student advice and welfare services, and to development of Peer Assisted Learning Schemes (PALS) or Academic Families, since the enhanced support would complement more formal academic support structures and community-building within the Subject Area.	10 months	ECA has an office specifically designated for use by University student services such as Disability Office, Counselling and Careers service. We will work with the Students' Association to promote this more widely and explore how the range of advice and welfare services might be expanded.	December 2017
6. It is recommended that the School review the external examiner system with a view to establishing a mechanism to regain the critically supportive element to external examining which existed previously	18 months	The new curriculum will present individual programmes for Examination (rather than the single programme currently offered). External Examiners will be appointed to oversee the individual programmes in line with University Regulations. This process will take place in consultation with ECA-level Directors, including Quality, and UG.	Provisionally 2018/19 academic session

<p>7. It is recommended that ECA initiate a stronger dialogue with the University with regard to the apportioning of student numbers and possible targets and caps on numbers. This dialogue should help to ensure that the delicate ecology of space is not compromised, which will in turn serve to balance student expectations.</p>	<p>24 months</p>	<p>ECA is in dialogue with University CAHSS and Estates on these matters through development of our estate master plan which includes careful and detailed planning and discussion of student numbers and forecasts in relation to space ecology and student experience. ECA has also established a Recruitment and Admissions Strategy Group with the following remit which will help to strengthen our student intake planning and join up with other resource and space planning -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To further develop and articulate an ECA recruitment and admissions strategy</li> <li>• To develop and articulate the 'ECA offer'; oversight for management and sustainability of portfolio of programmes</li> <li>• To develop and oversee ECA's approach to, articulation of and implementation of a widening participation strategy</li> <li>• Oversight and sign-off of annual and other strategic planning for recruitment and admissions strategy core goals including annual student intake and population profile projections (and directions)</li> <li>• To utilise management information, insight reports, trend information and analysis to inform and review strategy</li> <li>• Strategic oversight of recruitment, admissions and conversion activities</li> <li>• To liaise with other relevant CAHSS and ECA committees and role holders (e.g. CAHSS RASC; ECA Management Group both as a group and in individual roles; Programme Directors)</li> </ul>	
<p>8. It is recommended that the Subject Area develop a progressive strategy with regard to international partnerships, building on the model created with Donghua and Shanghai International College of Fashion and Innovation (SCF).</p>	<p>18 months</p>	<p>Design continues to have a strong Outreach ethos and create and build connections with international partners. The SCF partnership will be reviewed over the next 18 months as a consequence of Chinese Ministry of Education's shift of emphasis on students remaining in China rather than engaging with innovative 2+2 models. This review will involve UOE International office, CAHSS,</p>	<p>September 2018</p>



		ECA and Design.	
9. Since the Subject Area is about to enter a period of intense change, it is recommended that a strategy for communication be developed, building consensus among staff for change and building students' engagement and voice in the conversation.	12 months	<p>Currently, high email traffic, and large numbers of part-time staff within Design hamper attempts to bring all colleagues together for discussion.</p> <p>However, we have implemented regular staff meetings for 2017/18, twice per semester. Design Management Group is also introducing a regular 'Design Newsletter' to keep colleagues apprised of changes</p> <p>Design Management is currently investigating incentives to encourage students to attend student-staff liaison meetings. Year group Welcome Week meetings have now been implemented where year groups are informed of any forthcoming changes which may affect their studies.</p>	2017/18 academic session ( <b>partially completed</b> )
10. It is recommended that ECA seek to maintain continuity in the Director of Quality post, in line with the University guidelines on the School Director of Quality role.		The current Director Jill Burke has agreed to continue in Post.	<b>Complete</b>
Please report on steps taken to feedback to students on the outcomes of the review	12 months	The initial outcomes of the review have been communicated to student reps via the student-staff liaison committees. As the School of Design implements the changes outlined above we will continue to update students via these committees.	February 2018

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Review

14 week response on recommendation actions

TPR of: Ecological and Environmental Sciences (including with management)

Date of review: 27-28 March 2017

Date of 14 week response: 7<sup>th</sup> September 2017

The subject area is responsible for reporting on progress with all recommendations, including those remitted to other areas of the University for action. Please report on progress towards meeting each recommendation. Any urgent recommendation should be highlighted along with a deadline for response. If any recommendation has been fully addressed please record the action taken and date completed. Any barriers to progress should be highlighted on this report.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Timescale for completion</b>	<b>Comment on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion</b>	<b>Completion date</b>
1 The Review Team recommends that the subject area, with strong support from the School, proceed with the planning and introduction of the 1st year course Introduction to EES (IEES) in 2018/19 to help with building a community identity and embed core transferable skills.	For introduction in semester 1 2018/19	The future of the degree programme and synergies with the Biological Sciences curriculum are being investigated. Whilst the School supports in principal the creation of a new course, the staff resource needed to create and run it needs to be considered carefully. There has already been discussion between Degree Programme Convenor (DPC), Head of Teaching (HoT) and School of Biological Sciences regarding changes to other first year courses Origins and Diversity of Life (ODL) and Biology Ecology and Environment (BEE), making it even more pertinent that the new IEES course is taken forward. An EESTC (Ecological and Environmental Sciences Teaching Committee) meeting is planned for September 2017 and a working group will then report by the end of Semester 1 2017/18. The course proposal will be presented to the Board of Studies (BoS) for formal approval in February 2018 and implementation in Semester 1 2018/19.	
2 The Review Team recommends that the subject area revisits the possibility of introducing a 5-year UG Masters in Ecological Sciences through sharing of other Masters courses e.g. research methods in order to increase efficiency.	End of Semester 1 2017/18	The provision of integrated Masters programmes across the School are being reviewed during a project on learning, teaching, and assessment (LEA). In the meantime, the EESTC will discuss the possibility of a 5-year UG Masters in Ecological and Environmental Sciences (EES). Advice will be sought from those running other UG Masters within the School of GeoSciences and a decision will be made by the end of 2017/18 as to whether or not to proceed.	
3 The Review Team recommends that the EES management team	For introduction in 2019/20	The School supports a review of the 'with management programme' to set it in current day context. This will also be reviewed during the LEA review. A new	

<p>review the BSc EES with Management degree and investigate a range of alternative options for students wishing a more applied degree that integrates ecological and environmental sciences with resource management and applied social science.</p>		<p>member of staff with expertise in natural resource management, food security and policy will join the EES team in Semester 2 2017/18. This was in part-replacement for Dr. Ron Wilson, who retires at the end of October 2017. Discussions about the direction of the EES w/m degree programme will then take place with a view to inclusion a social science component by 2019/20.</p>	
<p>4 With regard to Tutors and Demonstrators, the Review Team recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tutors and Demonstrators should be involved in post-course review sessions as they gain valuable insight into the running of the course as well as the content.</li> <li>- Tutors and Demonstrators should receive formal feedback from the students that they teach – it was found that this would be valuable to Tutors and Demonstrators in terms of providing them with an indication of how they are performing.</li> <li>- Tutors and Demonstrators should receive clear guidance regarding marking of coursework to build confidence.</li> <li>- The School should also enhance the consistency of guidance in advance of each teaching session to ensure that the Tutors and Demonstrators are well informed of what is expected of them</li> </ul>	<p>For introduction in 2017/18</p>	<p>The PGR Office, and in particular, the Academic Tutor &amp; Demonstrating Representative will strongly encourage Course Organisers (Cos) to feedback to Tutors and Demonstrators. The Degree Programme Convenors will ensure that all COs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. (i) Hold post-course review sessions involving tutors and demonstrators</li> <li>ii. (ii) Provide tutors and demonstrators with written feedback from the students that they have taught</li> <li>iii. (iii) Provide tutors and demonstrators with written guidance regarding coursework marking and further verbal guidance as required</li> </ol>	
<p>5 The Review Team strongly recommends the introduction of</p>	<p>2018/19</p>	<p>We are looking for ways to provide a supportive environment for staff to improve their teaching excellence. We are investigating with the Institute of</p>	

regular Peer Observation of Teaching for all academic members of the teaching staff		Academic Development best practice (within and beyond the University) and will look to roll out a programme across the school. Currently, we are encouraging individual arrangements of peer observation until we realise a more formal plan.	
6 The Review Team strongly recommends student representation on school/subject level committees such as the Teaching Committee and others, where appropriate.	For introduction in 2017/18	Increasing student engagement is a priority in the School with recent activity including student presence on our staff hiring assessment. The school are also in the processes of changing how our Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) work with the aim of having broader student engagement. The Head of School (HoS), Director of Teaching (DoT), and Head of Student Services (HoSS) meet monthly with the Students' Association School Convenors to promote student engagement. The DPC will invite student representatives from both non-honours and honours years to attend part of each of the EESTC meetings.	
7 The Review Team recommends the subject area reviews current processes to ensure student and staff course/programme feedback is evaluated and any action taken in response is highlighted and fed-back to both students and staff effectively to close the Quality Assurance and Enhancement loop	Semester 1 2017/18	The EES team has followed School guidelines in regard to student feedback. Student-staff meetings have been held twice per semester, minutes detailing initial staff response were produced and circulated, and the Student Support Co-ordinator (SSC) subsequently gathered responses and actions which were made accessible on the School website. The DPC met with each year group at least once per semester to discuss the responses and actions and gather further feedback from students. The Teaching Organisation (TO) is, however, currently reviewing student-staff meetings to make them more streamlined, involve more student, and consistent across the School. The current proposal is to simplify them: COs and class reps will meet twice per course to sort out little details and the full SSLC will only hear about the resolution of these issues or just to cover issues which can't be resolved at course level. The SSLC will consist of the DPC, perhaps one other member of staff and the student year reps. This will be discussed at our second EESTC meeting in semester 1 2017/18.	
8 The Review Team strongly recommends that all Personal Tutors hold group meetings with mixed year groups as students who have had these meetings found them extremely beneficial.	For introduction in 2017/18	The Senior Personal Tutor will oversee that group meetings led individually or jointly take place as required.	
9 The Review Team recommends that the School introduce mechanisms to reward excellence in teaching and encourage	Ongoing	We are exploring further ways in which to judge teaching excellence across the School. Currently, during promotion rounds teaching contribution is clearly recognised in part based on student survey data and student teaching nominations. We are reviewing practices in other institutions as part of this process as we recognise the value to staff and the School.	

engagement with new technologies and innovation.			
10 The Review Team recommends that the subject area reviews communications to students regarding internships, funding sources, international exchanges and research placements to ensure equal and fair access to the information.	For introduction during 2017/18; ongoing in future academic sessions	The degree area has a Careers Representative that coordinates with the Careers Service and external organisations. An EES webpage with information about internships, potential funding and international exchanges will be developed during semester 1 2017/18. We intend to extend our international exchange programme over the next few years, if capacity allows.	
<b>Please report on steps taken to feedback to students on the outcomes of the review</b>	The DPC will meet with each year group during Semester 1 2017/18 to feedback the main commendations and recommendations from the review. This will include discussion of the initial actions and timescales outlined above.		