



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Senatus Academicus
Wednesday 7 February 2024 at 2-5 pm
G.03, 50 George Square or Teams

AGENDA

FORMAL MEETING OF SENATE		
1.	Convener's Communications – 15 minutes	Verbal Update
2.	Senate Minutes & e-Senate Reports – 10 minutes To approve <ul style="list-style-type: none">Minutes of Senate meeting held on 29 March 2023Report of E-Senate held from 26 April – 10 May 2023Minutes of Senate meeting held on 24 May 2023Report of E-Senate held from 13 – 27 September 2023Minutes of Senate meeting held on 11 October 2023Report of E-Senate held from 10-24 January 2024	S 23/24 2A
3.	Matters Arising – 15 minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none">Senate Actions Log (available via the Senate Members Portal)	Verbal Update
ITEMS TO COMMENT		
4.	Special Minute for former Senate member Professor John McCloskey - 5 minutes To approve	S 23/24 2B
5.	General Council Membership & Registration Ordinance – 10 minutes To comment	S 23/24 2C
6.	Senate Standing Committees - Mid-Year Reflection on Committee Priorities and Upcoming Business – 20 minutes To comment	S 23/24 2D
7.	Senate input to a proposed successor to the University's Climate Strategy – 20 minutes To comment	S 23/24 2E CLOSED
Break – 10 minutes		
ITEMS FOR APPROVAL		
8.	Senate External Review – formation of a Task and Finish Group – 15 minutes To approve	S 23/24 2F

9.	Senate Elections 2024/25 & Senate Standing Committee Elections 2024/25 – 15 minutes To approve	S 23/24 2G
10.	Curriculum Transformation Project – 30 minutes To approve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response from some Elected Academic Members of Senate to the Curriculum Transformation Briefing • Curriculum Transformation Project (CTP) Reflection paper 	S 23/24 2H S 23/24 2I
11.	Suppressed Items from Senate Business – 10 minutes To approve	S 23/24 2J
12.	Senate Role in the Response to People and Money External Review – 15 minutes To approve	S 23/24 2K
ITEMS FOR INFORMATION		
13.	Senate Standing Orders For information	S 23/24 2L
14.	Quality Enhancements and Standards Review Report For information	S 23/24 2M
ITEMS FOR NOTING		
15.	Research Strategy Group Report To note	S 23/24 2 2N
16.	A Member-Led Approach to Senate Effectiveness To note	S 23/24 2 2O
17.	Corrections and Qualifications to the External Senate Review Report To note	S 23/24 2 2P
18.	Revised paper deadlines for 22 May 2024 Senate meeting To note	S 23/24 2 2Q

Members attending the meeting in person are asked to please bring a device to enable them to access electronic voting which will be undertaken using Wooclap, if required.

Senate

7 February 2024

Senate Minutes and e-Senate Reports

Description of paper

1. The paper provides the minutes of Senate meetings held on 29 March 2023, 24 May 2023 and 11 October 2023. It also provides the reports of electronic business conducted between 26 April – 10 May 2023, 13 – 27 September 2023 and 10-24 January 2024.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval.

Discussion

3. Members were invited to electronically consider amendments to the minutes of the 29 March 2023 and 24 May 2023 meetings as per the action agreed by Senate at its 11 October 2023 meeting. The minutes of the 11 October meeting have been updated in response to corrections raised by members.
4. The report of electronic business for the April/May 2023, September 2023 and January 2024 meetings include a summary of comments raised as per the action agreed by Senate at its 11 October 2023 meeting.

Resource implications

5. None.

Risk management

6. Not applicable.

Equality & diversity

7. Not applicable.

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

8. Senate minutes are published on the Senate website:
[Senate agendas, papers and minutes](#).
9. Papers and minutes related to meetings of Senate Standing Committees have been circulated via email to Senate members.

Author

Senate Secretariat
February 2024

Freedom of Information

Open paper



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Senatus Academicus

Wednesday 29 March 2023 at 1:30-4:30pm

Online meeting

Microsoft Teams

UNCONFIRMED MINUTE

ATTENDEES: Peter Adkins, Steve Anderson, David Argyle, Michael Barany, Chris Beckett, Christine Bell, Shereen Benjamin, Daniel Bilc, Richard Blythe, Tom Booth, Julian Bradfield, Holly Branigan, Mary Brennan, Aidan Brown, Tom Bruce, Adam Budd, Celine Caquineau, Leigh Chalmers, Siddharthan Chandran, Alan Convery, Hope Conway-Gebbie, Sam Coombes, Mariana Costa Cruz Santos, Jeremy Crang, Juan Cruz, Sarah Cunningham-Burley, Jo Danbolt, Jamie Davies, Matuikuani Dax, Anne Desler, Charlotte Desvages, Simone Dimartino, James Dunlop, EUSA VP Education, Jite Eferakorho, Constantinos Eleftheriou, Daniel Friedrich, Stuart Gilfillan, Iain Gordon, Kim Graham, Liz Grant, Richard Gratwick, Yong Guo, Lorna Hamilton, Tobias Hansen, Tina Harrison, David Hay, Elaine Haycock-Stuart, James Hopgood, Jenny Hoy, Andrew Hudson, Emma Hunter, David Ingram, Aditi Jain, Tobias Kelly, Meryl Kenny, George Kinnear, David Langley, Dave Laurenson, Sam Maccallum, Antony Maciocia, Rebecca Marsland, Peter Mathieson (Convener), Alistair McCormick, Gavin McLachlan, Avery Meiksin, Carmel Moran, Steven Morley, Shatabdi Mukhopadhyay, Bryne Ngwenya, Robbie Nicol, Paul Norris, Matthew Novenson, Patrick Lennard, Ken Rice, Pablo Schyfter Camacho, Geoff Simm, Hamish Simpson, David Smith, Tim Stratford, Melissa Terras, Tamara Trodd, Uzma Tufail-Hanif, Jon Turner, Patrick Walsh, Stephen Warrington. Robyn Woof, Ben Wynne

IN ATTENDANCE: Sinead Docherty, Arlene Duffin, Lucy Evans, Olivia Hayes, David Matheson, Paul McGinty, Barry Neilson, Ella Ritchie, Tom Ward

APOLOGIES: Marialuisa Aliotta, Ruth Andrew, Matthew Bailey, Elizabeth Bomberg, Chandan Bose, Christina Boswell, Laura Bradley, John Cairns, Jane Calvert, Kevin Collins, Andrew Connor, Karen Dawson, John Devaney, Lawrence Dritsas, Paul Du Plessis, Murray Earle, Natasha Ellingham, Andrea English, Jay Evans, Darrick Evensen, Suzanne Ewing, Susan Farrington, Bob Fisher, Chris French, Benjamin Goddard, Pia Helbing, Melissa Highton, Aisha Holloway, Laura Jeffery, Zoeb Jiwaji, Linda Kirstein, Simone Lamont-Black, Steff Lewis, Wendy Loretto, Jason Love, Ewa Luger, Catherine Martin, Heather McQueen, Damian Mole, Andrew Morris, Susan Morrow, Jade Naulty, Conchur O'Bradaigh, Diana Paton, Sarah Prescott, Rebecca Reynolds, John Reynolds-Wright, Simon Riley, Niamh Roberts, Ewelina Rydzewska, Marion Schmid, Jo Shaw, Mike Shipston, Izabela Skowronska, James Smith, Sarah Stock, Jonathan Terry, Robert Thomas, Nadia Tuzi, Christopher Weir, Lauren Byrne, Ryan Wereski, Isi Williams, Mark Williams, Alper Yildirim, Ingrid Young,

The Convener, Principal Sir Professor Peter Mathieson, opened the meeting however the meeting did not reach quorum. The meeting is reconvened from 8 February with outstanding agenda items carried forward. Senate proceeded to consider items of business and any items of business deemed contentious would be held over to be considered by a future quorate meeting of Senate.

The Convener reminded members of the etiquette for online meetings including discouraging members from using the meeting chat to make substantial points, reminding them that the chat is subject to freedom of information requests. The Convener noted that Senate Support would manage any vote's use the Teams voting function, and that non-members in attendance should not take part in any voting that may take place.

The Convener extended his thanks to Mr Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services for his support of Senate. Mr Ward departs from the University at the end of the week.

1. Senate Minutes - S 22/23 4A

- Minutes of Senate meeting held on 8 February 2023

To approve

The following amendments to the minute were raised:

- A correction to include attendees who were in attendance but missing from the record.
- An amendment to item S22/23 3B to minute the concern raised regarding Personal Tutors assigned to transgender students.
- An amendment to item S22/23 3C to reflect the differing viewpoints on Ordinance 212.
- A request to include the rationale for not circulating the paper submitted for Item 9: Legal Context of Senate Motions. It was asserted in response that no amendment to this item should be made as the paper was not considered at the 8 February meeting. The member noted their agreement for this to be recorded under Matters Arising of the 29 March meeting.
- A request to revise the minute of S22/23 3D & 3E to reflect the critical tone of discussions.

A request was made to record the majority associated with votes undertaken at Senate. The Senate Clerk would investigate whether numbers can be included for previous meetings.

Senate deemed the 8 February minutes contentious. The minute will be revised in light of comments and presented for approval at a future meeting of Senate.

A member raised a discrepancy in the 12 October minute. The member requested that section 2.1 (Minutes of Senate meeting held on 12 October 2022) be amended by including the following text:

A number of amendments were submitted and incorporated in advance of the meeting. There was a discrepant recollection about paper 2I (point 10 of the minutes), namely whether Senate had agreed to “approve” the paper formally. This was clearly and distinctly recalled by the member raising the point, but not reflected in the informal meeting notes or draft minute. In the interest of time, the convener was asked to allow this to be noted without a formal motion to that effect, but declined to do so.

The revision was deemed uncontentious and, though Senate was not quorate, it agreed to accept the amendment to the 12 October minute.

2. Matters Arising - Verbal Update

- **Senate Elections and Amendment to Senate Election Regulations [Minutes of 8 February 2023 meeting of Senate, Item 5]**

Senate reached quorum during consideration of this item.

Ms Olivia Hayes, Clerk to Senate, provided an update on the Senate and Senate Standing Committee Elections. There were 130 vacancies on Senate with 98 nominations received. An early review of nominations indicate that an election would be held in the CAHSS non-Professorial category to determine successful candidates. An election would be held to determine the terms of office in the CAHSS Professorial, CSE non-Professorial and CSE Professorial categories. The nomination period closed at 12noon, Wednesday 29 March.

A member asked whether it was possible for all nominations in the Professorial category and the CMVM non-Professorial categories to be reopened.

Ms Hayes noted that significant effort had been made to generate interest in the elections and that a further extension to the nomination period would impact on the election timelines previously advertised as well as the support available to conduct the elections.

A member queried whether colleagues who hold an Honorary contract are eligible to stand for election to Senate. It was noted that the Senate Election Regulations state that academic staff members who hold a contract of employment issued by the University are eligible to stand for election to Senate. Academic Services agreed to confirm the eligibility of staff who hold an Honorary contract.

The nomination period for Senate Standing Committees has closed. An election would be held for the Senate Education Committee to determine successful candidates.

The results of the Senate and Senate Standing Committee elections would be declared and published by the 19 May.

A member raised concern regarding Court's decision to overturn a proposed amendment to the Senate Election Regulations approved by more than 80% of Senate at its 8 February meeting on the bases of advice provided by Academic Services, external legal advisors and Legal Services. It was acknowledged that Court has the authority to make this decision irrespective of legal advice. The member identified in a summary of legal advice which was provided in an open Court paper relating to the relevant Court meeting two factual errors which they considered significant, regarding what Ordinance 212 actually states regarding elected members and regarding the relationship between at-large elected Senate terms and the terms of Senate Assessors

The Convener noted that Court received legally privileged and confidential advice on the amendment and Court agreed not to adopt the amendment. The Convener agreed that Court would be advised of the challenge to the legal advice received, subject to feedback received from Legal Services on the comments raised by the Senate member.

The University Secretary agreed to return this item to Court noting the challenge to the legal advice and Court would be responsible for determining how to proceed.

- **External Review – update on timelines**

The Convener provided an update on the timelines for the completion of the Senate External Review. Due to a high level of engagement with the review, the timescales for presenting emerging findings and submission of the final report have been extended.

Senate would receive a presentation of emerging themes and findings at its meeting on 24 May with the final report to be received in June.

- **Legal Context of Senate Motions/ Context of Some Recent Member Contributed Papers**

A member noted that a paper titled *Legal Context of Senate Motions/ Context of Some Recent Member Contributed Papers* submitted for inclusion in the 8 February meeting and included on the 8 February agenda marked as 'to follow'. A revised version of this paper was submitted on 8 March but was not included on the 29 March agenda (which was a continuation of the February meeting) on the grounds that it was not part of Senate's business

in February. The authors objected to the assertion that the paper was not part of Senate's February business noting that it was listed on the 8 February agenda and not withdrawn by the authors. The paper recorded obstacles experienced in proposing a Senate response to the University travel policy and a pattern of questionable actions by the Senate Convener, and challenged representations of law and procedure offered to Senate in paper S 22/23 2B. The following concerns were noted on behalf of the paper authors:

- The authors raised concern that the University Secretary and Academic Services demanded changes to the paper submitted for 8 February as a condition of circulating it.
- The authors confirmed with Legal Services that there is no document formally approved in law, by Senate or by Court that provides a basis for not permitting the paper to be included.
- The authors raised objection to the decision to withdraw the paper from the 29 March meeting and requested that the paper be included in the 29 March meeting. The authors noted that the decision to withdraw the paper raises serious concerns with the actions of the Convener which suggest a desire to suppress criticism.

The following points were made:

- Legal advice had been obtained which stated that the Standing Orders can be relied on and are instructive and of assistance in determining which person or body is responsible for determining what matters are put before Senate at a meeting of Senate. This position is supported by advice from the University's Legal Services team and external legal advice. The Principal, as President of the Senate, had received professional legal advice on this issue and was entitled to rely on that advice.
- The Sustainable Travel Policy is a critical issue and the policy impacts on the ability of staff to undertake their job within a reasonable framework. There is a cumulative effect of policies, including the Sustainable Travel Policy, which Senate members would like an opportunity to discuss at Senate. It was noted by Legal Services that the legal advice provided did not state that any particular matters were unable to be discussed at Senate.

The Convener noted that an earlier version of this paper focussed on the author's opinions about legal matters which were contrary to the legal advice received, and that the decision not to circulate the paper was based on legal advice alleging that the paper fundamentally misrepresented the law and may materially misdirect Senate as to legal matters, rather than a desire to suppress criticism nor prevent discussion on particular topics as suggested.

The University Secretary claimed that the language within the paper could be damaging if received out of context and without accompanying advice from the University's Legal Services team.

The Convener would consider receiving the paper at a future meeting of Senate. Any future inclusion of the paper on a future Senate agenda would be accompanied by a paper prepared by Legal Services given ongoing concerns about the accuracy of the author's statements on legal issues.

3. Laigh Year Regulations - S 22/23 4G

To approve

Ms Olivia Hayes, Clerk to Senate, introduced this item which was presented to Senate for approval. Court and Senate are jointly responsible for approving the Laigh Year Regulations.

Senate reached quorum and approved the Laigh Year Regulations as presented.

4. Senate Oversight of the Curriculum Transformation Programme (CTP) - S 22/23 4B

To note and approve

This item was introduced by Dr Tamara Trodd. There was discussion on this item held at the 8 February meeting of Senate. The paper has been revised following the 8 February meeting and in light of constructive discussions held with colleagues in the interim on the wording of the motions presented.

Senate members made the following points:

- The National Student Survey results indicate that something within the existing model is not working and institutional oversight is required to enact change.
- Work is ongoing around the decolonisation of the curriculum and discussions on the urgency of the climate crisis, which students wish to see reflected in their studies.
- The CTP presents an opportunity for disciplines to come together
- Further work is required to support and understand the resourcing and skills required to support the project. Allowing for work on the digital strategy and systems improvements required for the project to continue is essential to ensuring these are ready and adequately tested ahead of being rolled out.
- There is a gap in information on the costs associated with the project, for example, the proportion of student numbers on challenge courses and the FTE staffing expected to support challenge courses. This information is required ahead of significant investment being made.
- The University's QA processes should support curriculum enhancement and development. It was queried whether QA processes are robust enough to support Schools where feedback indicates difficulties.
- Further engagement work will be undertaken by the CTP with Schools to consider how the framework can be adopted in specific disciplines and areas. This is also intended to establish pinch points where further work is required and to help Schools to understand the resourcing implications of the project.
- There is general uncertainty, confusion and a degree of fear around what is to come from the CTP. Senate members are eager for clarity on key points and details where concern has been raised to be able to consider its support for the work to progress. Members raised concern regarding the transparency of the project and welcomed an ongoing dialogue on the development of the project.

Following discussion, Senate approved the amended paper on the following basis:

- It agreed to adopt Motion 3.1 as presented in the paper.
- It agreed to adopt the following amendment to Motion 3.2:

That the delayed implementation of the programme be used as an opportunity to review the CTP approach in order to minimise the risk of the final CTP design failing to meet approval with Senate. The review should articulate the key features of CTP as it is currently envisaged, and how it will improve the Edinburgh curriculum, with reference to specific features of the proposed new degree programme design; and what arrangements are contemplated for staffing and resourcing new curriculum and course models and associated features including institutional placements?

- It agreed to adopt the following amendment to Motion 3.3:

	<p><i>That the outcome of this review be discussed at the October 2023 meeting of Senate along with a motion to approve continuing the programme with the direction of travel subject to any revisions arising from the review.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It agreed to adopt Motion 3.4 as presented in the paper.
<p>5.</p>	<p>Senate Role in the Response to People and Money Crisis - S 22/23 4C To note and approve¹</p> <p>Following a short break, Senate did not reach quorum and was inquorate for the remainder of the meeting. Senate agreed to proceed to consider non-contentious items of business.</p> <p>The Convener, with the agreement of the paper authors, provided Senate with an update on developments related to People and Money which have taken place since the 8 February meeting of Senate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An external review into People and Money is in the final stages of being commissioned by the University Court. Paul McGinty, Head of Internal Audit, confirmed that they are proceeding to the invitation to tender stage and that a Senate Assessor to Court will be engaged in the selection of the external reviewer. • The Principal has engaged Robert Fraser, former Director of Finance at Glasgow and Manchester, as an advisor to the Principal on operational matters relating to the handling of People and Money. This appointment followed consultation with an informal advisory group of some of the independent members of the Court and is separate to the external review and intended to provide support on immediate actions to support improvement. • The University has engaged its external auditors to conduct additional assurance work to understand the University's auditing position considering People and Money. <p>The authors introduced the paper. The paper outlines the significant and ongoing consequences and costs resulting from the implementation of the People and Money infrastructure. The paper seeks to formally ensure Senate is kept informed of and involved in the review of People and Money.</p> <p>Though Senate was no longer quorate, the Convener invited Senate to approve the motions outlined in the paper. All motions were deemed non-contentious and the paper was approved.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Supporting a Negotiated Resolution to Industrial Action as an Academic Priority - S 22/23 4D To approve</p> <p>This item was introduced by Dr Michael Barany. The paper asks Senate to consider the current industrial action, a continuation of sector-wide industrial disputes of many years running, as bearing fundamentally on the academic mission of the university. The paper outlines a number of steps to support a negotiated resolution in the best interest of our academic mission.</p> <p>The Convener of the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC), Dr Paul Norris, provided an update on decisions taken at a recent meeting of APRC. The Committee considered and approved two temporary variations to academic regulations to mitigate against the impact of disruption on students, in line with the Taught Assessment Regulations:</p>

¹ Court has approved the commissioning, scope, and timescale of an external review of People at Money at its 27 February meeting. This scope includes the impact on academic matters and comments previously provided by Senate. The commissioning and associated costs of the review, and decision on handling of outcomes, sits within the scope of Court's powers rather than being a matter for Senate.

- APRC approved a temporary variation to permit schools to make changes after the start of a course without the approval of College or consultation with students and external examiners.
- APRC approved a temporary variation to relax the requirement to consult External Examiners when setting examination papers.

The Committee agreed that the temporary variations were urgent and necessary. The temporary variations and guidance on the application of these were communicated to Schools last week.

Though Senate was no longer quorate, the Convener invited Senate to approve the motions in turn.

Senate considered motion 2.1 to be non-contentious and this was approved.

Senate considered elements of motion 2.2 to be contentious.
Senate approved an amendment to split motion 2.2 as follows:

2.2a: University management has expressed a commitment to mitigate disruption due to strike action. Senate believes that the only sustainable and effective long-term mitigation in the best interest of students and the university's academic mission is a negotiated resolution that minimises the fact of strike action in the first place.

2.2b: It is a disservice to students, staff, our communities, and our public mission to limp along from strike to strike without comprehensively addressing the underlying issues at stake.

Senate considered motion 2.2a to be non-contentious and this was approved.

Senate considered motion 2.2.b to be contentious and this was not considered. This motion would be considered at the next quorate meeting of Senate. The following comments were made on this motion:

- The use of the word 'disservice' is not reflective of the efforts by staff in engaging with and attempting to resolve the dispute.
- Student members agreed that relying on mitigations rather than resolving the dispute was a disservice.

Senate considered motion 2.3 to be non-contentious and this was approved.

Senate considered motion 2.4 to be contentious and this was not considered. This motion would be considered at the next quorate meeting of Senate. The following comments were made on this motion:

- There may be unintended consequences of adopting this motion which are not adequately understood. This includes the challenge in achieving and maintaining quorum at Senate, which would be a significant risk to considering time-sensitive and critical decisions as proposed by motion 2.4.

Senate considered motion 2.5 to be contentious and this was not considered. This motion would be considered at the next quorate meeting of Senate.

Senate considered the overarching motion 2.6 and sub-motions 2.6.1 and 2.6.4 to be contentious and these were not considered. These motions would be considered at the next quorate meeting of Senate. The following comments were made on these motions:

- The University is part of national pay bargaining and therefore unable to deviate from the pay scales agreed via this process.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The restoration of pension benefits is dependent on the valuation of the scheme and therefore a decision regarding the benefits and contributions is a decision for the members of the pension scheme. <p>Senate considered motions 2.6.2 and 2.6.3 to be non-contentious and these were approved.</p>
7.	<p>Honorary Degrees Withdrawal Procedure - S 22/23 4E To approve</p> <p>This item was introduced by Ms Lucy Evans, Deputy Secretary, Students. Ms Evans noted that a review of the Procedure was undertaken following Senate's approval to withdraw an Honorary Degree and comments relating to the associated Procedure. Under the revised Procedure the decision to withdraw an Honorary Degree would remain with Senate.</p> <p>Though Senate was no longer quorate, the Convener invited Senate to approve the paper. The item was deemed non-contentious and approved.</p>
8.	<p>Senate Standing Committee Membership – outstanding membership items - S 22/23 4F To note and discuss</p> <p>This item was introduced by Mr Tom Ward, Director of Academic Services. This paper provides Senate with an update on the motion from the 12 October 2022 meeting, for the Conveners of the three Senate Standing Committees to propose reasonable additions to their Committees to improve Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME), student, and trade union representation.</p> <p>Mr Ward noted that the principle of the motion is supported, however the mechanisms to achieve this are challenging. In considering the motion, Conveners had consulted with relevant departments for input, including Human Resources and the Students' Association. There is a lack of clarity on how to adequately achieve the principle of the motion and ensuring that other groups with protected characteristics are appropriately represented. The paper authors would value the input of the external review in achieving Senate's request and they recommend that the motion be held over until the external review of Senate has concluded so that changes to membership can be considered as part of the actions and recommendations arising from the review.</p> <p>Senate members made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The University's commitment to decolonisation should extend to the composition of its Committees, including Senate Standing Committees. Senate first expressed its support for the motion at the 11 August meeting, and reiterated its support again at the 12 October meeting. Members noted that the objections have been raised at previous meetings and there has been adequate time and latitude for Conveners to consider and make progress on the actions approved by Senate and as outlined in the motion. The failure to progress the actions raises concern regarding the delegation of decision making to Standing Committees.

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL OR NOTING

9.	<p>Research Strategy Group update - S 22/23 4H To note</p> <p>Senate noted the paper.</p> <p>Senate members raised the following points on the item:</p>
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The report does not include reference to anti-casualisation measures and it would be useful for the Research Strategy Group to consider using REF income towards anti-casualisation measures. |
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The Provost, Professor Kim Graham noted that work in this area is underway and being led by the Director of Human Resources, James Saville.



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Senatus Academicus

Wednesday 24 May 2:00-5:00pm

Online meeting

Microsoft Teams

Unconfirmed Minute

ATTENDEES: Marialuisa Aliotta, Arianna Andreangeli, Ruth Andrew, Mohammad Amir Anwar, David Argyle, Michael Barany, Daniel Bilc, Richard Blythe, Tom Booth, Conchur O Bradaigh, Julian Bradfield, Holly Branigan, Aidan Brown, Adam Budd, Jane Calvert, Tony Carbery, Alan Convery, Hope Conway-Gebbie, Sam Coombes, Miguel Costa-Gomes, Jeremy Crang, Hilary Critchley, Juan Cruz, Sarah Cunningham-Burley, Jo Danbolt, Jamie Davies, Matuikuani Dax, Anne Desler, John Devaney, Paul du Plessis, Murray Earle, Jite Eferakorho, Constantinos Eleftheriou, Natasha Ellingham, Mark Evans, Bob Fisher, Chris French, Daniel Friedrich, Stuart Gilfillan, Benjamin Goddard, Iain Gordon, Kim Graham, Liz Grant, Richard Gratwick, Lorna Hamilton, Uzma Tufail-Hanif, Colm Harmon, Tina Harrison, David Hay, Elaine Haycock-Stuart, Margarete Heck, Thorunn Helgason, Sarah Henderson, Caroline Heycock, James Hopgood, Jenny Hoy, Andrew Hudson, Emma Hunter, Gbenga Ibikunle, David Ingram, Aditi Jain, Laura Jeffery, Kirsten Jenkins, Tobias Kelly, Meryl Kenny, George Kinnear, Linda Kirstein, Dave Laurenson, Patrick Lennard, Steff Lewis, Ashley Lloyd, Wendy Loretto, Ewa Luger, Sam Maccallum, Antony Maciocia, Rebecca Marsland, Peter Mathieson, Keith Matthews, Gavin McLachlan, Heather McQueen, Avery Meiksin, Steven Morley, Jade Naulty, Pau Navarro, Paul Norris, Diana Paton, Rebecca Reynolds, Ken Rice, Simon Riley, Sabine Rolle, Marion Schmid, Bernd Schroers, Matthias Schwannauer, Hamish Simpson, David Smith, Antonella Sorace, Tim Stratford, Gavin Sullivan, Jonathan Terry, Alex Thomson, Tamara Trodd, Jon Turner, Nadia Tuzi, Jeremy Upton, Jose Vazquez-Boland, Patrick Walsh, Stephen Warrington, Christopher Weir, Mark Williams, Ben Wynne, Alper Yildirim

IN ATTENDANCE: Kim Ansell, Lisa Dawson, Sinead Docherty, Arlene Duffin, Lucy Evans, Patrick Hadoke, Olivia Hayes, David Langley, Kathryn Nicol, Dean Pateman, Ella Ritchie, Jo Roger

APOLOGIES: Peter Adkins, Shereen Benjamin, Chandan Bose, Mary Brennan, Celine Caquineau, Leigh Chalmers, Siddharthan Chandran, Dylan Clements, Andrew Connor, Charlotte Desvages, Simone Dimartino, Lawrence Dritsas, Agata Dunsmore, Andrea English, Jay Evans, Suzanne Ewing, Manuel Fernández-Götz, Aisha Holloway, Simone Lamont-Black, Catherine Martin, Damian Mole, Andrew Morris, Susan Morrow, Robbie Nicol, Wayne Powell, Sarah Prescott, Niamh Roberts, Jo Shaw, Tobias Schwarz, Geoff Simm, Melissa Terras, Mike Shipston, Ryan Wereski, Isi Williams, Ingrid Young

The Convener, Principal Professor Sir Peter Mathieson, opened the meeting and confirmed that Senate had reached quorum. The Convener reminded members of the etiquette for online meetings – including requesting that members do not use the meeting chat to make substantial points, reminding members that the chat is subject to freedom of information requests, and noting that Senate Support would manage any votes using the Teams voting function, and that non-members in attendance should not participate in voting.

Senate received a presentation with the emerging findings of the Senate External Effectiveness Review ahead of the formal meeting with a detailed discussion on the review and recommendations to take place following the final report being received in July.

The Convener welcomed Advance HE consultants, Professor Ella Ritchie and Dr David Langley and Kim Ansell, to the meeting and extended his thanks to them and Hillary Gyebi-Ababio on behalf of the University for their work in undertaking the External Review of Senate.

1. Presentation: Emerging findings of the Senate External Effectiveness Review

To note and comment

Senate received a presentation from Professor Ritchie, lead consultant for Advance HE, which provided an overview of the approach and emerging themes from the externally facilitated review. Professor Ritchie extended her thanks to Senate and Standing Committee members on behalf of Advance HE for taking time to contribute to the review. Professor Ritchie also thanked Academic Services staff for their support throughout the review.

The following key points were made:

- The support provided to Senate by Academic Services staff including Olivia Hayes and formerly by Tom Ward was noted as being an asset to Senate.
- The methodology used by the review included two surveys: one of Senate members and a second of Standing Committee members, a review of documentation, observation of Senate and Standing Committee meetings and individual interviews. The strong engagement with the survey along with overall review methodology provided a rich picture of Senate.
- Academic Governance is working well in some areas, with the majority view reflecting that Senate operates in the interests of the wider University rather than the interests of individual members'. The overall view is that Standing Committees add value to decision making processes.
- Some areas are not working well and there may be benefits seen by making changes to the operation and scope of Senate, the focus and outcomes coming from Senate, culture and links to Colleges, Schools and Court.
- An emerging theme is on the culture of Senate and it was observed that it is challenging to conduct constructive debate around core issues. Discussion was observed as being confrontational with the use of the chat function during meetings detracting from valuable strategic discussions. Respecting agenda and meeting timings would aid in creating trust, where there is currently a culture of openly questioning of the value of Senate among members.
- An emerging theme is on the reputation of Senate and there is a risk of Senate becoming unrepresentative of the academy. This is reflected in the lack of attendance at meetings and frequent quoracy issues. There was some evidence of Senate views being side-lined, even when the opinion was strong and broad. There would be benefit in building the reputation and culture of Senate across the University.
- An emerging theme is on student voice at Senate. There is a lack of profile and visibility of student matters, which affects engagement and trust. This was particularly seen among student members who are not representatives of the Student Association and who struggled to keep track of the progress of issues.
- An emerging theme is on enablers at Senate. At present, operational matters dominate strategic discussion and detract from focus on strategic issues. A focus on detailed procedural matters alienates staff and is usually unproductive. Greater visibility of professional services leadership on Senate and clarifying the scope and boundaries of Senate and its relationship with Schools and Colleges would be useful.
- An emerging theme is on the Senate Standing Committees. Overall the Committees generally work well, however there would be value in strengthening connectivity between Senate and its Committees.
- Emerging themes including the University's focus on EDI matters was not visible as part of academic governance during the review. There is a limited research agenda at Senate, despite the promotion of research being one of Senate's statutory functions.
- A range of emerging recommendations were outlined, as presented in the slides, these cover the following broad areas: a change to allow Senate to focus on the academic mission; an enhanced role of the senior leadership team on Senate to create more collegiality and cohesion across Schools, Colleges and departments; increased visibility of the agenda setting process; an increased profile of student matters at Senate; discussion of research strategy; composition of Senate; logistical enablers to support operational effectiveness of Senate; a review of Senate induction; and an expansion of support provided to Senate by Academic Services.
- A range of emerging suggestions were outlined, as presented in the slides, these covered the following broad areas: the balance of activity between Standing Committees; strengthening links between Court and Senate; empowering subject and School leaders to help formulate

feedback or steer policy; Senate membership as part of the WAM; and increased promotion of the work and benefits of Senate.

Professor Ritchie invited initial comments from the floor. The following points were made:

- The purpose of Senate was raised as a key area of concern with recent focus on legalistic and non-academic issues. It was noted that increasing the time spent on core issues relating to Senate's remit would be useful.
- A more constructive approach to the debate in Senate would be valuable. An approach which sees speakers taking a collegial approach to solving issues was suggested.

Professor Ritchie invited further comments via email to ella.ritchie@ncl.ac.uk by 7 June. The full report would be provided by early July with the report and recommendations to be considered at the next meeting of Senate.

FORMAL MEETING OF SENATE

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

The Convener opened the formal meeting and reminded members of the etiquette for online meetings. He discouraged members from using the meeting chat to make substantial points and reminded them that the chat is subject to freedom of information requests. The Convener noted that Senate Support would manage any votes required using the Teams voting function, and that non-members in attendance should not take part in any voting that may take place.

Members were asked to be mindful of time when making comments.

2. Convener's Communications - Verbal update

The Convener made the following points:

- People and Money continues to be a focus for the Senior Leadership Team. The external advisor engaged to provide confidential support to the Principal on People and Money has shared recommendations for improvement which are in the process of being shared with and implemented by the relevant leads for People and Money. It was acknowledged that issues relating to People and Money are not resolved, however progress towards addressing issues with means of measuring the progress of mitigations are in place.
- Industrial Action and the Marking and Assessment Boycott (MAB) are a focus for the Senior Leadership Team. The University put forward a proposal to the Edinburgh branch of UCU that the proposed 50% deduction of pay would not be implemented for any staff member if the work of graduating students and students with critical assessments were marked. Though initial discussions with the local branch were positive, the national UCU body did not permit a ballot on this to be undertaken. The Senior Leadership Team are engaged with UCU Scotland with the same resolution put forward where it can be guaranteed that work for the identified cohorts is completed after 4 July. The University is awaiting a response to this offer from the unions.
The Senior Leadership Team are very distressed by the messages from students and their families on the prospect of not graduating and are seeking any avenue to compromise on this. The University has agency over the extent of pay to withhold and is seeking a local compromise if the conditions of the offer are met.
- The rapid growth of Artificial Intelligence and tools such as Chat GPT is a focus with the implications for Universities of these still being considered and explored. It is anticipated that this may return to Senate in the future.

The Convener invited comments and the following points were made:

- The guidance produced by the University on the use of AI tools is very useful. Thanks and congratulations were extended to the colleagues involved in drafting this.
- A query was raised on how and when Senate can expect to receive the People and Money update referred to by the Convener and to be involved in the P and M response as approved at our previous meeting. The Convener said he did not know, and agreed to discuss with necessary colleagues, with any updates likely to be circulated electronically.

- Media reports suggest that the University has committed to all work being marked. The Convener noted that the 4 July is the date by which the full impact of the MAB would be felt, as this is the date publicised when all awards and course results should have been communicated to students, and that the University would be willing to waive pay deductions for all staff if the work of graduating students is marked. He noted that the local solution proposed is intended to protect these students from the impact of the MAB.
- A student member reflected on their experience and noted that since commencing their programme in 2019 every semester has been impacted by industrial action or Covid. The student raised a concern over allegations regarding the sexual behaviour of some staff hired in teaching positions and noted concern regarding a funding cut for the Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre in the context of an alleged pay rise for the Principal. The Convener expressed his regret and apologies that Industrial Action and Covid has impacted on their entire studies. The Convener said that the news story reporting on his salary is factually incorrect. The Deputy Secretary, Students noted that a meeting is being held imminently with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee to discuss the funding cuts. The Deputy Secretary, Students agreed to report back to Senate on this in due course.

3. **Senate Minutes - S 22/23 5A**

- Minutes of Senate meeting held on 8 February 2023
- Minutes of Senate meeting held on 29 March 2023
- Report of E-Senate held from 26 April – 10 May 2023

To approve

Senate approved the minutes of the meeting held 8 February 2023 as presented.

A significant number of detailed amendments to the minutes of the meeting held 29 March 2023 were raised as follows:

Matters Arising: Senate Elections and Amendment to Senate Election Regulations

A concern was raised regarding Court's decision to overturn a proposed amendment to the Senate Election Regulations approved by more than 80% of Senate at its 8 February meeting on the basis of advice provided by Academic Services and legal advisors that contained at least two significant factual errors. In the open Court paper relating to the relevant Court meeting, Court was given factually incorrect information about what Ordinance 212 states regarding elected members and about the relationship between at-large elected Senate terms and the terms of Senate Assessors

Matters Arising: Legal Context of Senate Motions/ Context of Some Recent Member Contributed Papers

It was noted that there was a paper titled Legal Context of Senate Motions/ Context of Some Recent Member Contributed Papers submitted for inclusion in the 8 February meeting and included on the 8 February agenda marked as 'to follow'. A revised version of this paper was submitted on 8 March but was not included on the 29 March agenda (which was a continuation of the February meeting) on the grounds that it was not part of Senate's business in February. The authors objected to the assertion that the paper was not part of Senate's February business, noting that it was listed on the 8 February agenda and not withdrawn by the authors. The paper recorded obstacles experienced in proposing a Senate response to the University travel policy and a pattern of questionable actions by the Senate convener, and challenged representations of law and procedure offered to Senate in paper S 22/23 2B.

The following concerns were noted on behalf of the paper authors:

- The authors raised concern that the University Secretary and Academic Services demanded changes to -the paper submitted for 8 February as a condition of circulating it.
- The authors confirmed with Legal Services that there is no document formally approved in law, by Senate or by Court that provides a basis for not permitting the paper to be included.

- The authors raised objection to the decision to withdraw the paper from the 29 March meeting and requested that the paper be included in the 29 March meeting. The authors noted that the decision to withdraw the paper raises serious concerns with the actions of the Convener which suggest a desire to suppress criticism.

The following points were made:

- Legal advice had been obtained which stated that the Standing Orders can be relied on and are instructive and of assistance in determining which person or body is responsible for determining what matters are put before Senate at a meeting of Senate. This position is supported by advice from the University's Legal Services team and external legal advice. The Principal, as President of the Senate, had received professional legal advice on this issue and was entitled to rely on that advice.
- The Sustainable Travel Policy is a critical issue and the policy impacts on the ability of staff to undertake their job within a reasonable framework. There is a cumulative effect of policies, including the Sustainable Travel Policy, which Senate members would like an opportunity to discuss at Senate. It was noted by Legal Services that the legal advice provided did not state that any particular matters were unable to be discussed at Senate.

The Convener noted that an earlier version of this paper focussed on the author's opinions about legal matters which were contrary to the legal advice received, and that the decision not to circulate the paper was based on legal advice alleging that the paper fundamentally misrepresented the law and may materially misdirect Senate as to legal matters, rather than a desire to suppress criticism nor prevent discussion on particular topics as suggested.

The University Secretary claimed that the language within the paper could be damaging if received out of context and without accompanying advice from the University's Legal Services team.

The Convener would consider receiving the paper at a future meeting of Senate. Any future inclusion of the paper on a future Senate agenda would be accompanied by a paper prepared by Legal Services given ongoing concerns about the accuracy of the author's statements on legal issues.

Item 6: Supporting a Negotiated Resolution to Industrial Action as an Academic Priority - S 22/23 4D

The paper asks Senate to consider the current industrial action, a continuation of sector-wide industrial disputes of many years running, as bearing fundamentally on the academic mission of the university.

The following comments were made on this motion:

- The use of the word 'disservice' is not reflective of the efforts by staff in engaging with and attempting to resolve the dispute.
- From a student perspective, continuing to rely on mitigations rather than directly resolving the dispute was indeed a disservice.

Item 8: Senate Standing Committee Membership – outstanding membership items - S 22/23 4F

Senate first expressed its support for the motion at the 11 August meeting, and affirmed it again by majority vote at the 12 October meeting, during which Senate already heard many of the objections repeated here. There has been adequate time and latitude for Conveners to consider and make progress on the actions approved by Senate and as outlined in the motion, and failure to do so raises concerns about the legitimacy of committees' delegated decision-making.

"As Senate was no longer quorate, the Convener invited Senate to reach a decision on the paper. The item was deemed contentious and no action agreed."

Senate agreed to consider the amendments received electronically subsequent to the meeting. The formal approval of the 29 March minute would be deferred until the next Ordinary meeting.

	<p>The Report of E-Senate held from 26 April – 10 May 2023 was not considered and would be carried forward to the next Ordinary meeting.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Matters Arising - Verbal update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senate Elections and Amendment to Senate Election Regulations [Minutes of 29 March 2023 meeting of Senate, Matters Arising] <p>The Convener noted that consideration of this item would be covered under Item 19: Senate and Senate Standing Committee Election Results 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senate Standing Committees membership – outstanding issues [Minutes of 29 March 2023 meeting of Senate, Item 8] <p>The Convener noted that consideration of this item would be covered under Item 15: Senate Standing Committee Membership – recommendations</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Supporting a Negotiated Resolution to Industrial Action as an Academic Priority - S 22/23 5B To approve</p> <p>This item was received at the reconvened meeting held on 29 March. However as Senate was not quorate and some items were deemed contentious, the paper is returned to Senate for consideration.</p> <p>Professor Diana Paton introduced the paper which was presented to Senate for approval. The paper outlines a number of steps to support a negotiated resolution in the best interest of the academic mission. This is the result of the long term degradation of pay and conditions within the higher education sector and that the current industrial action, including the marking and assessment boycott, can only be resolved with a long term pay and conditions solution.</p> <p>Professor Paton outlined that Senate approved motions 2.1, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6.2 and 2.6.3 at the 29 March meeting. The previous approval of motion 2.3 asks that the University Executive concentrate efforts on promoting a negotiated national resolution. An update on this progress of this action was requested.</p> <p>Professor Paton outlined that decisions on variations to regulations resulting from Industrial Action are too important to be considered solely by APRC, and these should be considered by full Senate. Should Motion 2.4 be carried, this could require additional emergency meetings of Senate.</p> <p>The Convener of Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC), Dr Paul Norris, provided an overview of the temporary variations approved by APRC. The decisions taken by APRC are in line with the authority as given in Regulations 70 and 71 of the Taught Assessment Regulations. The timing of APRC's decision was the point at which decisions were required due to disruption to assessments that were taking place, including oral assessments, and in time for Boards of Examiners to have adequate time to prepare ahead of Boards being held in June. It is likely that further meetings to consider temporary variations will be necessary over the coming months. Following feedback from APRC members, the Convener agreed that the Committee would discuss the handling of decisions relating to industrial action at the next meeting of APRC.</p> <p>Senate members raised the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EUSA VP Education strongly conveyed their concern regarding the impact of Motion 2.4 on students. The variations approved by APRC were noted as being insufficient to fully mitigate against the impact of industrial action, which has had a significant impact in 2022/23 and throughout their studies. They reflected on the solidarity of students with the UCU fight, however noted the approval of Motion 2.4 would have a significant and detrimental impact on students and erode staff/student relations. • A query was made on the ability of Senate to resolve an industrial action dispute and to whether Senate was an appropriate forum to discuss this. The Convener stated that though some motions are outside the remit of Senate and some actions are not deliverable, Senate can express its view on the actions requested. It was stated in response that Senate approved uncontroversial motions contained within the paper at its 29 March meeting,

establishing that industrial action and the university's response are matters of Senate interest.

- A concern was raised regarding the maintenance of academic standards in approving temporary variations. Members noted concern among non-Senatorial colleagues that the temporary variations do not uphold academic standards nor meet the requirements for external accrediting bodies. The Deputy Vice-Principal, Students (Engagement) noted that the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) has confirmed that it is satisfied with the variations approved and is content that the University is maintaining academic standards. Boards of Examiners retain responsibility for reaching decisions under the temporary variations and in line with any external accreditation requirements.
- Boards of Examiners will be under pressure to utilise the temporary variations and concern was noted regarding the impact on appeals. The guidance produced to accompany the temporary variations provides Boards with explanation on the information required where they do not apply the temporary variations.
- The impact of industrial action on lost learning was raised. There is concern among colleagues that missed education cannot be appropriately mitigated and this will have an impact on students in later years.
- The impact of industrial action has been ongoing for a number of years and the University has a duty to mitigate against impact to students on a staffing matter. The mitigations approved by APRC are taken to be robust, proportionate and appropriate to supporting students through a period of disruption. It is necessary for APRC to be able to take agile and quick decision making and the prospect of emergency meetings of Senate was flagged as a concern.
- The financial implications for specific cohorts were raised. There may be a disproportionate impact on international students who are unable to graduate and who must return to Edinburgh to undertake further study.
- The paper was originally presented to Senate on 8 February. The placement of this item on previous meeting agendas and chairing of meetings were noted as a barrier to having this item considered sooner. The Convener noted that his role is to allow Senate members to have their views heard.
- A member who serves as an elected member on APRC, reflected on their experience of decision making at APRC. The member explained that final wordings were not formally approved at the recent meeting considering exceptions, and that there were unresolved questions about the proposed mitigations. The Convener of APRC noted the feedback raised and agreed that he would discuss the handling of decisions at the next meeting of APRC. It was suggested by a non-APRC member that the APRC Convener may have erred in assuming the mitigations were completely agreed when not all members of the Committee felt that way.
- A question was raised on how the Academic Contingency Group (ACG) fits into the University governance structure, specifically querying the group's membership and lack of transparency. The Convener of APRC confirmed that this Group is comprised of individuals in key roles across the University and is a practical way of achieving discussion on key issues affecting multiple areas.
- A concern was raised regarding the tone of contributions from some members and the disparaging comments made regarding the motivations of individual colleagues, without identifying what comments were thought to be disparaging or of concerning tone.

Following discussion, Senate moved to vote on the remaining motions contained within the paper

Motion 2.2b was deemed uncontroversial and Senate agreed to adopt the motion as presented in the paper.

An amendment to Motion 2.4 was moved and seconded. It was proposed that the motion be revised to:

2.4.1: As any academic policy changes or exceptions necessarily trade off with the primary goal of promoting a negotiated resolution, Senate expects strike-related concessions to be presented to Senate as a whole for approval, and this supersedes the delegation of authority to Senate standing committees where applicable. As with other matters approved by the whole Senate, it is

anticipated that the relevant committee (typically APRC) would develop and approve recommendations; the Exception Committee retains its powers to approve exceptional urgent cases that cannot await full Senate consideration.

2.4.2: Senate notes that APRC considered a suite of variations to the Taught Assessment Regulations at its 2 May meeting (APRC 22/23 8B). These have not been approved by Senate and are therefore not in force until approved by a vote of full Senate.

The Convener received legal advice, which he chooses to accept, on the legality of Motion 2.4.2. The advice states that motion 2.4.2 as presented is not lawful. Senate cannot retrospectively withdraw the decisions taken by APRC which are in line with the delegated authority as it currently stands. Any decision to withdraw the delegation of authority would apply prospectively. Therefore, this motion would not be presented to Senate for a decision.

A member noted in response that the assertion that 2.4.2 is not lawful reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of the motion, as the motion is not intended to be a retrospective action. The practice of suppressing motions on the basis of secret legal advice was also questioned.

Senate undertook a vote on Motion 2.4 as presented in the paper. 62% of members did not support adopting the motion as presented in the paper.

Ahead of a vote on Motion 2.5, the Director HR Partnering: Professional Services provided an update on the grade scale review which will consider the pay across all grade points. The actions contained within the motion pre-empt the outcome of the review and it is not possible to commit to what specific outcomes may arise from the review at this stage.

It agreed by a majority vote of 67% to adopt Motion 2.5 as presented in the paper.

Ahead of a vote on Motion 2.6.1, the Principal claimed that the action requested in the motion is not deliverable by individual employers and he cannot publicly commit to this, however Senate can express its view. The University is part of national pay bargaining at the request of the trade unions.

It agreed by a majority vote of 64% to adopt Motion 2.6.1 as presented in the paper

Ahead of a vote on Motion 2.6.4, the Principal noted that the restoration of pension benefits is a matter for the pension trustees and he cannot publically commit to this. However, Senate can convey its opinion and it is at the discretion of the trustee to reach these decisions.

It agreed by a majority vote of 71% to adopt Motion 2.6.4 as presented in the paper

6. Conferment of degrees for undergraduate Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (MVM) students - S 22/23 5C CLOSED

For approval

This closed item was presented to Senate for approval. The paper set out the requirement for Senate to confer degrees on a group of students out with the normal Senate Graduation Meetings.

Members were invited to comment on the paper and no comments were received.

Senate approved the paper as presented.

7. Honorary Degrees - S 22/23 5D CLOSED

For approval

The Deputy Secretary, Students introduced this closed item which was presented to Senate for approval. The paper lists the nominations for award of Honorary Degrees and Fellowships in the next academic year.

	<p>Members were invited to comment on the paper. The presenter was thanked for effectively implementing the changes to documentation of honorary degree candidates for Senate discussed in a previous meeting.</p> <p>Senate approved the paper as presented.</p>
8.	<p>Court Resolution – Personal Chairs - S 22/23 5E To comment</p> <p>This item was presented to Senate for consultation in accordance with the procedures for the creation of Resolutions as set out in the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.</p> <p>Members were invited to comment on the paper and no comments were received.</p>
9.	<p>Proposal to extend Scotland’s Rural College’s (SRUC) Accredited Institution status to Postgraduate Research Provision - S 22/23 5F For approval</p> <p>The Deputy Vice-Principal, Students (Engagement) introduced this item which was presented to Senate for approval. The paper contains a proposal to build on the long-standing relationship with SRUC by extending the current Accredited Institution status of Scotland’s Rural College’s (SRUC) from taught degrees to include the provision of University of Edinburgh validated postgraduate research provision. There are already a number of joint PhD’s with SRUC and this proposal would delegate awarding responsibility and offer accredited status to SRUC and these programmes.</p> <p>Senate members made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A query was raised regarding the review processes and the suitability of holding an interim review at the mid-way point to ensure procedures continue to align with those of the University. In response it was noted that there is a five year review cycle and that SRUC is subject to the same QA arrangements as the University which includes an annual review. • A query was raised on whether there is desire from SRUC to extend to wider subject areas. In response it was noted that SRUC have a defined scope and remit and have not indicated a desire to extend beyond the defined subject areas. SRUC has put forward the request and the University has not sought to define or dictate what provision is considered. <p>Senate approved the paper as presented.</p>
10.	<p>Legal advice in relation to the paper: "Context of Some Recent Member Contributed Papers" - S 22/23 5G To note</p> <p>The Convener outlined that the paper is presented to Senate to note and that he accepts the paper and the legal advice provided within in.</p> <p>A concern was raised with regard to paragraph 7 and the assertion of an action that Senate would not be able to take legal advice in the future.</p> <p>Senate noted the paper. Senate did not agree to the action in paragraph 7 that Senate <i>take no further action in response to the Revised Paper as it relates to the legal advice previously provided.</i></p>
11.	<p>Context of Some Recent Member Contributed Papers - S 22/23 5H To note</p> <p>This item was introduced by Dr Michael Barany. The paper is presented to Senate to note.</p> <p>In the interest of time, one of the authors of the Context paper (5H) shared in the meeting chat a point by point list of twenty concerns about the claims and reasoning in paper 5G regarding the Context paper, and expressed the hope that management would rather spend the effort and money involved in cooperating with Senate members towards the university’s goals.</p> <p>The written concerns may be obtained upon request to the Senate Clerk.</p>

The Convener noted that in his role it is appropriate to take advice from suitably qualified experts and he is confident with the advice received.

The Provost also raised her concern regarding the tone of debate and discussion and that Senate and its members should remain mindful that it is not appropriate to call into question the competency of any University's staff and external advisors.

Senate noted the paper.

12. Senate Oversight of Estates Provision for Academic Offices - S 22/23 51

For approval

This item was introduced by Dr Tamara Trodd. The paper is presented to Senate at the request of non-Senatorial academic staff and asks Senate to recognise that space provision has significant implications for the conduct of academic work and that future estate development plans may impact on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within the academic community.

The Provost noted that academic view and ownership of estates planning is embedded at all levels and that project boards have both academic and student representation. There is a high degree of locality in estates planning to reflect the unique needs for each discipline and compromise is required to achieve a high quality estate which delivers on the University's academic mission.

The University's estate is of a significant size and space should be used effectively and reflect the University's commitment to sustainability, evolving patterns of work, the underutilisation of space and the increased demand for particular types of spaces, for example, study space.

The University estate is overseen by Court with decisions undertaken via the appropriate governance pathways and with the academic mission at the centre of decisions taken.

Senate members raised the following points:

- Members expressed support for the opportunity to discuss the provision of space, which is an important and complicated issue and reflects the desire of staff to work on campus. The management of existing spaces and new building projects is a complex and pressing issue across the University. Though it may not be possible to achieve all the aims outlined in the paper, this presents an opportunity to consider strengthening the existing practices for consultation with academic staff.
- The Head of the Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) outlined his experience of the ECA building project as an example of how building projects operate within local contexts. The ECA project is seeking to enhance access to space and provide office space, suitable music and study spaces and meet specialist space needs. It is focussed on the academic mission and the need to enhance space needs with discussions still ongoing. Colleagues have been consulted and provided a strong view of their needs. Work is ongoing to balance these needs with competing demands.
- There is a need to balance difficult and competing priorities including financial and practical constraints however the academic mission remains forefront across these tensions. The space required will be highly subjective to the discipline and nature of work being undertaken at any one time. The diversity of those requirements should be considered at the design stage.
- There is a need for private and quiet space for academic staff to hold confidential conversations with students and undertake research. Space should reflect the needs of academic staff and the views of staff and research should be taken account of in reaching decisions on what space is required for academic staff to effectively undertake their role. It may be useful to undertake benchmarking on a discipline level against other institutions, including Russell Group universities, to establish how peers and competitors manage the provision of space.
- The suitability and consideration of space for staff in lower paid roles such as postdoctoral research staff was highlighted as a concern. These staff require appropriate space to work and are often located in open plan offices and it may not be feasible for these staff to work from home.
- The University's commitment to climate and sustainability should remain a key consideration in any estates projects undertaken.

	<p>Following discussion and in the interests of time, the Convener asked the presenter if a single vote on all motions could be taken. However, the paper author requested an individual vote on each motion. Senate approved the paper on the following basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It agreed by a majority vote of 89% to adopt the following amendment to Motion 5.1: <p>5.1 That Senate requests <i>the relevant bodies including Court and the University Estates Committee</i> to take account of its views on the provision of space where it affects academic work, for instance by altering availability and occupancy of offices for core academic tasks including research, supervision and teaching preparation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It agreed by a majority vote of 90% to adopt the following amendment to Motion 5.2: <p>5.2 That Senate requests <i>the relevant bodies including Court and the University Estates Committee</i> ensure that current and future Estates development plans make provision for appropriate spaces for academic staff to conduct research and their other contracted work (e.g. teaching, supervision, administration, collaboration with external partners), based on consultation and agreement with academic staff in the relevant areas, and that efficiency and utilisation rates should not be prioritised over the ability of staff effectively to conduct research and related academic work on campus.</p> <p>The Convener invited Senate to consider the remaining motions. These were deemed non-contentious and voting undertaken.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It agreed by a majority vote of 80% to adopt Motion 5.3 as presented in the paper It agreed by a majority vote of 83% to adopt Motion 5.4 as presented in the paper <p>Senate was then observed to be no longer quorate, and as the meeting had already overrun the scheduled time, the meeting of Senate was adjourned. The President of Senate indicated that any outstanding business would be carried forward to the next meeting of Senate.</p>
13.	<p>Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees - S 22/23 5J For formal noting and approval</p> <p>Senate did not reach this item before adjourning the meeting.</p>
14.	<p>Senate Exception Committee Terms of Reference and Membership 2022-23 - S 22/23 5K For approval</p> <p>Senate did not reach this item before adjourning the meeting.</p>
15.	<p>Senate Standing Committee Membership – recommendations - S 22/23 5L For approval</p> <p>Senate did not reach this item before adjourning the meeting.</p>
16.	<p>Senate Standing Committees: Membership - S 22/23 5M For formal noting and approval</p> <p>Senate did not reach this item before adjourning the meeting.</p>
17.	<p>Review of Timetabling Processes – Progress Update - S 22/23 5N To note</p> <p>Senate did not reach this item before adjourning the meeting.</p>

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL OR NOTING

18.	Report from the Central Academic Promotions Committee - S 22/23 5O For information Senate did not reach this item before adjourning the meeting.
19.	Senate and Senate Standing Committee Election Results 2023 - S 22/23 5P To note Senate did not reach this item before adjourning the meeting.
20.	Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate - S 22/23 5Q For noting Senate did not reach this item before adjourning the meeting.
21.	Report from the Senate Exception Committee - S 22/23 5R CLOSED For noting Senate did not reach this item before adjourning the meeting.
22.	Conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus - S 22/23 5S For approval Senate did not reach this item before adjourning the meeting.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Senatus Academicus
Wednesday 11 October 2023 at 2-5 pm
G.03, 50 George Square

Unconfirmed Minute

Attendees: Peter Adkins, Gill Aitken, Marialuisa Aliotta, Ruth Andrew, Jake Ansell, Mohammad Amir Anwar, David Argyle, Sharan Atwal, Vansh Bali, Kasia Banas, Michael Barany, Clark Barwick, Matt Bell, Shereen Benjamin, Laura Bickerton, Clare Blackburn, Kelly Blacklock, Sophia Blum Richard Blythe, Lisa Boden, Tom Booth, Christina Boswell, Catherine Bovill, Julian Bradfield, Laura Bradley, Holly Branigan, Mary Brennan, Aidan Brown, Tom Bruce, Jane Calvert, Celine Caquineau, Jeremy Carrette, Leigh Chalmers, Neil Chue Hong, Sam Coombes, Martin Corley, Sharon Cowan, Brenda Cundy, Sumari Dancer, Jamie Davies, Ricardo De Oliveira Almeida, Luigi Del Debbio, Jonathan Dennis, Charlotte Desvages, Sameer Dhumale, Hannah Dong, Kevin Donovan, Claire Duncanson, Murray Earle, Constantinos Eleftheriou, Andrea English, Mark Evans, Anne-Maree Farrell, Tonks Fawcett, Valentina Felito, Emily Ford-Halliday, Chris French, Stuart Gilfillan, Manuel Fernandez-Gotz, Vashti Galpin, Patrick Hadoke, Ben Goddard, Justin Goodrich, Iain Gordon, Kim Graham, Liz Grant, Gillian Gray, Leo Hajducki, Karen Halliday, Katie Hardwick, Colm Harmon, Carl Harper, Tina Harrison, Helen Hastie, David Hay, Pia Helbing, Thorunn Helgason, Sarah Henderson, Melissa Highton, James Hopgood, Jenny Hoy, Andrew Hudson, Emma Hunter, Gbenga Ibikunle, Kirstin James, Jakov Jandric, Kirsten Jenkins, Aarnesh Kapoor, Itamar Kastner, Jim Kaufman, James Keeley, Toby Kelly, Catherine Kidner, Greg Kinnear, Andy Law, Tom Leinster, Patrick Lennard, Ashley Lloyd, Wendy Loretto, Jason Love, Ewa Luger, Sophia Lycouris, Lesley McAra, Alistair McCormick, Margaret MacDougall, Mike McGrew, Sam Marks, Rebecca Marsland, Avery Meiksin, Carmel Moran, Steven Morley, Susan Morrow Chris Mowat, Rachel Muers, Lyndsay Murray, Rupert Nash, Pau Navarro, Max Nyman, Richard Oosterhoff, Cheryl Patrick, Sarah Prescott, Jon Pridham, David Quinn, Alma Kalina Reißler, Ricardo Ribeiro Ferreira, Aryelly Rodriguez Carbonell, Ken Rice, Simon Riley, Hollie Rowlands, Max Ruffert, Eberhard Sauer, Ash Scholz, Bernd Schroers, Matthias Schwannauer, Pablo Schyfter Camacho, Jo Shaw, Sue Sierra, Hamish Simpson, David Smith, Sean Smith, Stewart Smith, Antonella Sorace, Tim Stratford, Gavin Sullivan, Emily Taylor, Alex Thomson, Tamara Trodd, Nadia Tuzi, Jeremy Upton, Jose Vazquez-Boland, Frank Venter, Dylan Walch, Patrick Walsh, Stephen Warrington, Mark Williams, Robyn Woof, Iain Wright, Qingchi Wu, Ben Wynne, Alper Yildirim

In attendance: Adam Bunni, Arlene Duffin, Lucy Evans, Rebecca Gaukroger, Olivia Hayes, Nichola Kett, Cristina Matthews, Dean Pateman, Ella Ritchie, Dominic Tate

Apologies: Arianna Andreangeli, Kate Ash-Irisarri, Chandan Bose, Lauren Byrne, Sarah Cunningham-Burley, John Cairns, Tony Carbery, Siddharthan Chandran, Kevin Collins, Jeremy Crang, Hilary Critchley, Juan Cruz, Lisa Dawson, Karen Dawson, Chris Dent, James Dunlop, Agata Dunsmore, Olivia Eadie, Darrick Evensen, Stuart Forbes, Richard Gratwick, Laura Jeffery, Zoeb Jiwaji, Meryl Kenny, Steff Lewis, Gavin McLachlan, Cait MacPhee, Catherine Martin, Peter Mathieson, Andrew Morris, Simon Mudd, Bryne Ngwenya, Diana Paton, Josephine Pemberton, Colin Pulham, Rebecca Reynolds, Ewelina Rydzewska-Fazekas, Tobias Schwarz, Geoff Simm, James Smith, Chris Speed, Melissa Terras, Uzma Tufail-Hanif, Pia Wahi-Singh, Michele Weiland, Christopher Weir, Ingrid Young, Ansgar Zoch

The Convener, Provost Professor Kim Graham, opened the meeting.

The Convener indicated her wish that the meeting incorporate a diversity of views during discussions, with contributions from student members particularly welcome. Members were asked to state their name at the start of any contributions.

The Convener noted that attendees were joining the meeting both in-person and via Teams and that contributions to the discussion would alternate between each mode.

The Convener drew Senate's attention to Standing Order 19 regarding the conduct of the meeting. The Convener further added that efforts be made to conclude each item within the time allocated on the

agenda, asking that members be mindful of this when making their comments. The meeting would conclude at 5pm.

1. **Convener's Communications**

The Convener provided an update to Senate on a range of items.

People and Money

- People and Money continued to be a priority area for the Senior Leadership Team, with some ongoing disruption from the new finance processes. The University Executive and Senior Leadership Team continue to receive regular updates and the People and Money Enactment Group continues to meet on a fortnightly basis.
- A set of priorities for the 2023 calendar year have been agreed and communicated to the University community. Priorities include the core stabilisation of research finance processes, maintaining and preparing for critical business as usual activity including financial year end, audit, statutory returns, budgeting and forecasting for 2023/24, and ongoing maintenance of payments and supply of goods and services.
- Work was also being undertaken to implement recommendations from the Principal's external advisor, including improvements to purchase to pay processes, the finance helpdesk and the collection of outstanding debt.
- Further updates will be provided to colleagues by the end of the calendar year. This communication will include the next set of priorities, which are likely to include research awards, enhancements budget, and planning and forecasting activity.
- The Convener confirmed that a paper prepared by Senate members Dr Michael Barany and Dr Tom Booth, and submitted in time for inclusion on the 11 October agenda, had been forwarded to the Enactment Group. The paper outlined, to date, the University's response to motions agreed by Senate in March and contained responses from the University community on the ongoing impacts of People and Money. The Enactment Group was asked to review the paper, including considering any points that have not already been addressed. In the questions following the report, the Convener was asked when the paper would be circulated to members and the Convener stated that she felt the paper was more valuable considered in the context of the Enactment Group.

Clerk's note: Dr Barany and Dr Booth asked following the meeting that it be minuted that the paper was submitted in a timely manner for consideration of the full Senate and they strongly object to the convener denying Senate members the opportunity to consider the paper in full. This request was not made during the meeting in the interest of time.

- Additional assurance work has been undertaken by the University's external auditors, and the findings of this work is being considered by the Audit and Risk Committee as part of year-end assurance processes. In response to a question regarding the University's assurance in relation to a normal year, the Convener noted that work is ongoing and therefore she is unable to comment on this at this time.

University Estates

- The Convener provided an update on key actions taken since Senate last met on 24 May 2023 and in response to motions approved in paper [S22/23 51](#).
- Estates are undertaking a review of Project Board governance with the outcomes of this to be shared with Estates Committee by December. This will provide clear governance context and clarity on how Schools and Colleges can contribute to estates planning via these Boards.
- Estates have completed a deep dive exercise into Estates planning with 7 schools in CAHSS and 4 schools in CSE. These exercises involved gathering information to understand the current requirements, including staffing and student numbers, vision for the School, size and shape and current challenges and pressure points. Estates are working closely with Schools and Colleges in these exercises, which are via a series of workshops with representation from academic and professional services staff chosen by School leadership. The outcomes of these workshops are being presented to College Management Teams, and will inform the College strategies for use of space, in line with identified academic needs.
- A member noted that the Convener's update did not include an update on the actions taken in response to Motions 5.3 and 5.4 agreed by Senate at its 24 May 2023 meeting. The member asked whether a fuller report would be provided to Senate, with acknowledgement that

Senate has asked that open plan or hot desk arrangements not be used unless agreed by the relevant subject area.

In response the Convener noted that the review of the Project Boards would involve input from Schools and Colleges. This will consider disciplinary needs and feed into considerations at College level. The diversity of research needs across subject areas makes it difficult to have single university guidelines for the use of space, however Estates are engaging with specific areas to understand their needs.

Curriculum Transformation Programme

- An update was provided on the Curriculum Transformation Programme (CTP). A report on CTP had been expected to come to this meeting of Senate, in response to the actions agreed by Senate at its 29 March meeting ([Paper S 22/23 4B](#)), however this report has been delayed.
- Further work is being undertaken and coordinated by Colleges which involves in-depth engagement with specific disciplines and programmes to explore short and medium term responses to the framework. This work is providing important and useful insights into the impact on the flow of student numbers, key processes and system enablers, as well as the investment and resource required for CTP to be a success. Progress in this area has been slower than anticipated, partly due to the pressures on Schools as a result of the Marking and Assessment Boycott. Discussions and work towards this resumed at the beginning of the 2023/24 academic year.
- The preparation of the investment case is also taking longer than planned, partly due to pressures on capacity referred to previously and as experienced across the institution.
- The results of the review and key proposals relating to CTP will firstly go to the Senate Education Committee, before coming to Senate in early 2024.
- In response to a query regarding the impact of the delays on the CTP timeline and timing for this coming to Senate, the Vice-Principal Students confirmed that the intention is to bring an early draft of the framework to the November 2023 meeting of the Senate Education Committee, before coming to Senate in February 2024. The revised timelines will form part of the Senate consultation.

Industrial Action

- The Universities and Colleges Union (UCU) nationally called off the marking and assessment boycott on 6 September, and all staff have now returned to full duties. In agreement with the UCU Edinburgh branch and in exchange for ceasing deductions early, participating members committed to ensuring all outstanding marking would be completed for the October Boards, with a minority of exceptional cases. The Convener extended her thanks to colleagues for delivering outcomes to students as soon as possible.
- The UCU Edinburgh branch voted to participate in 5 days of strike action in September. Edinburgh was one of 52 branches across the UK to take part in the action.
- UCU and Educational Institute of Scotland are each balloting their members for a mandate on industrial action, both ballots close on 3 November. Unison and UNITE are not currently balloting members and do not have a mandate for action.
- The University is pleased that UCEA and the five sector trade unions have resumed discussions on seeking understanding of the sector finances and progressing the negotiated terms of reference, which were rejected by the UCU Higher Education Committee in March 2023. These relate to motions approved at Senate in March 2023, and the University has been vocal in its strong support to progress this work. This is alongside work taking place locally on the University's grade scale review and fixed term contract review, with the outcomes of these reviews being considered through the University's governance structures.

Pension Benefits

- Following employer and trade union consultations, UCU and UUK have prepared a joint proposal to restore pension benefits to pre-April 2022 levels and reduce contributions. The proposal is subject to trustee approval with changes to take effect from early 2024 if approved. Senate was reminded that an employee consultation is open until 24 November with an invitation to contribute to the consultation.

To note

- Two members made comments regarding an event being held on campus at 6pm and correspondence between groups of staff ahead of the event. In the context of these comments, the Convener reminded members of the importance of the Dignity and Respect Policy which members should remain mindful of throughout and when contributing to discussion.

Clerk's note: Two members expressed disagreement regarding an event taking place on campus, with one member stating that they had not received a timely response to personal safety concerns raised to University leadership and other relevant parties.

2. **Senate Minutes & e-Senate Reports – S 23/24 1A**

Minutes of Senate meeting held on 29 March 2023

The Convener noted that Dr Michael Barany submitted a series of amendments to the 29 March 2023 minute. The Senate Clerk has incorporated these where appropriate, however some amendments were not incorporated either due to inappropriate language or because amendments did not reflect a balanced record of the discussions which took place. A Clerk's note was added to the two sections within the minute where a member has raised objection to the record of the item. A Clerk's note was also added to Matters Arising: Senate Elections Update and Matters Arising: Legal Context of the Senate Motions.

Dr Tom Booth noted that he had raised an amendment to item 5: Senate Role in the Response to People and Money Crisis. Despite this being out with the deadline the Convener had agreed that an update on assurance work would be reflected under this discussion. In response, the Convener noted that this comment was not captured by the Senate Clerk or other colleagues supporting the meeting and therefore this amendment was not to be incorporated into the final minute, with the query addressed instead through the Convenor's communications earlier.

The Convener invited Senate to approve the 29 March minutes as presented. Three members, Dr Tom Booth, Dr George Kinnear and Dr Pau Navarro raised objection to approval of the minutes as presented, with Dr George Kinnear stating that he had seen some of the proposed corrections submitted by Dr Barany and did not recognise the characterisation provided by the Convener regarding their appropriateness. Dr Kinnear believed it to be belittling of Senate for not to have sight or discretion over amendments when being asked to accept minutes.

Senate voted on the Minutes of the 29 March 2023 meeting and 69% did not approve this item.

Report of E-Senate held from 26 April – 10 May 2023

The Convener noted that a member had requested that Reports of E-Senate include a summary of comments and proposed that this be undertaken moving forward. Senate agreed that a summary of comments should be provided in reports in future.

Additionally, it was noted by the Convenor that, if there was agreement to form a Senate External Review Task and Finish Group (under item 8), this Group will be asked to undertake a deeper review of e-Senate business and processes around e-Senate.

The Convener invited Senate to approve the 26 April – 10 May Report of E-Senate as presented. Dr George Kinnear raised objection to approval of the Report as presented and stated that a summary of comments should be provided in the 26 April – 10 May E-Senate Report. The Convener noted in response that a retrospective change had not been agreed, with comments applying to any future Reports of e-Senate presented to Senate for approval.

Senate voted on the 26 April – 10 May Report of E-Senate and 59% did not approve this item.

A student member, Max Nyman, requested that votes on Senate minutes and E-Senate reports include an abstain option for those members who were not on Senate at the time, or in attendance at the relevant meeting so their engagement with each vote is recorded. The Convener advised that

members can abstain from voting by not voting. Consideration would be given to including an abstain option for decision making on minutes at future meetings.

Minutes of Senate meeting held on 24 May 2023

The Convener noted that the minutes of the 24 May meeting were circulated to Senate with an invitation to submit amendments during a time limited period. The Senate Clerk has incorporated amendments to the minute in response to these.

The Convener invited Senate to approve the 24 May minutes as presented. Three members, Dr Michael Barany, Dr Jonny Dennis and Dr Charlotte Desvages raised objection to approval of the minutes as presented.

Senate voted on the Minutes of the 24 May 2023 meeting and 67% did not approve this item.

Report of E-Senate held from 13 – 27 September 2023

The Convener restated the earlier commitment that future Reports of E-Senate would include a summary of comments moving forward.

The Convener invited Senate to approve the 13 – 27 September Report of E-Senate as presented. One member raised objection to approval of the Report as presented and raised a motion, which was seconded, that amendments to the minutes be considered electronically outside of Senate meetings.

Senate voted on the 13 – 27 September Report of E-Senate and 65% did not approve this item.

The Convener noted that Senate had not approved any minutes or Reports of E-Senate, including minutes that have been presented to Senate for approval on two previous occasions.

The Convener noted that actions raised would be taken away for consideration.

Action: The Senate Clerk and Academic Services to look at the process and options for considering and incorporating amendments to minutes to allow unconfirmed minutes to be presented for approval at a future meeting.

Action: The Senate Clerk to include a summary of comments raised via e-Senate in Reports of E-Senate business in time for the next Ordinary meeting of Senate.

Action: The Convener and Senate Clerk consider the process for voting on minutes at future meetings of Senate.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

3. Conferral of awards delayed due to the Marking and Assessment Boycott - S 23/24 1B CLOSED

For approval

The Convener noted that Dr Michael Barany submitted amendments to the paper ahead of time. The amendments submitted were to change the contents of the paper authored by another individual. This is not the established practice for amendments, and therefore the member was invited to raise these as comments to be reflected in the minutes of the item accordingly.

The Deputy Secretary Students, Ms Lucy Evans introduced the item which Senate was invited to approve to allow the conferral of awards on students whose award was delayed due to the Marking and Assessment Boycott. Ms Evans noted that conferral of awards usually takes place ahead of a graduation meeting. She extended her thanks to the Schools who expedited approval of these awards to allow students to receive their degree outcomes as soon as possible.

Senate unanimously approved the conferral of awards on graduands listed in Annex A without requiring a vote.

4. Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees - S 23/24 1C

For approval

The Convener noted that two sets of amendments had been received. One set of amendments were submitted via a paper from Dr Michael Barany and these amendments related to the Terms of Reference of the Senate Standing Committees and both papers have been referred to the VP Students to take forward as part of the review of Standing Committees as highlighted in the Senate External Review.

The second set of amendments were submitted by Dr George Kinnear.

Vice-Principal Students, Professor Colm Harmon introduced the item. He extended his thanks to Senate for engaging with the report, and for members' input into Standing Committee business over the previous year.

Members raised the following points in discussion:

- The provision of a timed agenda was welcomed, however the 15 minutes allocated to this item was insufficient given the scope of the item, so that Senate had adequate oversight of Standing Committee business and could hold Committees to account. The Convener invited members to highlight the key items they would like answered with an invitation to raise further comments with the paper authors outside the meeting.
- There was insufficient detail provided in the forward plans for the Senate Education Committee (SEC) and greater detail should be provided in future. The VP Students agreed that the detail could be reviewed in preparing future reports.
- The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) formed a task group to undertake a review of the Coursework Extensions and Special Circumstances Policies. APRC did not approve a new policy and Schools and Colleges implemented local arrangements. In some cases, teaching staff were informed of local arrangements on 30 August, which was very close to the beginning of Semester 1. It was requested that any future policy changes be agreed with sufficient time for teaching staff to prepare for the year following. The Convener of APRC, Professor Patrick Hadoke outlined the decision making surrounding a revised Exceptional Circumstances Policy. Professor Hadoke noted that the Committee did not approve the Policy as the Committee did not believe that it was ready for implementation. In reaching this decision, the Committee was aware that local practices may be introduced in the 2023/24 academic year.
- Student members noted the challenges that three-day extensions pose and highlighted that may disproportionately impact on certain groups of students, such as Student Parents. Student members noted that alternative ways of approaching the issues which lead to the review of coursework extensions may be necessary to address these challenges. Student members requested that coursework extensions be revisited by APRC as a priority to enable the local approaches to coursework extensions to be addressed. Professor Hadoke noted that there remains a willingness within APRC to review the Coursework Extensions and Special Circumstances Policies, however this needs to be done with a reflection on feedback raised in discussion of the item to date. The VP Students echoed this sentiment, noting that there is a strong desire to reach an improved position with a consistent and coherent approach to coursework extensions and special circumstances. It was acknowledged that due to a new policy not being approved, local approaches to coursework extensions have been introduced for this academic year.
- A member observed that Annual Report is challenging to draft given the volume of business. The Report provides a narrative description of business undertaken by Committees over the course of the year. It would be valuable if future reports could provide greater detail on where improvements are made, and where concerns are raised so that Senate can obtain a greater understanding of impact and concerns. The VP Students noted that the minutes of Committee meetings are available online, and that work is underway to improve the flow of communication between Senate and its Committees. Members were invited to highlight areas where they would like greater information so that this can be considered moving forward.
- A student member drew attention to the fact that there had been numerous comments made during the meeting regarding the detail provided in minutes and they asked if there were guidelines for the production of Committee minutes.
- A member highlighted that the SEC priorities include reference to Curriculum Transformation and that Senate has previously agreed that an update on CTP would be provided to the 11 October 2023 meeting of Senate. The VP Students noted that work is ongoing in response to the actions endorsed by Senate and that this would follow the appropriate governance pathways which includes returning to Senate in February 2024.

- Dr George Kinnear noted that they submitted two amendments to the Committee priorities ahead of the Senate meeting and they were not satisfied with the response provided to these amendments. He outlined the two amendments submitted and noted that these align with the remit of the Committees and it is within Senate's gift to determine whether these are appropriate priorities for the Standing Committees. Dr Kinnear requested that a vote be taken on the amendments, subject to an appropriate seconder being identified.
- Dr Kinnear also noted that they and four other colleagues submitted a paper regarding maintaining academic standards for the 11 October 2023 meeting and this paper was not included in the billet for the meeting. He noted his disappointment with the approach taken to the paper which was titled Maintaining Academic Standards and drafted following concerns with the approach taken by his School's Boards of Examiners.
- The Conveners of Standing Committees stated that the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) had recently undertaken a rigorous assessment and review of the temporary variations and the concluded that the mitigations posed no risk to academic standards and that standards had been maintained.

An amendment to 6.3, APRC Priorities was moved and seconded as follows:

Audit the extent to which exceptional variations to academic policies and regulations during 2022/23 have in fact maintained academic standards

Ahead of a vote on the proposed amendment the following points were raised by members:

- The amendment suggests that upholding academic standards should be a priority.
- A member reflected on their experience at their School's Board of Examiners commenting that, in their view, the temporary variations to the regulations undermined the commitment to maintaining standards.
- Some members reflected on there being a lack of clarity on what Senate were being asked to consider. They raised concern with the handling of amendments and reflected on the importance of adhering to the Standing Orders as stated prior to the commencement of the meeting. It was requested that amendments be handled in a consistent manner and in accordance with the Standing Orders. A request was made that amendments submitted in advance of the meeting to the Senate Clerk be shared with members ahead of the meeting. The Convener clarified the voting procedure and the meaning of voting for/against amendments, and agreed that the process for handling amendments would be reviewed with the Senate Clerk following the meeting.

Senate approved by a majority vote of 71% to amend 6.3: APRC Priorities to include:

Audit the extent to which exceptional variations to academic policies and regulations during 2022/23 have in fact maintained academic standards

Senate further undertook a separate vote on the amended Paper S 23/24 1C and 51% of members did not approve the paper.

Action: The Conveners of Standing Committees to take account of comments raised and provide greater detail in forward looking plans for future annual reports.

Action: Senate members to highlight to Standing Committee Conveners areas where greater information on Committee business is sought for future Annual Reports.

Action: The Convener and Senate Clerk to review the process for handling amendments.

5. **Recommendation to add EDI representation to Senate Standing Committees - S 23/24 1D**
For approval

Vice-Principal Students and Convener of the Senate Education Committee, Professor Colm Harmon introduced the item which was taken as read.

Members raised the following points in discussion:

- Student members expressed disagreement with the position outlined in the paper that students and the Students Association do not want greater involvement in Standing Committee business. They expressed disagreement with the phrasing of the student position,

and that the wider structural issues relating to student engagement with the business of Senate and its Committees are not adequately reflected in the paper.

- Student members highlighted that an increased student membership on Standing Committees is associated with intensive workload implications for those student members, which is not feasible for volunteer positions and where timelines for inputting into business are inflexible. Additionally, the absence of remuneration for students' time does not adequately recognise the student contribution to the betterment of the University. Student members were supportive of increasing opportunities for student engagement via other mechanisms and would value the opportunity to revisit avenues to achieve this.
- Student members expressed a concern with the governance implications of an EDI representative on each Standing Committee. They noted that the EDI member may be expected to fulfil a token role, and their expertise in EDI may not be appropriate to support the full spectrum of EDI concerns relating to Committee business. A proposal was raised that the EDI member be a split membership role, to be rotated among members and to allow for relevant expertise to be fed into Committee business as appropriate.
- A concern was raised that the proposed approach does not provide an adequate solution to ensuring individuals with other protected characteristics are represented in Committee business, for example, disabled members of the University community.
- A query was raised regarding the cited consultation with UCU. The paper authors were asked to clarify the contact and channels through which UCU was consulted.
- A student member highlighted the Advance HE recommendation regarding enhancing communication between Senate and its Committees and noted the value of this recommendation in the context of this item.

The Conveners of Standing Committees thanked members for their engagement and made the following points in response to comments from members:

- The position outlined in the paper was reflective of the view of Sabbatical Officers from the 2022/23 academic year. The Conveners noted the student members unease with the position outlined and agreed to engage with the current sabbatical officers to take forward discussions on increasing student involvement in and engagement with Standing Committee business, as well as the phrasing around student involvement.
- The EDI representation on Committees is proposed as an interim measure, and it is expected this will continue to be reviewed in the context of wider changes to Senate and its Committees arising from the External Review.
- There is a strong desire to avoid the view that the EDI member position is a token position. The original motion approved by Senate had a specific focus on BAME representation, which is why this protected characteristic is specifically mentioned. Consideration will be given to widening the representation to include other protected characteristics.
- Standing Committee members can request that a substitute member attend meetings where necessary.
- It is the responsibility of all members to be mindful of EDI issues in fulfilling their responsibilities as Committee members.
- Consultation with UCU on the motions took place via the Director of HR and the Joint Committee channels. The UCU Executive were unaware of the motions and did not express an interest in pursuing this at the time. The Conveners noted that they remain open to discussing with the current UCU Executive if this is desired.

Ahead of a vote on this item, the Students' Association VP Education reinforced the student members unease with the wording relating to student engagement included in the paper.

Senate undertook a vote on the item and 68% of members did not approve the paper as presented.

Action: Standing Committee Conveners to liaise with 2023/24 Sabbatical Officers regarding opportunities for increasing student involvement in and engagement with Committee business and the phrasing around student involvement included in future proposals relating to student representation.

Action: The Convener agreed to adopt the practice of announcing when voting opens.

6. **Senate Committee Administration**
For approval

Senate Standing Committee Composition: 2023-24 - S 23/24 1E

The Convener noted that a motion relating to this item had been received from Dr Michael Barany. and that it would be taken forward by the proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group once formed to allow detailed consideration of the points raised in the motion.

Clerk's note: Dr Barany requested following the meeting that it be minuted that the motion was submitted in a timely manner for consideration of the full Senate and he strongly objects to the convener denying Senate members a proper opportunity to consider a relevant and time-sensitive motion by suppressing it from the Billet. This request was not made during the meeting in the interest of time.

Members raised the following points in discussion:

- There are individuals who appear in the membership across multiple committees. It was queried whether this is appropriate and whether it is desirable that a range of views feed into Committee business. There are effective ways of seeking consistency without restricting input to a few individuals.
The VP Students noted that majority of Standing Committee positions are ex-officio and are filled according to the relevant expertise. It is often valuable to have continuity of input from members, particularly where items move between Committees across the University. This will be picked up by the External Review Task and Finish Group.
- Members requested that the motions submitted be shared with the wider Senate.
The Convener committed to the motions being shared with the External Review Task and Finish Group once formed.
- An objection to the item was raised on behalf of an absent member on the grounds that the Standing Orders state that members shall be invited annually to submit suggestions for membership of the Committees and that this had not taken place. The Convener agreed that the membership of Standing Committees should be formed in accordance with the Senate Standing Orders.
- A member expressed their view that the challenges experienced at Senate arise from a lack of engagement with Senate members from the Senior Leadership Team. The member noted that there is a lack of papers submitted by Senate members on the agenda, adding to the concerns raised regarding a lack of transparency facilitated by papers and amendments not being circulated to Senate.

Senate approved by majority vote of 52% the Senate Standing Committee Composition for 2023-24.

Action: Senate Clerk to share the motions submitted with the proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group once formed.

Action: The membership of Standing Committees be formed in accordance with the Senate Standing Orders.

Senate Exception Committee Terms of Reference and Membership 2023-24 - S 23/24 1F

The Convener noted the updates to the ex-officio membership to reflect current role holders. The Convener also noted an amendment was submitted by Dr Michael Barany prior to the meeting. The amendment is to remove the Principal from the Exception Committee, whilst enabling the Provost to join. The Standing Orders include a reference to membership, including quoracy, where it is clear that the Principal should be a member of the Exception Committee. Therefore, the Principal is required as a member of the Senate Exception Committee and the paper is requesting the addition of the Provost to the membership in her role as Chief Academic Officer.

Dr Barany objected to the representation of his pre-submitted amendment, stating it unambiguously complies with the letter of the Standing Orders and the Convener's implication that the President of Senate must chair every committee is clearly not a practice we follow. He urged that Senate be provided with accurate reasons for the suppression of duly raised motions.

Senate approved by majority vote of 63% the Senate Exception Committee Membership.

Action: Senate Clerk to update the membership of the Senate Exception Committee.

Membership of the Knowledge Strategy Committee - S 23/24 1G

The Convener stated that the membership of the Knowledge Strategy Committee cannot be changed by Senate and Senate are invited to either approve or not approve the appointment. Members were invited to comment on the paper and no comments were raised.

Senate approved this item without requiring a vote.

Action: Senate Clerk to relay Senate's approval of the Membership of the Knowledge Strategy Committee.

ITEMS TO COMMENT

7. University of Edinburgh Students' Association Vice President Education Priorities 2023/24 - S 23/24 1H

To note and comment

The Students' Association Vice President Education Carl Harper introduced the item. They outlined their priorities for the year and expanded on each priority. They invited members of Senate to contact them if they wish to offer support in achieving the priorities.

Members raised the following points in discussion:

- Members expressed their support for the priorities presented.
- A member reflected on their experience as School Coordinator of Adjustments. They noted they found the training and awareness on creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment inadequate. It would be valuable if training was made a compulsory part of induction for new staff.
- Schools aim to provide students with opportunities to build community via social events, however this is challenging in the context of budget cuts and Schools operating under reduced budgets.
The Convener noted in response that budgets were increased, and offered to discuss with the member further outside the meeting.
- Members welcome opportunities to extend the priorities to include Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research students.
- A member outlined areas which the Students' Association VP Education may find valuable to consider as part of their work, such as mechanisms in place to ensure students are enrolled on courses in time for the start of semester, as well as consideration on how the new Student Support Model is working and reflected on anecdotal evidence about student engagement with community building events.

The Students Association VP Education thanked members for their engagement and made the following points in response to comments from members:

- They have been undertaking work with management to expand the suite of learning technologies available to students in a bid to achieve the first of their priority. They invited members to contact them directly if they wish to support this work.
- Consideration is being given to how to ensuring Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research Students are represented within these priorities.
- There has been challenges in relation to course enrolments with some factors making this especially challenging in concentrated areas within the University. The impact of late enrolments on specific students groups was noted.
- The feedback regarding the Student Support Model was noted and would be passed on to School Representatives for feedback.

The Convener extended her thanks on behalf of Senate to the Students Association VP Education and noted Senate's support for their priorities.

8. **Senate External Review – Presentation of findings & proposed actions in response - S 23/24 11**

To note and comment

Professor Ella Ritchie of Advance HE gave a brief overview of the review. Professor Ritchie reflected on the complexity of the review and extended her thanks to members for their honesty, time and valuable insight and willingness to share. The review was challenging to complete in the available timeframe and to fully understand all the nuances of the institution. However, it is hoped that the recommendations and suggestions arising from the review are useful in moving forward. Professor Ritchie urged Senate and the proposed Task and Finish Group to maintain the momentum as it moves beyond the conclusion of the review. Professor Ritchie extended her thanks to the Senate Clerk, Olivia Hayes for her support throughout the review.

The Convener extended thanks on behalf of Senate to Professor Ritchie and her team at Advance HE for undertaking the review.

The Convener noted that Senate is asked to provide feedback on the proposed actions contained within Appendix 1 and support the formation of a proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group critical in taking forward some of the recommendations of the review.

The Convener noted that two papers had been submitted by Dr Michael Barany which relate to this item. The Convener shared her view that the papers pre-empted some of the actions contained within Appendix 1 and committed to the papers being shared with the proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group, once formed, to ensure detailed consideration of the points raised, alongside other recommendations arising from the review or in response to feedback from members.

Members raised the following points in discussion:

- Members were pleased to see representation of staff from different career stages. The Group is being asked to take forward controversial and contentious items and the impartiality of the proposed Chair of the Group was raised as a potential issue.
- The time commitment required for members of the Task and Finish Group appears to be significant. The feasibility of members having capacity to serve on the Group is likely to be very challenging and unlikely to be achieved without compensation for student members and ensuring that staff members are released from work allocated to them. This was raised as a particular concern for Early Career Fellows who generally have heavier teaching loads. The EDI implications of a heavy workload were noted.
- The term of office for members of the Task and Finish Group was raised. The paper indicates that the Group is expected to provide proposals for the February and May 2024 meetings of Senate, however the term of office run until the 31 July 2024. The feasibility of the Group completing the work in the timelines given was raised, given the volume of work required from the Group and the likelihood of this continuing into next academic year. Student members highlighted that members elected to Senate for one year are unlikely to see the outcome of actions taken by the Group.
- The agenda setting process was highlighted as an area that continues to be a concern for members with the Sustainable Travel Policy and People and Money highlighted as specific examples. The agenda setting process requires consideration and Senate members would value having greater input into agenda setting in the future. Members reflected on one of the Report's review themes being a lack of trust between the Senior Leadership Team and the membership of Senate and noted this in the context of papers not shared with members and redirected to other Committees or Groups at the discretion of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Dr Barany expressed his strong discontent with the rationale provided to Senate for not circulating the papers to Senate referred to in introduction of the item. He stated that the Convener's summary of the reasons for non-circulation mischaracterised the contents of the papers, and reflected a lack of respect and trust both for the author and for the wider Senate membership. He stated the papers served two purposes, one providing corrections to the AdvanceHE report, and the second summarising long-running discussions among Senate members, which many felt had not been reflected in the review report. He shared that the papers reflected the collective effort of a large number of members who have been keen to engage with Senate reform in good faith. The papers were originally submitted as a single item in a timely manner for the latest e-Senate and also suppressed there. Additionally, he shared he had been informed in a non-negotiable way how papers would be handled, and it

was wrong for the Convener to characterise this as 'discussion'; and also commented that the approach of relegating this large collective input to a task and finish group rather than allowing it to be shared with colleagues is problematic. Dr Barany expressed concern that the External Review and proposed actions took a narrow view of Senate's effectiveness, and that the approach to Senate reforms should be one which is respectful and uplifting of contributions from all members.

The Convener restated her commitment that both papers would be provided to the proposed Task and Finish Group for consideration.

- The progress towards decisions taken by Senate and improving the relationship and flow of actions between the University Court and Senate was noted as being absent from the report. The minutes of previous Senate meetings do not include a clearly defined action. It would be useful if Senate minutes include an action where appropriate for inclusion in the Action log.
- The methodology of the External and Internal Reviews relied heavily on members completing surveys. Consideration should be given to the alternative ways that Senate's effectiveness can be measured, including expanding surveys to the wider University population and/or measuring Senate's effectiveness via the actions taken in response to decisions taken at Senate.
- A query was raised regarding the interaction between actions arising from the External Review and actions arising from the Internal Review.
- The Senate Induction was highlighted as an area that requires greater work. The Induction process is inadequate to preparing members for Senate meetings. A student member suggested the development of a shadow system as a potential improvement.
- The actions contained within the paper were queried, with a member noting that Senate should be asked to approve the proposals.
- A long-standing member of Senate noted that one of the principal roles of Senate is to act as scrutinising body. Historically Senate has received items of University business brought to Senate for a decision, however as member engagement has shifted and this has moved to include papers submitted by members there has been a lack of clarity on how decisions taken have translated into action, which contributes to the recent focus on procedural amendments. The Task and Finish Group should also consider the scrutinising function of Senate.

Members were invited to submit any further comments on the item to the Senate Clerk.

An amendment to Appendix 2: Senate External Review Task and Finish Group was moved and seconded. Ahead of a vote on the proposed amendment the following points were raised:

- The amendment will slightly widen the members who are able to put themselves forward for membership of the group
- The principle was included to reflect Senate's previous agreement that this should apply to the elected Senate membership of Senate Standing Committees.
- This is contradictory to the overlap of membership on Senate Standing Committees, where there is repetition of ex-officio members.

Senate approved by a majority vote of 78% to amend Appendix 2: Senate External Review Task and Finish Group and strike:

members who are already serve on a Senate Standing Committee cannot seek membership of the task group;

The Convener invited Senate to form the Task and Finish Group.

A member objected to a decision on this item being taken, noting that they had been advised by the Senate Clerk before the meeting that that there would not be a vote taken on this item. The member stated that formal amendments had not been prepared based on this understanding.

The University Secretary Leigh Chalmers proposed that some items be taken forward as a priority and sooner than the next meeting of Senate. There was not consensus regarding the formation of the Task and Finish Group, and those actions which can be progressed without requiring Senate's agreement will be taken forward. Those items which are contentious, including the formation of the Task and Finish Group will be given further consideration accordingly.

	One member, Dr Michael Barany noted his support for the University Secretary's proposed approach to take forward what she could. In the absence of Senate consent there was no objection raised from Senate.
9.	<p>Research and Innovation Strategy – S 23/24 1J CLOSED</p> <p>To comment</p> <p>Senate did not reach this item ahead of the conclusion of the meeting. The Convener extended her apologies to the presenter.</p>

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The following items were provided to Senate for information:

10. Senate Standing Committees – upcoming business - S 23/24 1K

ITEMS FOR NOTING

The following items were provided to Senate for noting:

- 11. Update to the Senate Ex-officio Membership – inclusion of the Convener of APRC - S 23/24 1L**
- 12. Review of Timetabling Processes – Progress Update - S 23/24 1M**
- 13. Feedback and actions arising from the Internal Effectiveness Review of Senate and its Standing Committees - S 23/24 1N**
- 14. Report of recent business undertaken by the Senate Exception Committee - S 23/24 1O CLOSED**
- 15. Research Strategy Group update - S 23/24 1P**

Clerk's note: Following publication of the agenda and papers for the 12 October 2023 meeting of Senate, an error was identified in paragraph 19 of the Research Strategy Group update. The correct paragraph is provided as an excerpt for noting:

19. At the close of academic year 2022/23 the University has maintained strong application activity, with the number (2,470) of applications being comparable to the three-year average and the value (£1,377M) trending slightly higher than the historic average. £460.78M in research awards have been recorded by the University in academic year 2022/23. This represents a 44% increase relative to the three year average figure, particularly driven by major awards in CMVM.



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Electronic Senate

Report of Electronic Business of Senate conducted between Wednesday 26 April – 10 May 2023

Unconfirmed Report

A full summary of comments raised via e-Senate can be accessed at [e-Senate comments](#) (EASE login required).

1. Resolutions (e-S 22/23 3 A)

Senate considered the draft Resolutions below and offered no observations.

No. 8/2023: Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations

No. 9/2023: Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations

2. Conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita (e-S 22/23 3 B)

Senate agreed to confer the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita on those professors listed in the paper and no comments were received.

3. Communications from the University Court (e-S 22/23 2 C)

Senate formally noted the communications. Comments were received from three members.

Item 2: Principal's Report

One member extended their congratulations to the long-serving staff and expressed their discontent with the report of "an impasse reached" with Acas on pay. They reflected on Senate's expectations that the Principal publicly push on pay as reflected in its approval of some motions contained within Paper S22/23 4D at its 29 March 2023 meeting.

Item 3: People and Money

Two members expressed concern at the reported dissemination for the report and indicated that Senate should have access to the report, and at a minimum the academic-related elements of the review.

One member emphasised their expectation for an update on the academic-related elements of the report, expressing doubt about the University Executive taking Senate's motions approved by Senate at the 29 March 2023 (Paper S22/23 4C) seriously. They raised concern that the external review commissioned by Court is going forward, calling for information on the structure and its alignment with the expectations outlined in the People and Money paper approved at Senate's 29 March 2023 meeting.

Item 5: Engineering Hub

One member welcomed the decision to proceed with the new Engineering Hub building citing poor-quality buildings and overcrowding as issues which currently impact on the School.

Item 6: Update on Research Excellence Framework (REF) Planning

One member expressed concern regarding plans to increase the weight of REF-related evaluations in staff promotion and appointment decisions. They expressed concern that

REF is an unstable and unreliable standard and emphasised the importance of the University's recent moves to take a holistic approach and put submissions in proper perspective.

Item 7: Development & Alumni Annual Report; Donations and Legacies; Alumni Activities

One member highlighted the interest of alumni in the University's actions during periods of industrial action and suggested that the Development and Alumni Office assess the impact of strike related measures on alumni faith and donations.

Item 8: Student Pulse Survey Update

One member raised doubt regarding the ongoing suitability of the Student Pulse Survey considering the low response rates, students reporting survey fatigue as well as potential impact of the Pulse Survey on the response rates to the PTES and PRES surveys. The member recommended that any review of the Pulse Survey be undertaken in consultation with Student Representatives.

Another member queried the response rate and the target response rate in the Student Pulse Survey.

Item 9: Update on arrangements for Senate and Senate Standing Committee Elections, and proposed amendment to Senate Election Regulations

One member expressed concern regarding Court's decision not to adopt a proposed amendment to the Senate Election Regulations which was approved by Senate at its 8 February meeting on the basis of advice provided by Legal Services. The member identified two factual errors which they considered significant, regarding what Ordinance 212 states regarding elected members and regarding the relationship between elected Senate terms and the terms of Senate Assessors. The member acknowledged Court's authority to make this decision irrespective of legal advice.

The comments were passed to the author of the paper.

4. College Academic Management Structure 2023/24 (e-S 22/23 3 D)

Senate noted the College Academic Management Structure 2023/24 and one member provided comments.

The commenter expressed confusion regarding the action requested in the paper and suggested this be reviewed for future versions. They also queried the differences in Dean roles and titles between Colleges and whether there is value in a consistent structure across the university and that in future the paper summarises what each role is intended to accomplish relevant to Senate's work.

The comments were passed to the author of the paper.

5. Report from Knowledge Strategy Committee (e-S 22/23 3 E)

Senate noted the report of the Knowledge Strategy Committee and two members provided comments.

Two members expressed support for the University's Generative AI Guidance with one member noting the guidance is sensible and well-informed. Both members expressed support for students being aided in understanding the pedagogically appropriate resources and how tools such as generative AI may be used, including the potential pitfalls and challenges which these tools present.

One member also recommended that teaching staff be adequately supported to incorporate these tools into their teaching.

One member identified shortcomings, outlining that certain approaches included in the guidance, such as those used with Wikipedia, have had a mixed or poor record in the past. They highlighted challenges in conveying the concept of original work to students, as well as the inadequacy of messages to students regarding referencing which may be exacerbated by the unreliability of citations from generative AI systems. The commenter stated that greater emphasis needs to be placed on 'hidden plagiarism', the copyright risks and unknown biases observations, and suggesting that in many cases students should be discouraged from using generative AI for coursework.

One member expressed concern with the commitment to Learn Ultra ahead of the Curriculum Transformation review of digital infrastructure is complete. They believe this represents a missed opportunity to rethink the digital estates needs and indicated that there was a lack of clarity on whether time and support has been budgeted for the wider Learn Ultra implementation.

One member stated that Senate should have sight of the updates on People and Money received by the Knowledge Strategy Committee in line with the expectations outlined in the People and Money paper approved at Senate's 29 March 2023 meeting.

One member advised the University to take note of the lessons learnt from Carnegie Mellon's controversies related to Internet of Things (IoT) and sensor installation, and highlighted the importance of thorough community engagement and recommended small opt-in pilots before a wider rollout.

Another member highlighted the potential benefit of accessing data from IoT systems for various research teams across the University and urged the University to take this opportunity to support its world class research work. They specifically mentioned the Institute of Energy Systems within the School of Engineering as an area likely to be interested in utilising the data provided via these systems.

The comments were passed to the author of the report.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Electronic Senate Report of Electronic Business of Senate conducted between Wednesday 13 September 2023 and Wednesday 27 September 2023

Unconfirmed Report

A full summary of comments raised via e-Senate can be accessed at [e-Senate comments](#) (EASE login required).

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL	
1.	<p>Conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita (e-S 23/24 1A) For approval</p> <p>Senate agreed to confer the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita on those professors listed in the paper.</p> <p>Three members submitted comments on this item. Two members acknowledged the contribution of Emeritus Professors on the University. Two members observed the gender and ethnic disparity among Professors listed for the conferral of Emeritus status observing a majority of male Professors and a lack of representation from ethnic minority backgrounds. One member was critical of the procedural approach to using e-Senate to confer the status of Emeritus and expressed a hope that the e-Senate process be reviewed now that the external review has concluded.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
ITEMS FOR COMMENT	
2.	<p>Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council on Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity 2022/23 (e-S 23/24 1B) To note and comment</p> <p>The report was provided in draft format from 13 – 20 September for comment alongside an electronic business meeting of the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC). The final report was circulated to Senate on 20 September with comments welcomed until e-Senate concluded on 27 September.</p> <p>Senate formally noted the annual report and comments were received from three members.</p> <p>The comments collectively express a range of concerns and recommendations regarding the Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council (e-S 23/24 1B). Members identified several elements of the report where they felt the summary provided was inadequate, there were discrepancies or inaccuracies. Common themes across all commenters included concern with staff workloads, student engagement, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion concerns impacting on</p>

	<p>students with specific examples given including reliance on food banks, inflated housing costs and the provision of support for students in University-managed accommodation. Some commenters called for greater evidence of the claims made within the report, and nuanced evaluations of the initiatives and success of some elements referred to within the report.</p> <p>One member raised concern with the governance process for the report emphasising the importance of Senate’s contribution to the annual report. During initial circulation of the draft report, the member stated that they would not approve the report as presented and following the circulation of the final report, they rejected the statement that the content of the report was approved by SQAC and identified this as being factually inaccurate.</p> <p>The member outlined concern with the process for finalising the report and that the decision to deem the report as final as exacerbating distrust in Senate as reflected in the feedback provided in internal and external reviews. The member stated Court’s responsibility for approval of the final report and expressed concern regarding unresolved queries regarding the content of the report as raised by Senate members relaying their comments via their representative member on SQAC.</p> <p>Another commenter deemed the report not to be appropriate for approval and raised concerns with the governance process undertaken by the Committee that changes to the report should be made to the satisfaction of the Committee.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Court Resolutions (e-S 23/24 1C) To comment</p> <p>One member submitted comments on this item. The commenter sought additional detail on the reason for renaming the chair in resolution 113/2023 after Thomas Bayes indicating a general preference for naming chairs after academic subjects rather than after individuals with reference to the University’s recent experiences with honorary degree rules and the renaming of 40 George Square as rationale for exercising caution.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Rector Election Date – 2024 (e-S 23/24 1D) To comment</p> <p>Comments were received from two members. Commenters supported an extended nomination and a longer voting period for the Rector position. They encouraged greater efforts to actively seek suitable candidates in advance of election period and greater support for approaching potential candidates for the position of Rector.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Senate Elections 2023/24 – key dates (e-S 23/24 1E) To comment</p> <p>Comments were received from three members. Commenters supported an extended voting and nomination period in the Senate Elections. They highlighted the important of increasing the opportunity for staff</p>

	<p>engagement, especially during teaching and potential periods of further industrial action.</p> <p>One member provided comment on the election of Senate members to Standing Committees and queries whether this could take place during a later timeframe. The member also emphasised the temporary nature of the arrangements for electing Senate members to Standing Committees, as agreed in October 2022.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
<p>ITEMS FOR INFORMATION OR NOTING</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Senate and Senate Standing Committee Election Results 2023 (e-S 23/24 1F) To note</p> <p>Senate formally noted the election results. Comments were received from one member. The commenter expressed their belief that Senate owes a note of gratitude to the Senate Clerk for their commitment to rigour and transparency as reflected in the paper.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Senate (e-S 23/24 1G) To note</p> <p>Senate formally noted the plans for the annual review.</p> <p>Comments were received from nine members. Several members highlighted concerns about monitoring the impact and strategic relevance of Senate’s work, with reference to the goal outlined in paragraph 12(c) of the paper. Members requested that the annual effectiveness review include a summary of Senate decisions and an overview of the progress and completion of actions where relevant. Members called for greater transparency in the reporting and accountability process, with specific mention of Senate papers S22/23 1F, 2D, 2G, 2I, 2J, 4B, 4C, 4D, and 5I where action taken is unclear. Several commenters asserted members’ rights to question the status and outcomes of Senate decisions and objected to a paper submitted for e-Senate seeking to address this not being included in the September 2023 e-Senate papers.</p> <p>One member suggested twice yearly updates on the progress toward actions arising from the review rather than yearly updates.</p> <p>A new member indicated that their involvement with Senate would be contingent on members’ right to question the outcome of decisions. A new member expressed efforts to understand the internal review process highlighting a reliance on feedback from Senate members and a lack of detail on the implementation and outcome of decisions as an omission for an effective review process.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>

<p>8.</p>	<p>Report from the Senate Exception Committee (e-S 23/24 1H) - CLOSED To note</p> <p>Senate formally noted Report from the Senate Exception Committee.</p> <p>Comments were received from two members. Both members indicated that an update on the measures taken to prevent a recurrence of the error would be valuable with one member stating that this was also raised by the Senate Exception Committee. One member noted that it would be useful if the report had clearly indicated the number of students missed off the graduation list.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Communications from the University Court (e-S 23/24 1I) To note</p> <p>Senate formally noted the communications. Comments were received from five members.</p> <p>Item 2: Principal's Report One member registered their protest to the Principal's response to the demands of the University and College Union (UCU). The member reflected on the erosion of morale across Edinburgh's academic community worsened by punitive deductions, alleged bullying and problematic working conditions. They criticised senior leadership for hiding behind UCEA instead of leading negotiations.</p> <p>Item 5: Estates: Residential Strategy 2023-2030 Two members reflected on the growth of the University and the impact of record recruitment as creating further pressure in a challenging housing market. One commenter welcomed the recognition of the housing challenges whilst another commenter felt that the University was doing too little to fulfil its responsibility to protect and support students.</p> <p>Item 9: People and Money System Update. Four commenters expressed their concern with the update provided. Two members expressed their disagreement with the suggestion that user error was to blame for ongoing issues, and identified the cumbersome nature of the software and insufficient training and guidance provided to users as having an ongoing impact on staff and the wider institution. One member expressed a concern regarding the move to a centralised system of support and reflected on value of the specialised support offered by local contacts and concern that a centralised support system would result in slow response times, generic responses and exacerbate problems for staff and students.</p> <p>Two members reflected on the ongoing impact of People and Money on staff and that the Principal should make the University Court aware of this. Both commenters expressed discontent with the response of senior management with one member calling for greater transparency and decisive action from university leaders. Both commenters expressed their discontent that an e-Senate paper which collated staff feedback on People and Money was not included on the September 2023 e-Senate agenda.</p>

	<p>One commenter expressed support for the comments provided by other members and reflected on their experience of providing detailed comments on the Communications from the University Court and a lack of evidence of Senate comments being taken onboard. They expressed a belief that Senate-Court-University Executive relations would benefit from concrete commitments from Court and the University executive on the importance of Senate contributions.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Report from Knowledge Strategy Committee (e-S 23/24 1J) To note</p> <p>Senate noted the report of the Knowledge Strategy Committee. Comments were received from one member. The commenter reflected on the external review and internal priorities for Senate and its Committees and expressed a hope that the Knowledge Strategy Committee would also consider its effectiveness, the configuration of joint Senate and Court Committees and involving Senate in strategic decisions related to the promotion of research and conditions of research-led teaching.</p> <p>The commenter also considers the timetabling transition as an opportunity to rebuild staff confidence in central infrastructure projects.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Report from the Central Academic Promotions Committee (e-S 23/24 1K) For information</p> <p>Senate noted the report of the Central Academic Promotions Committee. Two members extended their congratulations to the new Professors and Personal Chairs.</p> <p>One commenter expressed a hope that the new appointments would consider standing for election to Senate and emphasised the need to fill vacancies at a Grade 10 level. The commenter suggested that the new Personal Chairs be invited to stand for Senate to raise awareness of the opportunity and the importance of their potential contribution to the University community.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Electronic Senate

E-Senate will commence on Wednesday 10 January 2024 and close at noon on Wednesday 24 January 2024

Unconfirmed minute

A full summary of comments raised via e-Senate can be accessed at [e-Senate comments](#) (EASE login required).

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL	
1.	<p>Conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita (e-S 23/24 2 A) To approve</p> <p>Senate agreed to confer the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita on those professors listed in the paper. One member provided comment on this item.</p> <p>One member was critical of the procedural approach to e-Senate stating that they believe it to be poor form to confer the status of Emeritus via a process where nil response equals assent. They stated their hope that the e-Senate process be reviewed now that the external review has concluded.</p> <p>The member indicated a preference that a Special Minute refer to the candidates intention to remain active within the University and that Schools be recommended to include this information moving forward.</p>
ITEMS FOR COMMENT	
2.	<p>Court Resolutions (e-S 23/24 2 B) To comment</p> <p>Two members submitted comments on this item. One member expressed a view that a change from European Politics to Neuropolitics required explanation, whilst another member expressed a view that Personal Chairs should be able to determine the appropriate title to correspond with their area of academic expertise.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
ITEMS FOR INFORMATION OR NOTING	
3.	<p>Communications from the University Court (e-S 23/24 2 C) To note</p> <p>Senate formally noted the communications. Comments were received from four members.</p> <p>19 June 2023 Item 2: Principal's Report</p>

	<p>Two members commented on the use and meaning of the terms “freedom of speech” and “academic freedom” expressing opposing views. One member suggested that the University utilise the expertise within the institution on subject of academic freedom and that the approach be considered by Senate.</p> <p>Item 3: Student Experience Reviews with Schools/Deaneries 2022-23 One member commented on this item, expressing caution with anecdotal reports of positive feedback regarding the Student Support Model without a defined metric for measuring its success.</p> <p>9 October 2023 Item 7: Staff Engagement Survey Two members commented on this item, with one commenter reflecting on there being a lack of time given to the staff survey and another commenter suggesting that the low response rate may be associated with broader institutional matters at the time, including industrial action and confidence in University leadership.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Report from Knowledge Strategy Committee (e-S 22/23 2 D) To note</p> <p>Senate noted the report of the Knowledge Strategy Committee. Comments were received from three members.</p> <p>Item 2: Presentation: Digital Strategy, Digital Estate Update One member commented on the benefits of SeatEd and encouraged ethical use of anonymised data. Another member reflected on there being a lack of evidence of the University’s looking to learn from other institutions where there IoT/SMART-like systems have been rolled out at scale. The member urged adequate piloting of systems and consideration of data use and robust of opt-out provisions.</p> <p>Item 3: Chief Information Officer Update One member sought clarification regarding the reference to updates to the student record (EUCLID) as being linked to the Curriculum Transformation Project. Another member expressed concern regarding the proposal for a Chatbot within EdHelp, suggesting that investment should be directed toward human-supported alternatives.</p> <p>Item 4: Data Centre Capacity One member commented on the absence and delay of carbon accounting in relation to the University’s supercomputer facilities as detracting from the University’s carbon and sustainability commitments.</p>

Senate**Special Minute for former Senate member Professor John McCloskey****7 February 2024****John McCloskey Obituary**

After eight years remission, John McCloskey died of cancer on 15th November 2023. A native of Derry City in Northern Ireland, John grew up in a period marred by conflict and ever-present danger, but which generated a strong sense of community and solidarity that remained with him throughout his life. By his own admission, he was not a model student, but he graduated from Queen's University in Belfast with a BSc in Geology and then a Postgraduate Certificate of Education in Physics two years later. He spent the next ten years working as a physics teacher, latterly in Limavady, Northern Ireland. He proved an inspiring teacher and mentor to his pupils, leading them to an Irish and then European award for best high school physics project, and receiving the Institute for Physics Outstanding Teacher award for 1992. During this time, he developed an interest with his pupils in non-linear physics, and started to apply this in a part-time Doctorate of Philosophy programme in geophysics at the University of Ulster (UU), Coleraine, working largely from home while teaching and bringing up a young family with his wife Siobhán, also a dedicated teacher. Initially working on the spontaneous development of ripples and dunes in coastal environments, John quickly moved on to studying earthquakes as a non-linear system with much more freely-available data to test his hypotheses on. With no local supervisor to work with in this field, he established a strong and productive collaboration with Christopher Bean, then an early-career lecturer at University College Dublin. He completed his PhD in a similar time to that of a student working full time, and moved directly to a lectureship at UU in 1993.

The quality of his largely self-directed early work in earthquake physics was recognised by the European Geophysical Society in their young scientist publication award for 1994, and he moved quickly to a personal Chair in geophysics at UU at the turn of the millennium. He established from scratch a strong research group in geophysics at UU, with a large body of students and postdoctoral researchers funded by a significant number and variety of external research grants, while establishing geophysics as a key part of the undergraduate curriculum. Two of this group joined him as members of staff. The group became world leaders in modelling the triggering of earthquakes by stress transfer, leading major European Union funded consortium programmes in seismology. Following the 2004 Boxing-day mega-earthquake and tsunami in Sumatra, this team successfully forecast the location of a major aftershock. This propelled John to the public attention, generating global media interest and resulting in his being placed 72nd on the Sunday Times list of most influential scientists in 2010, mainly in recognition of his work during the Sumatra earthquake and tsunami crises. In parallel with his teaching and research work John provided a range of collegiate services to the community in leadership and advisory roles, including acting as Head of the School of Environmental Sciences at UU from 2002-2006, and Chair of the Natural

Environmental Research Council Geophysical Equipment Facility steering group. In recognition of the career excellence of his work he was elected member of the Royal Irish Academy in 2012.

The experience of working with communities affected by the Sumatran tsunami disaster proved something of an epiphany for John, so that his focus moved from solely understanding the physics of earthquakes to also developing practical methods to forecast the hazard and mitigate the worst effects of such disasters. He began working actively with community groups, NGOs such as the Dublin-based charity Concern, and government organisations, recognising it is often the poorest and most marginalised who are most affected by 'natural' disasters, and bringing a strong sense of purpose to the work. As a consequence, he was appointed to the UK Government Cabinet Office Scientific Group for Emergencies (SAGE) during the Nepal earthquake crisis in 2015 to evaluate the ongoing hazard during the aftershock sequence and inform the ongoing relief effort. In all of this work, John took a longer view, recognising that it was important even during the crisis management phase to consider how to 'build back better' before the next extreme event.

John faced two major crises of his own at around this time. First, he developed liver failure, requiring a transplant which proved successful and allowed him to return to work. He was forever grateful to the medical staff who looked after him then and subsequently. While very ill, and then to aid his convalescence, he moved office nearer home to the UU McGee campus in Derry to continue working with his group, while campaigning with local community groups to enhance the University presence in his home city. Second, the geophysics group were made redundant as part of a reorganisation at UU. It was characteristic of John that he was more concerned about the effect of this on junior colleagues than himself. However, UU's loss proved to be a major gain for the University of Edinburgh, where John moved to take up a new Chair in Natural Hazards in 2016.

This platform allowed John to scale up his ideas, and in 2019 he won over £20 million from the UKRI Global Challenges Research Fund for the 'Tomorrow's Cities' consortium, which he then led as principal investigator "to reduce disaster risk for the poor in tomorrow's cities." The ongoing aim of this programme is to catalyse a transition from crisis management to multi-hazard risk-informed planning and decision-making, for cities in low-and-middle-income countries, putting research at the heart of efforts to deliver the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. The programme involves a large number of early and later career researchers, town planners, engineers, and affected communities from around the world to deliver a practical decision support tool for planning future Cities at a time of unprecedented global urban development. Despite a hiatus in the GCRF programme funding in the second year of this programme, it continues to deliver, and will complete its mission in the Autumn of 2024. In the last year of his life John saw this idea being taken up by UN agencies, the World Bank, and a growing list of new City partners such as Nablus, involving a large amount of travel on his part to plan for the next phase of the work.

Outside work John was a dedicated family man, devoted to Siobhán and their daughters Mairéad and Róisín, and doting on his grandchildren Sorcha, Niamh and Sinéad. His nature was gregarious, and he made many friends for life in chance meetings across the world. I once accompanied him on the commute from Derry to Coleraine. So many passengers approached him that I asked at one point if he actually knew everyone on the train. He was a fine singer and guitar player, from his early days as a band member as a student to turns in sessions in the old town here in Edinburgh, with eclectic tastes in music from the classical to Rory Gallagher and Dick Gaughan, and from a young age a fan of the poems and songs of Robert Burns. He was a fine sailor, at least twice seeing the boat home safely in a storm, and only once with the aid of the coastguard when a mast snapped in the gale. He leaves us with a rich legacy of shared stories and songs, convivial evenings and serious discussion, a host of students and earlier career colleagues he mentored and inspired, many of whom may not have thought this path was open to them, a significant body of influential scientific research work, and the legacy of Tomorrow's Cities being safer places to live and work in areas prone to natural hazards. Go raibh maith agat (thank you) John - we will miss you.

Ian Main, University of Edinburgh, January 10, 2024.

Senate**7 February 2024****General Council Membership & Registration Ordinance****Description of paper**

1. University of Edinburgh Ordinance No. 186 (Appendix 1) has defined the criteria for membership of the [General Council](#) (GC) since 1991. At its meeting on 29 November 2021 Court approved that the Ordinance be reviewed to address unsatisfactory clauses which had been identified as anachronistic and causing confusion. These issues have been addressed in the attached Draft New Ordinance (Appendix 2).
2. The current Ordinance (Appendix 1) offers membership only to those with University degrees or to senior academic staff. These restrictions do not reflect that the University now confers other awards to graduates and are at odds with the value attached to an inclusive multi-professional University community articulated in Strategy 2030. The review identified the University grade structure as a means of defining comparable criteria for academic and professional staff. The criteria for staff membership of the GC defined in the Draft New Ordinance (Appendix 2) reflect the University's contemporary ethos while also recognising the requirements of the role and responsibilities of GC members.

Action requested / recommendation

3. Senate is invited to comment on the draft Ordinance.

Background and context

4. A report presented to the University Court in November 2021 proposed that Ordinance 186 should be amended substantially so that GC membership could be conferred on:
 - i. all those graduating with academic awards approved by Senate, not just degrees;
 - ii. all administrative, professional, and technical staff at grade 8 and above, to give parity with similar grade academic staff already eligible to join General Council;
 - iii. all Honorary awards and appointments – not just Honorary Fellows and Honorary graduates.
5. Court agreed to 'The initiation of a process of review of Ordinance No. 186 (General Council Membership & Registration) with a view to amending the criteria for General Council membership to resolve identified issues set out in the paper'.
6. During that review period, further consideration of the resource and implementation requirements was made by Development and Alumni (D&A) as it manages the General Council (GC) Register within its Charity Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database. This identified practical data management issues, particularly around extending membership to all Honorary appointments. Also, major changes were about to take place to the CRM systems.

7. Now that the changes to the CRM system have bedded down, it was decided to carry out a more detailed review of the resource implications of the proposed changes to Ordinance 186 and this has been carried out by a working group which included members of the D&A Services Team and the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary of the GC.
8. The Working Group report presented to the University Secretary concluded that:
 - a. Most (but not all) of the proposed changes to Ordinance 186 as recommended in the previous report to Court would be straightforward to incorporate into the General Council Register.
 - b. Any additional resource requirements arising from bringing in new categories would be temporary and manageable through phased implementation of changes to incorporate existing staff or award holders who would become eligible.
 - c. The main change from the previous proposal should be not to extend General Council membership to all Honorary appointments, such as Hon Professors, Hon Readers, Hon Senior Lecturers or Hon Lecturers. This earlier proposal arose from confusion over the category of Honorary Fellows eligible to join General Council. When Court decided in 1991 to include this group, it was meant to apply only to those awarded University Honorary Fellowships on the recommendation of Senate, and not to College appointed Honorary Fellows, but this distinction was not made clear enough in subsequent documentation.
 - d. The data management difficulties associated with including hundreds of College Honorary appointments in the General Council Register are complex, time consuming and onerous. As a result, there should be no extension of eligibility to include College appointed Honorary Fellows, Honorary Professors or Honorary Lecturers, as similar data management issues would arise.

Discussion

9. The proposed amendments to unsatisfactory clauses of the current Ordinance are shown in red in the Draft New Ordinance (Appendix 2).
 - (i) **Not all who now graduate receive degrees.** The current Ordinance restricts GC membership to those awarded degrees. In addition to degrees, there are currently about 30 other awards that can be made by the University, some of which confer the status of being a graduate of the University. Clause 1(a) has been reworded with input from the Director of Student Systems & Administration to reflect the contemporary flexibility in awards and inclusivity, while maintaining the University's formal academic standards, by permitting all graduates of the University to become members of GC. For example, the new wording opens GC membership to those graduating with postgraduate diplomas or those completing joint degrees with partner Universities. This change is reflected in the wording of Clauses 3 and 4(a) of the Appendix 2 which substitute the term 'academic award' for degree.
 - (ii) **Anomalies.** The 'ex officio' GC membership of the University Chaplain has now been specified in Clause 1(c). The invitation to retain membership is made

consistently to members demitting office in Clause 1(e) or completing their term of appointment after 3 years in Clause 1(f).

(iii) **Anachronism.** The registration fee referred to in Clauses 1(d-e) and Clause 7 of the current Ordinance (Appendix I) was discontinued by the University in 2012 and has been omitted from the Draft New Ordinance.

(iv) **Administrative simplification.** The changes create an opportunity to consider data flows and processes with the aim of increased efficiency. This will continue in the implementation phase. Offering membership for staff on appointment would be administratively simpler than initiating that after one year in post (Clause 1(c) (iv) of Appendix I). The current reference to retirement - Appendix I, clause 1 (e) - has been removed. The Draft New Ordinance retains the criterion for former staff who were members of General Council and were employed by the University for at least 3 years prior to leaving to be invited to retain their GC membership on leaving the University, except for those who leave because they have been dismissed or following disciplinary action.

(v) **Parity of membership for academic and professional staff.** The academic job titles formerly used to define GC membership criteria translate to University Grade 8 and above. Use of the University Grade profiles offers a means of achieving comparable criteria for professional staff. Clinical academics have their own scale. The wording of the relevant clauses 1(e & g) of Appendix 2 was provided by HR.

Resource implications

10. Any additional resource requirements arising from bringing in new categories would be temporary and manageable through phased implementation of changes to incorporate existing staff or award holders who would become eligible. Potentially the largest group of additional members of GC are those who graduated with awards which were not degrees but as they are already in the D&A CRM database, including them in the General Council Register is straightforward.

Risk management

11. The General Council Register sits within a database managed by D&A with close attention to data protection legislation and data security. A detailed Data Protection Impact Assessment of the proposed changes was carried out by the Working Party in its review of implementation and this was approved by the University Data Protection Officer.

Equality and diversity

12. Current criteria for GC membership discriminate in favour of academic staff to the exclusion of other staff groups. One aim of the review is to propose a more equitable basis for staff membership and hence a GC membership which better reflects the diversity of the University's community. An [Equality Impact Assessment](#) was carried out by the Working Party. This has since been approved by the University Secretary and the proposed changes will contribute to meeting the University's general equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.

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

13. Court approval of the transmission of the Draft New Ordinance has triggered a statutory 8-week period of consultation with Senate and the General Council, which is required to inform the preparation of the final draft of the New Ordinance. This final draft must be approved by Court before onward transmission for consideration by the Scottish Universities Committee and, in due course, for approval by the Privy Council.

Author

Dr William Duncan
Secretary to the General Council

Presenter

Leigh Chalmers
University Secretary

Freedom of Information

Open Paper

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH ORDINANCE No 186

GENERAL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AND REGISTRATION

At Edinburgh, the Eighth day of July, Nineteen hundred and ninety-one years.

WHEREAS the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, Section 10(1), provides that the University Court shall cause to be maintained a register of members of the General Council in accordance with provisions to be prescribed by Ordinance:

AND WHEREAS in terms of Sections 3 of the said Act and of paragraphs 1 and 5- of Part I of Schedule 2 thereto, the University Court has power to amend by Ordinance the composition, powers, and functions of, 'inter alia', the General Council, and to prescribe the conditions under which the register of members of the General Council is to be maintained:

AND WHEREAS the University Court deems it expedient to amend the composition of the General Council and to amend the conditions under which the register of members of the General Council is to be maintained:

THEREFORE the University Court of the University of Edinburgh, in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Section 3 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, and with particular reference to paragraphs 1 and 5 of Part I of Schedule 2 to that Act, hereby statutes and ordains:

1. The General Council of the University of Edinburgh shall consist of:

(a) all persons on whom the University has conferred degrees other than Honorary Degrees, whose names shall be recorded in the Register of Graduates referred to in Section 3 of this Ordinance, in accordance with the provisions of this Ordinance:

(b) all persons on whom the University has conferred an Honorary Degree or on whom it has conferred the title of Honorary Fellow of the University.

(c) during their tenure of office -

(i) the Chancellor of the University;

(ii) the members of the University Court;

(iii) the Professors of the University;

(iv) all Readers, Senior Lecturers, and Lecturers in the University who have held any such office for a period of one year:

(d) former members of the University Court and former Professors who have elected to pay the statutory registration fee, if any.

(e) former Readers, Senior Lecturers and Lecturers who have retired after holding any such office in the University for a period of three years and who have elected to pay the statutory registration fee, if any.

2. The University Court shall from time to time appoint a Registrar of the General Council, upon such conditions as the Court may determine, and the Court shall provide such assistance for the performance of the Registrar's duties as it may consider necessary. The office of Registrar may be held in conjunction with any other office in the University

3. The Registrar shall ensure that a Register of Graduates is maintained, recording the full names of all persons on whom the University has conferred a degree other than an Honorary Degree, the address of each graduand at the time of registration for graduation, the date of graduation, and the degree conferred.

4. The Registrar shall also ensure that a Register of Members of the General Council is maintained, recording

(a) the full names in alphabetical order and addresses (where known) of all graduates whose names are recorded in the Register of Graduates and who are not known to be dead, or presumed dead failing contrary information after eighty years from the date of graduation, together with, in each case, the first degree recorded in the Register of Graduates, and the year of graduation in that degree;

(b) the full names, in alphabetical order, and addresses (where known) of all other members of the General Council not known to be dead and the offices in virtue of which they qualify for membership.

5. ¹

6. If any person whose name is not included in the Register of Members - shall consider that it should be so included, it shall be competent for him or her to appeal to the University Court if the Court considers that such person's name should be included in the Register of Members - in terms of this Ordinance, it shall direct the Registrar to amend the Register accordingly. The decision of the Court shall be final.

7. The University Court shall have power to decide whether a fee shall be required as a condition of graduation in any degree or as a condition of membership of the General Council for those categories of persons mentioned in Section 1(d) and (e) of this Ordinance, and to fix the amount of any such fee. Those categories of persons mentioned in Section 1(b) of this Ordinance shall not be required to pay such a fee.

8. Ordinance No 174 (General Council Membership and Registration) is hereby revoked.

9. This Ordinance shall come into force after its approval by Her Majesty in Council on a date to be determined by the University Court.

Approved by Order in Council, dated 11 February 1992.

¹ Omitted by Ordinance No. 202, now superseded by Ordinance No. 213

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH ORDINANCE No 217

GENERAL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AND REGISTRATION

At Edinburgh, the [Number] day of [Month], [Year]

WHEREAS the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, Section 10(1), provides that the University Court shall cause to be maintained a register of members of the General Council in accordance with provisions to be prescribed by Ordinance:

AND WHEREAS in terms of Sections 3 of the said Act and of paragraphs 1 and 5- of Part I of Schedule 2 thereto, the University Court has power to amend by Ordinance the composition, powers, and functions of, `inter alia`, the General Council, and to prescribe the conditions under which the register of members of the General Council is to be maintained:

AND WHEREAS the University Court deems it expedient to amend the composition of the General Council and to amend the conditions under which the register of members of the General Council is to be maintained:

THEREFORE the University Court of the University of Edinburgh, in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Section 3 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, and with particular reference to paragraphs 1 and 5 of Part I of Schedule 2 to that Act, hereby statutes and ordains:

1. The General Council of the University of Edinburgh shall consist of:

(a) all persons who **having successfully met the requirements of an academic award other than an Honorary Degree and have graduated from the University of Edinburgh and** whose names shall be recorded in the Register of Graduates referred to in Section 3 of this Ordinance, in accordance with the provisions of this Ordinance:

(b) all persons on whom the University has conferred an Honorary Degree or on whom it has conferred the award of Honorary Fellow of the University. [Note: this provision does not apply to those appointed by Colleges or Schools as Honorary Fellows.]

(c) during their tenure of office -

- (i) the Chancellor of the University;
- (ii) the members of the University Court;
- (iii) **the Chaplain to the University.**

[Drafting note: all Professors, Readers, Senior Lecturers, Lecturers are now included under (d) below]

(d) during the tenure of their appointment: all staff of the University appointed to roles assigned to University Grade 8 or above and their grade equivalent(s).

(e) those 'ex officio' members in Clause 1(c) who accept the invitation to retain their membership of the General Council on demitting office or completion of their period of appointment; *[Drafting note: former Professors are now included under (f) below]*

(f) former staff (admitted previously as per Clause (d) above) who accept the invitation to retain their membership of the General Council after being employed by the University for a period of at least three years in a role assigned to Grade 8 or above or equivalent and who leave University employment except when dismissed or in other similar categories of case as may be determined by the Registrar.

2. The University Court shall from time to time appoint a Registrar of the General Council, upon such conditions as the Court may determine, and the Court shall provide such assistance for the performance of the Registrar's duties as it may consider necessary. The office of Registrar may be held in conjunction with any other office in the University

3. The Registrar shall ensure that a Register of Graduates is maintained, recording the full names of all persons on whom the University has conferred an **academic award** other than an Honorary Degree, the address of each graduand at the time of registration for graduation, the date of graduation, and the **award** conferred.

4. The Registrar shall also ensure that a Register of Members of the General Council is maintained, recording

(a) the full names in alphabetical order and addresses (where known) of all graduates whose names are recorded in the Register of Graduates and who are not known to be dead, or presumed dead failing contrary information after eighty years from the date of graduation, together with, in each case, the first **academic award** recorded in the Register of Graduates, and the year of graduation in that **academic award**.

(b) the full names, in alphabetical order, and addresses (where known) of all other members of the General Council not known to be dead and the offices in virtue of which they qualify for membership.

~~5. [Omitted by Ordinance No. 202, now superseded by Ordinance No. 213]~~

5. If any person whose name is not included in the Register of Members shall consider that it should be so included, it shall be competent for him or her to appeal to the University Court **and** if the Court considers that such person's name should be included in the Register of Members - in terms of this Ordinance, it shall direct the Registrar to amend the Register accordingly. The decision of the Court shall be final.

6. Ordinance No **186** (General Council Membership and Registration) is hereby revoked.

7. This Ordinance shall come into force after its approval by **His** Majesty in Council on a date to be determined by the University Court.

Approved by Order in Council, dated **[insert date when known]**

Senate

7 February 2024

Senate Standing Committees - Mid-Year Reflection on Committee Priorities and Upcoming Business

Description of paper

1. The paper provides Senate with the Senate Committees' mid-year reflection on progress toward priorities.
2. This paper informs Senate of the main points of activity and business that we anticipate that the Senate Standing Committees will consider between February and May 2024.

Action requested / recommendation

3. Senate is invited to comment on the progress toward committee priorities for 2023/24. The feedback received at Senate will aid in informing area(s) of focus within the existing 2023/24 committee priorities and/or actions to help achieve these priorities in the remainder of the academic year.
4. Senate is invited to comment on the upcoming business of the Standing Committees.

Background and context

Standing Committee priorities in 2023/24

5. The Committees identified their priorities for the next academic year in March - May 2023. These were presented to Senate in May 2023 as part of the Annual Report of Senate Standing Committees; however, the paper was not considered due to insufficient time. Therefore, an updated paper was presented to the October 2023 meeting.
6. Senate received the Annual Report in October 2023; however, the paper was not approved by a majority vote of 51%. The Senate Standing Orders require the standing committees to report to Senate on an annual basis on action taken under powers delegated to them by Senate. The annual report is routinely presented to the May meeting of Senate.
7. Senate has expressed a preference that it be provided with greater information on standing committee business, including most recently during the discussion at the October 2023 meeting on the Annual Report. This paper aims to provide Senate with greater information on Committees' progress towards priorities, and help to inform the development of the next Annual Report.

Developing Standing Committee priorities for 2024/25

8. Each of the Standing Committees will receive a paper for discussion during the March/April round of meetings. In order to support the Committees in discussing proposed priorities and to ensure greater information is available for Senate, enhancements to the previous process will include: increased time at Standing Committee meetings for the discussion; provision of a rationale for each priority

and how these fit within the remit of the committee; providing information on the anticipated area(s) of focus and/or actions/outcomes; and identification of where a priority is related to a regulatory/external requirement.

Standing Committees Upcoming Business

9. As has been established as practice, a note of upcoming key items of business from the Senate Standing Committees is a standing item on the agenda for Ordinary meetings of Senate. This is intended to facilitate Senate awareness and oversight of Standing Committee activity. This note does not include a comprehensive overview of all business that the Standing Committees may consider during this period.

Discussion

Standing Committee Priorities

10. The mid-year update for the Senate Education Committee (SEC) is provided in Appendix 1. The Committee received a Mid-Year Reflection paper at its 18 January meeting. The Committee's discussion of the item was combined with discussion of a separate paper submitted by an elected Senate member which sought to review the priorities for SEC for the 2023/24 academic year. These were a request for greater information on NSS, discussion on Tutors and Demonstrators, and means to address lost learning. The Committee agreed that some interim actions were appropriate to progress in these areas, and it would also revisit its discussion when establishing the Committee priorities for 2024/25.
11. The mid-year update for the Senate Academic Policy and Regulation Committee (APRC) is provided in Appendix 2. The Committee received a Mid-Year Reflection paper at its 25 January meeting. The Committee's discussion of the items focussed on the process of review and approval of policies requiring amendments due to the Curriculum Transformation Project.
12. The mid-year update for the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) is provided in Appendix 3. Due to the timing of SQAC meetings, the Committee has not yet received the mid-year reflections paper and therefore comments of Committee members are not available to feed into this paper; however, this item will be included on the agenda for SQAC's 22 February meeting. In the interim, the mid-year reflections are provided to Senate for completeness and any discussion had by the Committee will feed into work towards the priorities, as well as helping to inform the drafting of the Annual Report.

Upcoming Business

13. A summary of the Standing Committee upcoming business paper is provided in Appendix 4. This summary is to inform Senate of the main points of activity and business that we anticipate that the Senate Standing Committees will consider between February and May 2024.

Resource implications

14. This paper does not propose any actions. The resource implications of any actions which arise from the discussion would need to be considered by the relevant Standing Committee.

Risk management

15. Progress against priorities is vital to the Committee fulfilling its remit. Failure of the Committees to fulfil their remit raises potential risks associated with the University's framework of academic policy and regulations and the student experience.
16. This activity supports the university's obligations under the 2017 Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

17. This paper does not respond to the climate emergency or contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Equality & diversity

18. This paper does not propose any actions. The equality and diversity implications any actions which arise from the discussion would need to be outlined and considered by the relevant Standing Committee.
19. Any Equality and Diversity issues related to Standing Committee business will be raised at the relevant Committee.

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

20. Any comments raised by Senate will be reported to the Standing Committees at their next meeting. Comments and feedback raised by Senate members will be taken into account when drafting the Senate Annual Report.
21. Additionally, the Senate Committees' Newsletter is prepared after each round of Committee business and this will provide information on business undertaken by Senate and its Committees to the wider University community.

Author

Adam Bunni, Academic Policy Manager
Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Manager
Sinead Docherty, Academic Policy Officer
Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer
Nichola Kett, Interim Director of Academic Services
Cristina Matthews, Academic Policy Officer

Presenter

Prof Patrick Hadoke, Convener of APRC
Prof Colm Harmon, Convener of SEC
Prof Tina Harrison, Convener of SQAC

Professor Colm Harmon, Convener of Senate Education Committee

H/02/02/02

S23/24 2D

Professor Tina Harrison, Convener of
Senate Quality Assurance Committee
Professor Patrick Hadoke, Convener of
Academic Policy and Regulation Committee

Academic Services
January 2024

Freedom of Information Open

Appendix 1:**Senate Education Committee priorities mid-year update 2023/24*****Curriculum Transformation Programme (also a standing item)***

- A verbal update was provided to the Committee in **September 2023** on work undertaken since the last paper was presented (in March 2023), covering key activities and the impact of MAB on engagement with Schools. The Committee fed back on the need for CTP to align with School and College priorities around assessment and on resource implications. More detail on challenge courses was also requested in future updates.
- In **November 2023** a paper providing an update on CTP since the last paper was presented to the Committee in March 2023 was given. The update was based around three main areas of activity:
 - the development, testing and validation of a new Curriculum Framework for the University (Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate) including engagement with Schools and via Colleges;
 - preparation of an Outline Business Case;
 - and work on an outline project plan to support the adoption of the Curriculum Framework including consideration of what processes could be used to approve changes to programmes and courses.
- Members fed in comments and discussion included the differences between honours and pre-honours years, resourcing of teaching staff, approaches to teaching at scale, and the need for the framework to include work streams and competency sets which affect how students work within their own subject area. Discussion also addressed other key elements including assessment and feedback, decolonising the curriculum and the importance of fundamental pillars of delivery such as timetabling and systems. It was noted that consideration must be given to how other key strategies of the University interact with CTP, and acknowledged that the continuing consultation with colleagues is vital to the plans and expected implementation.
- Committee members were also invited to attend the CTP Senate Session on **15 January 2024**. An accompanying paper outlined key elements for discussion and feedback at the session. A brief introduction to each of the topics was given ahead of discussion on each of the following items:
 - The Postgraduate Taught Framework
 - The Undergraduate Framework
 - The planned phasing of the Programme

Assessment and feedback task groups

- A verbal update in the **September 2023** meeting. The Committee was informed that the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group and the Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group are both

exploring options for the summer resit diet in 23/24, with a range of options set to be in place to facilitate resits that may not require in-person attendance.

- Assessment and feedback was also discussed in the context of the NSS Survey Results at the **September 2023** meeting. It was recognised that there is work to do to improve student satisfaction in relation to feedback; this work can be facilitated through the Assessment & Feedback Principles & Priorities which set out the standards and guidance for Schools.
- Assessment and feedback was discussed under Matters Arising at the **November 2023** meeting, with members expressing the view that assessment design is an important aspect of inclusivity and combatting plagiarism. Following this discussion, the Deputy Vice Principal, Students (Enhancement) agreed to liaise with IAD colleagues to identify resources which can be shared across the University to support assessment design.

Generative Artificial Intelligence

- The Committee discussed Generative AI in the context of a proposal for firewall website controls that was presented at the **September 2023** meeting. The Committee had been asked for its views, which would be shared with the University Executive. Comments from Committee members addressed firewall limitations, student protection and the need to understand how AI might be legitimately used by both staff and students.
- In the **November 2023** meeting, the Committee was informed that work is underway to review and develop the guidance around Generative AI, and to develop training that will assist colleagues with AI literacy. The Artificial Intelligence Data Ethics task group (AIDE) is being revised and reshaped and will be involved in this work

Appendix 2:**Senate Academic Policy and Regulation Committee mid-year update 2023/24*****Policy and regulatory arrangements for the Curriculum Transformation Programme***

- The Models of Degree Types, Framework for Curricula, and the Degree Programme Specification Guidance will need to be reviewed as part of the Curriculum Transformation Programme. These frameworks and guidance are due for review in 2023/24 as agreed in the updated schedule of review of policies, regulations and guidance approved by the Committee in March 2023, and are expected to be submitted to the Committee for approval in Spring 2024.

Strands of work relating to the Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group (particularly in relation to academic policy and regulation)

- The Committee has not received work or updates so far in 2023/24 in relation to the Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group.

Ongoing work around Coursework Extensions and Special Circumstances

- At its July 2023 meeting, the Committee considered but did not approve the implementation of a draft Exceptional Circumstances policy, which was designed to replace the existing policy and regulations relating to Special Circumstances and coursework extensions. However, the Committee agreed that it would be desirable for the draft policy to return for further consideration during 2023/24. The Committee will receive, for comment, an updated draft of a proposed policy, and an update on systems and process changes required to implement such a policy, at its January 2024 meeting. We anticipate that a final policy will be submitted to the Committee for approval at the March 2024 meeting.

Receive policies for approval in line with agreed updated schedule of review of policies, regulations and guidance

- Academic Services, and other stakeholders and policy owners, are conducting consultations with relevant stakeholders to revise the policies and guidance as set out in the updated schedule approved by the Committee in March 2023. The policies and guidance under the remit of APRC which are due for review in 2023/24 include:
 - Special Circumstances Policy
 - Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes
 - Student Maternity and Family Leave Policy
 - PhD by Integrated Study Guidance
 - Performance Sport Policy
- The Student Appeal Regulations and the Work-Based and Placement Learning Policy had not been noted for review in 2023/24 in the schedule, but have now

been prioritised for review, and will be presented to the Committee for approval in 2023/24.

- Following the standard annual schedule for the consultation and review of regulations, the Committee will also receive, for approval, updates to the following regulations:
 - Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations (due March 2024)
 - Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations (due March 2024)
 - Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees (due May 2024)
 - Taught Assessment Regulations (due May 2024)
- The following frameworks and guidance are also due for review in 2023/24 (as noted above cf.7) as part of the Curriculum Transformation Programme and are expected to come to APRC:
 - Models of Degree Types
 - Framework for Curricula
 - Degree Programme Specification Guidance

Appendix 3:**Senate Quality Assurance Committee mid-year update 2023/24*****Overseeing the implementation of a plan of action in response to the 2021 Enhancement Led Institutional Review***

- The [Quality Enhancement and Standards Review \(QESR\)](#) is the current review method used by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for higher education institutions in Scotland. It considers an institution's outcome under the previous review method, Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR).
- Our QESR took place on 16 November 2023 and the Final QESR Report was published on 24 January 2024. The review team was confident that the University is making effective progress in continuing to monitor, review and enhance its provision to enable effective arrangements to be in place for managing academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience. The QESR team commended the University's Institute for Academic Development in establishing a network of secondees and associates embedded within the schools to support developments in learning and teaching.
- The QESR team considered four of the ELIR recommendations to be fully addressed and recognised the action taken to date towards the remaining six recommendations, and helpfully made the following further recommendations for action based on, and in addition to, the ELIR 4 recommendations:
 - **Pace of change** - the University should make progress on and accelerate its actions in response to the recommendations from the previous ELIR, ensuring effective and consistent implementation by all Schools, and monitor the outcomes, in order to evidence significant progress within the next academic year.
 - **Learning and Teaching Strategy** - the University should expedite the final drafting, approval and implementation of the Learning and Teaching Strategy to help staff and students understand how major strategic projects work together and provide clarity on the strategic approach to enhancing learning and teaching.
 - **Assessment and feedback** - the University should take immediate action, within the current academic year, to ensure that the new Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities (developed in response to ELIR 4) are fully implemented in all Schools, that feedback turn-round times and quality are monitored effectively, and that prompt action is taken to address any shortcomings.
 - **Training for postgraduate research (PGR) students who teach** - the University should take prompt action, within the current academic year, to consistently implement its updated policy and to ensure that training for PGRs who teach is required at the University and School

level, and that this action is monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that all PGRs are fully supported in undertaking their teaching duties.

- **Promotion of academic staff based on teaching** - the University should clearly and accurately record data on promotion routes based on teaching excellence so it can effectively evidence the implementation of its goal to achieve parity between teaching and research and take action to ensure this aim is met.
- **Attainment gap monitoring** – the University should pay particular attention to sharing good practice and supporting staff in understanding the causes of attainments gaps and taking effective action.
- We are currently in the process of establishing an oversight group to take the recommendations forward.

Responding to the outcome of the Scottish Funding Council’s Tertiary Quality Review

- Current quality arrangements remain in place – including IPRs and annual monitoring – the outcomes of which were reported to the September 2023 meeting of SQAC. A Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework for implementation within 2024-25 is being developed and the University is represented on groups and is inputting into discussions as part of this development. Updated SFC Guidance on Quality is expected in the summer.

Strands of work relating to the Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group (particularly in relation to data regarding retention, progression and attainment).

- The Assessment and Feedback task groups were established by the Senate Standing Committees in the Spring of last year to coordinate and govern the range of institutional initiatives and activities on assessment and feedback. The Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group was tasked to address institutional strategy around assessment and feedback, and academic integrity in assessment. The initial focus of the group was on institutional policy around mode of examinations and overseeing Schools’ activities to align with the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities. The group reports directly to Senate Education Committee (SEC) and is convened by the Deputy Vice-Principal, Students (Enhancements). The Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation (AFGPDSE) Group has a more operational focus and was initially tasked develop institutional advice and guidance on the practical management of online and on-campus examinations and oversee the development of academic misconduct procedures. The AFGPDSE group reports to the three Senate

Standing Committees on issues related to their respective remits and is convened by the Deputy Secretary, Students. Each group met twice between March and September 2023, with several recommendations made to SEC in regard to institutional policy on examination formats for 2023-24 and the implementation of the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities.

- Despite the two groups having a distinct focus on strategic and operational matters, in practice it has been difficult to draw a clear distinction in some respects, resulting in a degree of overlap and duplication. This prompted the convenors to pause and consider whether the groups are delivering what we currently need. The anticipated publication (Wednesday 24 January 2024) of the final report of the [Quality Enhancement and Standards Review \(QESR\)](#) which the University underwent in November 2023, has also prompted a further re-think, due to the additional recommendations on assessment and feedback. Therefore, at the meeting held on Thursday 18 January 2024, Senate Education Committee (SEC) approved a proposal from the convenors to dissolve the AFGPDSE Group and reconstitute the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group with a refreshed membership and remit focused on delivering the outcome of the QESR and longer-term ambitions for assessment and feedback. The Group will continue to report to SEC with a revised terms of reference and membership.

Evaluation and monitoring of the implementation of the new student support model.

- SQAC is aware that Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling (SAIM) is currently working on evaluating and monitoring the new student support model in two strands; (1) evaluating the implementation of the model (continuation from 2022/23 academic year) and (2) the development of an evaluation mechanism as the model transitions to business as usual – including how this mechanism integrates with existing quality assurance processes.
- This work is being guided by academic colleagues from SPS, working with SAIM, the project team and with a group of key stakeholders. A paper will be presented to SQAC in its meeting on 22nd February 2024 with a substantial update on progress on both strands of work.

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Appendix 4:

Senate Standing Committees: upcoming business February 2024 – May 2024

All committees:

- March/April – Committee priorities for 2024/25. This is routine annual business where the committees will discuss and set their priorities for the upcoming year. The discussion will include outlining the rationale and how priorities fit with the remit of the committee. Priorities from the current year may be taken forward and/or new priorities agreed. Senate elected members on the committees are asked to feed the views of Senate into the consideration of proposed priorities. These will be included in the Senate Committees Annual Report presented to Senate in May.
- May – Senate Committees’ Internal Effectiveness Review. As part of routine annual business, each committee will receive an update on actions taken in response to last year’s review and an outline of plans for undertaking the review of 2023/24.
- May – committee Terms of Reference and membership. These are presented annually to each committee for noting and identify any changes in members for onward approval at Senate.

<u>Senate Education Committee (SEC)</u>	
Upcoming business:	Brief description and context:
1. Curriculum Transformation	This is a standing item on SEC agendas and a Committee priority for 2023/24. The exact nature of the business that SEC will consider during this period will depend on the decisions and advice that the project requires.
2. Student Experience	<p>This is a standing item on SEC agendas in 2023/24.</p> <p>Student Support Model</p> <p>An update on the Student Support Framework will be presented for approval and documentation on Leadership and Standards is expected to be presented to the March</p>

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	meeting of SEC. The update is expected to reflect latest developments in Student Support and leadership in particular.
3. Assessment and Feedback Groups	This is a Committee priority for 2023/24. Two task groups had been coordinating institutional activities around assessment and feedback (one focussing on strategy and policy, the other on guidance, procedures, data, systems and evaluation). At the January 2024 meeting, SEC approved the proposal to disband the operational group and allow the strategy group to refine its remit, and take forward the activities required. The activities will include the action required to respond to the recommendations made in the QESR report (following the November 2023 review). The strategy group will continue to report to SEC.
4. Student Partnership Agreement	The Student Partnership Agreement is presented annually to the Committee in May for approval, outlining the areas that the Students' Association wishes to work on (on behalf of the students) in partnership with the wider University.
5. Learn Ultra	An update on the Learn Ultra evaluation including school accessibility reviews is expected at the March meeting (last presented to the committee in May 2023)
6. Short courses	Information Services Group have proposed bringing a paper to the committee in May about a new platform for short courses
7. CPD Framework for Learning and Teaching	The Institute for Academic Development are seeking to bring a paper on the CPD Framework for Learning and Teaching to the May meeting
8. Doctoral College	This is a standing item on SEC agendas in 2023/24. It's not known at this stage if there will be any business presented to the committee.
9. Generative Artificial Intelligence	This is a Committee priority for 2023/24. It's not known at this stage if there will be any business presented to the committee.

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<u>Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)</u>	
Upcoming business:	Brief description and context:
1. Academic Services Annual Reports	<p>1. Annual Report on Academic Appeals 2022-23 The Committee will consider an analysis of appeals submitted in academic year 2022-23 and areas for action.</p> <p>2. Annual Report on Student Discipline 2022-23 The Committee will discuss an analysis of cases considered under the Code of Student Conduct over the course of the academic year 2022-23.</p> <p>3. Annual Report on Complaint Handling 2022-23 The Committee will discuss an analysis of the handling of complaints to the University for the academic year 2022-23, in line with the requirements of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and the University’s Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP).</p>
2. Annual Review of Student Support Services 2022-23	The Committee will discuss the report on the annual review, noting areas of good practice for sharing across services and agreeing themes for development and action.
3. Annual Monitoring, Review & Reporting	The Committee will consider changes to the School and Programme-level annual reporting templates for 2023-24 to ensure that key institutional issues are reported on where required. Specific consideration will be given to enhancing the PGR areas of focus within the templates.
4. Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR)	The Committee will consider the report of the Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR) published on the 24 th January 2024 following the November 2023 visit. The report details recommendations that require further action within the University (see Senate paper S23/24 2M)

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5. Undergraduate Degree Outcomes	The Committee (at the April meeting) will consider the annual report on degree classification data broken down by School and benchmarked against the Russell Group at subject group level.
6. Scotland's Rural College	The Committee will consider the annual report for 2022-23 of the Accreditation Committee of Scotland's Rural College (SRUC).

<u>Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)</u>	
Upcoming business:	Brief description and context:
1. Exceptional Circumstances Policy	The Committee commented on an updated version of the proposed policy at its January meeting. A final version of the policy is expected to come for approval at the March meeting.
2. Annual review of Degree Regulations	At its March meeting the Committee will consider proposals for amendments to the following sets of regulations as part of the annual review cycle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations - Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations Following this meeting the draft regulations will proceed for approval to Court via the resolution process.
3. Annual review of Assessment Regulations	At its May meeting the Committee will consider and approve, as appropriate, amendments to the following sets of regulations as part of the annual review cycle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taught Assessment Regulations - Postgraduate Research Assessment Regulations
4. Periodic review of policies	The Committee will consider proposals for essential changes and enhancements to policies due for periodic review in 2023/24. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes - Student Maternity and Family Leave Policy - PhD by Integrated Study Guidance

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Performance Sport Policy- Student Appeal Regulations- Work-Based and Placement Learning Policy
5. Policy updates contingent on Curriculum Transformation	The Models of Degree Types, Framework for Curricula, and the Degree Programme Specification Guidance will need to be reviewed as part of the Curriculum Transformation Programme. These frameworks and guidance are due for review in 2023/24.

Senate**7 February 2024****Senate External Review – formation of a Task and Finish Group****Description of paper**

1. This paper outlines the feedback received via the online consultation with Senate members on the proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group. The group is expected to respond to the recommendation and suggestions emerging from the External Effectiveness Review of Senate undertaken in 2022-23 with reports to Senate on how this will be achieved.

Action requested

2. To note the feedback received via the Senate members consultation on the proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group.
3. To approve the formation of the proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group as outlined in Appendix 1.

Background and context

4. Under the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance, the University is required to carry out an externally-facilitated effectiveness review at least every five years. At its 25 May 2022 meeting, Senate agreed to bring this review forward by one year to 2022-23, and at its 11 August 2022 meeting, Senate confirmed its support for the terms of reference for the review.
5. Following a standard tendering process led by the University Secretary, Advance HE were appointed to undertake the external review of Senate, with Professor Ella Ritchie as the lead consultant. .
6. The review commenced in November 2022. The report was finalised in July 2023 and submitted to the University.
7. The Report of the Review was provided to all Senate members with the invitation to provide feedback on the External Review. This feedback was collated and a summary of responses presented to the 11 October 2023 meeting (see [Paper S23/24 1I](#)).
8. The feedback received from members indicates a need for further consideration and development of actions in response to recommendations received via the External Review.

Discussion

9. Senate received a proposal to establish a Senate External Review Task and Finish Group at its meeting on 11 October 2023. The paper containing the proposal to establish the Task and Finish group did not indicate that the formation of the group was 'for approval' and Senate members were not expecting to undertake a vote on this item and therefore objected to the formation of the group as presented (see [11 October 2023 Senate minutes](#)).
10. Following the 11 October 2023 meeting, the proposal for the Senate External Review Task and Finish Group was redrafted to take account of comments raised by

members at the 11 October 2023 meeting and circulated to Senate members for consultation ahead of the 7 February 2024 meeting.

11. A total of 17 members engaged with the consultation with contributions from elected and ex-officio members.
12. A summary of the key points and feedback received via the consultation is provided in paragraphs 14 to 24. The full feedback can be accessed via the [Senate Members Portal](#) (Senate member access only).

Purpose, Terms of Reference and Scope

13. Members sought greater clarification on the frequency and process for reporting on the activities of the group.
14. Members sought greater clarification on the process for identifying the priority of actions for the group to take forward.
15. Members expressed a preference that the group not be limited by the bounds of the External Review and this be widened to allow the group to develop proposals intended to improve the function and effectiveness of Senate.

Membership, Composition and Terms of Office:

16. Members were broadly content with the proposed membership of the group.

A common theme across commenters was concern with the time commitment required for the group and queried whether there is means to compensate staff members by being released from other commitments, and student members with financial remuneration.

17. Members also held differing views on the proposed external chair, with several members raising concern regarding the appointment process for an external chair and suggesting that the chair be elected from among the group members.

Timelines:

18. Many respondents welcomed the extension to the timeframe and timelines for the group. Some members reflected on the ambitious nature of the timeframe and noted that adequate support will be required to achieve the aims of the group in the timeframe outlined.
19. Some members noted that scope for extending the group would be useful.
20. Members expressed a desire for clarification of how Senate would be kept informed of the progress of the group.

Process for the appointment of members:

21. The majority of members were content with the proposed approach for the appointment of elected members.
22. The appointment of a chair was also raised in relation to this item.

Next steps

23. This feedback has been incorporated in to the plans for the Task and Finish Group.
24. Due to the frequency of Senate meetings and the importance of ensuring action is taken in response to the review in a timely manner, it is proposed a Senate External

Review Task and Finish Group be established for 2023/24 with scope to extend beyond this if necessary.

25. The Task and Finish Group will be responsible for considering the recommendations arising from the Report, the feedback received from Senate members on the findings, and to develop proposals in response, for the consideration and, where appropriate, approval of Senate.
26. The full terms of reference is provided in Appendix 1.

Resource implications

27. The Task and Finish Group is expected to function in a similar way to a Senate Standing Committee with the group meeting up to five times per year. The volume of work is expected to be similar to that of a Senate Standing Committee.
28. There is an expected resource implication which is yet to be quantified for Academic Services and specifically the Senate Clerk in supporting the implementation of the recommendations and outcomes from the external review.
29. There is an expected resource implication is yet to be quantified for members of the proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group and the Senate Clerk in providing support to the Group.

Risk Management

30. There is a risk that failure to respond to the external review in a robust and timely manner may exacerbate the challenges experienced by Senate and erode confidence in the desire to address the issues leading to the review being brought forward.
31. There is a risk to the institutional governance of the University if the recommendations and actions arising from the Senate External Review are not taken forward.

Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

32. Not applicable

Equality and Diversity

33. The recommendations of the external review include points specific to Equality and Diversity. The proposed membership of the Senate External Review Task and Finish Group is formulated to take account of these points and the group will be asked to consider and identify any barriers to equality, diversity and inclusion in the development or implementation of actions in response to the review.
34. The Task and Finish group are be expected to consider the EDI implications of any proposals coming forward to Senate in line with the usual responsibilities for Committee members to take account of the EDI implications for proposals coming forward for approval.

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

35. The proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish group will be expected to regularly communicate updates on their work to the wider Senate membership.

Consultation

36. Senate is being consulted on the proposed actions in response to the external review and the development of a Senate External Review Task and Finish Group.

Further information

Author(s)

Leigh Chalmers
Vice-Principal and University Secretary
&
Olivia Hayes

Presenter

Leigh Chalmers
Vice-Principal and University Secretary

Senate Clerk & Academic Policy Officer
30 January 2024

Freedom of information

Open

Proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

1.1. The Senate External Review Task and Finish Group are responsible for considering the recommendations arising from the Advance HE Report and developing proposals in response for the consideration and, where appropriate, approval of Senate.

2. Terms of Reference

2.1. To provide oversight of the progress toward actions arising from the Senate External Review recommendations.

2.2. To provide regular updates and reports to Senate on the progress of actions in response to the Senate External Review recommendations.

2.3. To drive forward actions and initiatives in response to recommendations from the Senate External Review in-year and between meetings of Senate, where such actions have a clear benefit to the functioning of Senate and the wider University.

2.4. To develop proposals in response to the recommendations of the Senate External Review recommendations. Where appropriate, the group will consult with the wider membership which it represents with final proposals to be presented to Senate for approval, where appropriate.

2.5. The group will be expected to consider the EDI implications of any proposals coming forward to Senate in line with the usual approach to preparing papers and proposals for Senate.

3. Membership

3.1. The overarching principle for membership of the group is to achieve equality of representation across each member category, with representation from across career stages and with diverse expertise and perspectives to help shape proposals arising from the Task and Finish Group. Members will take collective ownership of the group's work and proposals arising from these, consulting with the wider member group they represent where necessary.

3.2. The group will be supported by Registry Services.

4. Composition:

4.1. Chair – To be determined.

4.2. Four (4) ex-officio members, made up of a member of the Senior Leadership team, a Senate Assessor to Court, the University Lead on EDI and Head of School representation. An equal balance of representation across Colleges will be sought.

4.3. Four (4) student members as nominated by the Students' Association. An balance of representation of student levels will be sought i.e. include representation from postgraduate research students.

4.4. Four (4) elected members, with representation from one member whose holds a dedicated research position such as a junior research associate, early career fellow or equivalent. An equal balance of representation across Colleges will be sought. Two (2) representatives from Registry Services, including the Senate Clerk. Representatives will provide practical advice and support to the group.

5. Terms of Office:

5.1. The term of office is 1 March 2024 – 31 July 2025.

5.2. Senate will review the end date for the group at its final meeting of 2025 to confirm if a further extension of the group's term is required.

- 5.3. Elected members whose term of office or contract of employment concludes prior to 31 July 2025 are still encouraged to submit a nomination for membership of the group. Any changes to group composition which arise due to either a members' term of office concluding, their contract of employment ending, or due to a change in role holder will be notified to Senate and handled in a similar manner to vacancies which arise on the Senate Exception Committee.
- 5.4. The Students' Association are responsible for nominating student members to fill the four student positions and ensuring a balanced representation across student groups e.g., taught and research. Due to the terms of office for student members, there is an increased likelihood that some role holders may change however any changes will be notified to Senate.

6. Timelines:

- 6.1. The Senate External Review Task and Finish Group will meet at least four times during each academic year. There will be three meetings of the group in remainder of 2023/24 and a minimum of five meetings in 2024/25. The group will conduct business electronically between meetings with the work of the group is expected to be of a similar volume to that of a Senate Standing Committee.
- 6.2. The group is expected to develop recommendations in response to actions over the course of the year with proposals requiring wider Senate approval to be presented to meetings of Senate.

7. Reporting

- 7.1. A standing item to be included on the Senate agenda for the duration of the life of the task and finish group providing members with an update on the work of the group, with proposals to be presented for approval as individual items.
- 7.2. Updates on the work of the group intended for Senate members will be published the Senate Members Portal
- 7.3. Updates on activities intended for the wider University community will be included in the Senate Newsletter.

8. Process for appointment of elected members

- 8.1. The work of the group is expected to be of a similar volume to that of a Senate Standing Committee and the process for electing members to the task and finish group is intended to reflect that of Senate Standing Committees.
- 8.2. To allow the work of the group to commence as soon as possible, it is proposed that the following pragmatic arrangements will apply to the nomination and appointment of elected members:
 - Current elected academic staff members of Senate will have the opportunity to nominate themselves for membership of the task and finish group. The principle of ensuring a wide input of views from elected members will apply;
 - Three of the four elected member positions on the task and finish group will be assigned to each College. The fourth position will be drawn from all remaining nominees across all Colleges.
 - In the event that the number of eligible nominees for the Group does not exceed the three available places and there is at least one nominee from each College, each nominee will be assigned to the membership of the group;

Senate

7 February 2024

Senate & Senate Standing Committee Elections 2024/25

Description of paper

1. This paper invites Senate to approve two revisions to the Senate membership which have arisen from the Senate External Review recommendations.
2. This paper invites Senate to approve the arrangements for the operation of the 2024 elections for academic staff to Senate.
3. The paper invites Senate to approve arrangements for the election of elected Senate staff members to Senate Standing Committees for 2024/25.
4. The paper invites Senate to consider and recommend changes to the Senate Election Regulations to the University Court for approval.

Action requested / Recommendation

5. Senate is asked to **approve** the proposal to reserve a total of nine (9) positions for staff who hold a junior research position. The nine positions are to be equally split across each College, with a total of three (3) positions in each College.
6. Senate is asked to **support** the proposal that a total of four (4) ex-officio positions be reserved for professional services staff. This will be comprised of the Professional Services staff member on Court, and three elected Professional Services staff members with one drawn from each College.
7. Senate is asked to **approve**:
 - 7.1. The appointment of a Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer for the Senate and Senate Standing Committee elections;
 - 7.2. The opening of the call for nominations for Senate and Senate Standing Committees;
 - 7.3. The deadline for the submission of nominations and the date of both sets of elections.
8. Senate is asked to **note** the continued process of allocating terms of office to defined groups of elected academic staff candidates in order to achieve an equal balance of positions becoming available for election in each category, each year. The process to achieve this is as approved by Senate at its 8 February 2023 meeting and is outlined in paragraph 45.
9. Senate is asked to **note** the technical amendment to Appendix 4 of the Senate Election Regulations, appended below, adding 4 Professional Services staff to the list of *Ex Officio* members. The correction is marked in track changes.
10. Senate is asked to consider and recommend for approval by the University Court proposed changes to the Senate Election Regulations to clarify the position of Senate Assessors and the Academic Staff Member on the

University Court within the election regulations, as outlined in paragraphs 67-72.

Background and context

11. Under University Ordinance 212 (Composition of the Senatus Academicus) academic staff elect from their own number 200 members of the Senatus Academicus.
12. Under the Senatus Academicus (Senate) Election Regulations, the call for nominations will normally be made after 31 January each year, normally at the next Senate meeting. At this meeting, Senate will agree a deadline for the submission of nomination forms and the date on which the election will be conducted, and will appoint a Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer.
13. The provisional Senate election dates for the 2024 elections were presented to the 13-27 September e-Senate meeting and Senate were invited to comment on these. Three members provided comment on the dates and suggested extending the election period to allow greater time for staff to engage with the Senate elections. The dates for the elections have been revised in response to this feedback with the revised dates provided in paragraph 40.
14. For information, a table of the elected academic staff positions open for election in 2024 is provided below.

Position	Total open for election 2024	Total positions
CAHSS Academic Staff (non-professorial)	13	34
CAHSS Academic Staff (professorial)	23	34
CMVM Academic Staff (non-professorial)	13	33
CMVM Academic Staff (professorial)	24	33
CSE Academic Staff (non-professorial)	11	33
CSE Academic Staff (professorial)	11	33
Total	96	200

15. Senate members are encouraged to make themselves available if colleagues contact them wishing to discuss standing for Senate.

Discussion

Revisions to Senate membership arising from Senate External Review recommendations.

16. Senate was the subject of an External Review in 2023/24 with the results of the review received in July 2023.
17. The review contained two recommendations which relate to the membership of Senate, these are referred to R1 and R2 in the Senate External Review Report and outlined in paragraphs 19 to 38.

18. A paper presented to the 11 October 2023 meeting (Paper S23/24 11) committed to adopting these recommendations with a proposal outlining the practical means to adopt these proposals expected to be presented to Senate for approval at the 7 February 2024 meeting.

Non-Professorial staff category

19. Recommendation R.1 states: *Given the mission of the University we recommend the addition of a specific membership category in Senate for a Doctoral Student or Junior Research associate.*

20. Senate members indicated their broad support for this recommendation in feedback and therefore a proposal with the practical implementation of this recommendation is being presented to Senate for approval.

21. [University Ordinance 212](#) (Composition of the Senatus Academicus) stipulates a total of 200 academic elected members of the Senatus Academicus, with a total of 100 whom shall be elected non-Professorial academic staff members.

22. Any changes to the elected staff composition must fit within the existing 200 elected positions as specified by Ordinance 212. As 100 positions are reserved for Professorial staff, any dedicated junior research staff positions must be drawn from the non-Professorial staff category.

23. It is proposed that a total of nine (9) positions be reserved for staff who hold a junior research position. The nine positions are to be equally split across each College, with a total of three (3) positions in each College.

24. To ensure there is an opportunity for junior research staff to seek election to Senate each year, it is proposed that a term of one, two and three years be allocated to the successful candidates. This will ensure that these positions are filled in a manner consistent with the broader Senate Elections, and that staff in junior research roles have an opportunity to seek election to Senate in the coming years.

25. The election of staff to the junior research category would be conducted in line with the normal arrangements for Senate Elections as outlined in paragraphs 39 to 46.

26. Should Senate approve this proposal, Registry Services will consult with Vice-Principal, Research to confirm which staff positions which are considered junior research for the purposes of the election.

27. Registry Services will also consult with Court Services to ensure that any revisions to the Senate Election Regulations are fit for purpose ahead of these being presented to Court for approval at Court's 28 February 2024 meeting.

28. In line with Ordinance 212, the Students' Association are responsible for determining the composition of student members who serve as members of

Senate. Therefore, this recommendation will also be referred to the Students' Association.

Professional Services staff category

29. Recommendation R2 states: *We recommend that Senate has 3 non-executive professional staff members on Senate.*
30. Senate members indicated their support for this recommendation in feedback and indicated a preference for a number higher than the three stated in the recommendation. Therefore, a proposal with the practical implementation of this recommendation is being presented to Senate for approval.
31. [University Ordinance 212](#) (Composition of the Senatus Academicus) stipulates a total of 200 academic elected members of the Senatus Academicus. The Ordinance does not allow for any of these 200 positions to be filled by elected professional services staff.
32. It is proposed that a total of four (4) ex officio positions be reserved for elected professional services staff. The four positions will be comprised of the Professional Services staff member on Court, and three elected Professional Services staff members with one position for each College.
33. Formally speaking, Senate are not required to approve changes to the ex officio membership, however given that this proposal arises from a recommendation contained within the External Review, we are seeking Senate's support to take this forward.
34. The four professional services staff must be considered ex officio members to allow professional services staff to join Senate and for the membership to remain compliant with Ordinance 212. The Ordinance allows for a maximum of 80 ex officio members, a total of 69 of these positions are currently filled.
35. The total number of College-level office holders contained within the ex officio category would be increased from 5 to 6 staff, with one position reserved for a professional services staff member elected to that role by their peers.
36. It is proposed that a term of three years be allocated to the successful candidates, with the term of office to commence on 1 August 2024.
37. The election of staff to the College Professional Services category would require specific Professional Service staff Election Regulations to be drafted. Registry Services will consult with Court Services to draft appropriate Regulations ahead of these being presented to Court for approval at Court's 28 February 2024 meeting.
It is anticipated that the Regulations would align with those for the conduct of Senate Elections, with revisions appropriate to allow the conduct of the specific election. The election of the Professional Services staff member to Court take place under separate regulations.

38. Should Senate approve this proposal, Registry Services will also consult with Colleges for their support in taking forward the election and consult on the appropriate timing of the elections. It is anticipated that the election of professional services staff may take place on a different timescale to the dates given in paragraph 41 for the Senate Elections.

Senate Academic Staff Elections – Returning Officer, and timelines

39. Lisa Dawson, Academic Registrar is nominated as the Returning Officer of the Senate Academic Staff Elections. Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer, is nominated as the Deputy Returning Officer. Senate is invited to approve these nominations and appoint these candidates under paragraph 25 of the Senatus Academicus (Senate) Election Regulations.

40. Senate is invited to approve the dates of the nomination and election process. In response to feedback received in the 13-27 September e-Senate, the dates for the Senate elections have been extended to allow greater time for staff to engage with election. The following table sets out the revised timelines that Academic Services will conduct the Senate Academic Staff Elections:

Wednesday 28 February 2024	Senate formally declares nominations open
Wednesday 27 March 2024 (12 noon)	Nominations close
Wednesday 17 April 2024 (9am) to Wednesday 1 May 2024 (12 noon)	Voting open online
By Friday 17 May	Results announced

Continued allocation of one, two and three year terms

41. At its 8 February 2023 meeting Senate agreed to allocate one, two and three year terms to Senate members joining in 2023. The intent of this approach was to enable the election of one third of the elected membership per year going forward, as was intended when the revised composition of Senate was introduced in 2020.

42. This approach was introduced in the event that there were significantly more than 11 nominations in constituencies with a high number of vacancies. In the 2024/25 election there is a marginally higher number of vacancies in the CAHSS and CMVM non-professorial categories, and a high number of vacancies in the CAHSS and CMVM professorial categories.

43. If every vacancy were filled with a three-year term this would limit the number of positions becoming available for election in 2025 and 2026, with a high number of vacancies arising for election again in 2027.

44. To mitigate against this potential issue, it is proposed that the practice of allocating one, two and three year terms to successful candidates continue in the CAHSS and CMVM non-professorial categories, and the CAHSS and

CMVM professorial categories. This will ensure a rebalancing of membership and mitigate the risk that a high number of vacancies will arise in three years' time.

45. In line with the approach approved by Senate in 2023, the following method will be used to allocate term lengths.
 - 45.1.1. In the event there are more than 11 nominees in a cohort with more than 11 vacancies, a method of Staged-WIGM is utilised to conduct the election.
 - 45.1.2. An election would take place even if there are enough vacancies for everyone, to allow the terms of office to be determined.
 - 45.1.3. Voter preferences determine the terms of office each candidate receives, filling all available positions and then continuing to use voter preferences to allocate longer terms among these candidates.
46. Successful candidates in the CSE non-professorial and professorial categories will be allocated a three-year term, as is standard, as these categories are on track for one-third of the positions to be available for election each year.

Eligibility for Election to Senate

47. In line with paragraph 14 of the Senate Election Regulations, all eligible staff from the academic and research community who are in post from 31 January 2024 are invited to stand for Senate.
48. Paragraphs 15 and 16 of the Senate Elections Regulations outline the eligibility criteria for staff standing for election to either the Professorial or Non-Professorial categories. The University's Human Resources system categories staff into Job Family. The categories eligible to stand for election to Senate include those within the Academic, Clinical and Veterinary Clinical categories.
49. In response to a query raised at the May 2023 meeting, Academic Services have confirmed with Court Services that staff who hold an Honorary position are not eligible to stand for election to Senate. Staff who are eligible for election to Senate must hold a contract of employment as attested by the University Court. In line with the [Policy for the Award of Honorary Status](#), staff who hold either Honorary status or Honorary Clinical status as outlined in Annex A and B of the policy are not remunerated and therefore not eligible for election to Senate. Individuals who hold an Honorary position are not included in the Job Family categories as given in paragraph 48.

Senate Standing Committee Elections

Senate Standing Committees: Review of Senate Committees Election Process

50. At its 12 October 2022 meeting, Senate agreed to add three elected academic staff members of Senate to each of the Senate Standing Committees.
51. Senate also agree that it would review the arrangements for adding elected academic members to the Senate Standing Committees during Semester 1 of 2023-24, and prior to seeking nominations for the Committees for 2024-25. This review was planned to take place at this time to allow any insights arising

from the External Effectiveness Review to also be considered (Paragraph 15, [Paper S22/23 2D](#)).

52. The timelines for the Senate Standing Committee Elections have been moved to commence after the 22 May meeting of Senate to ensure that any revised election arrangements can be implemented ahead of the election of Senate members to Standing Committees for 2024/25.

Senate Standing Committees: Role of Senate members on Standing Committees

53. At its 12 October 2022 meeting, Senate approved a proposal to add three elected Senate members to each of the Senate Standing Committees. Since the proposal was approved, there has been both a turnover of and increase in the elected members joining Senate. A summary of the role of Senate members on Standing Committees is provided for context and for those members who may be interested in standing for election.

54. Elected Senate members on Standing Committees have been included in Committee composition for close to two academic cycles. Elected members serving on Standing Committees are full members of the Committee and all Standing Committee members have equal rights and responsibilities and are expected to contribute towards the business and discussion of the committee. Elected Senate members represent the needs and wishes of their constituency (the wider elected membership of Senate). The rights and responsibilities of Standing Committee members are outlined in the [Senate Standing Committees' Members' Guidance](#).

55. Elected Senate members are nominally assigned to each College, however elected Senate members are not expected to act on behalf of the College to which they nominally represent. Each Standing Committee also has College representation with College representatives responsible for representing the needs and wishes of the Schools and Deaneries within their College and their College leadership.

56. The arrangements pertaining to elected Senate members on Standing Committees are as agreed at the [12 October 2022 meeting of Senate](#).

Senate Standing Committee: Election arrangements subject to Task and Finish Group review.

57. Senate approved the below election arrangements for 2023/24. It is proposed that these arrangements remain in place for the 2024/25 elections, subject to any revisions to the process which arise out of the work of the Senate Task and Finish Group. Should any proposed changes to the Senate Standing Committee Elections process arising from the Task and Finish Group would be referred to Senate for approval at its 22 May 2024 meeting. Should the Task and Finish Group not be approved by Senate at its 7 February meeting, then the below arrangements would be used to conduct the 2024/25 Senate Standing Committee Elections.
58. The arrangements are anticipated to be as follows:

58.1. Three places on each of the three Senate Standing Committees are allocated to elected members of Senate. The three elected member positions are nominally assigned to each College; (see paragraph 55)

58.2. Current elected academic staff members of Senate plus Senate Assessors and the Academic Staff Member of Court will have the opportunity to nominate themselves for membership of one of the three Senate Standing Committees. Nominees cannot seek membership of more than one Committee;

58.3. Where the Senate term of a current member in one of these categories is due to end in July 2023, they can nominate themselves for membership of one of the Committees for 2023-24 as long as they plan to stand for re-election to Senate on the understanding that they would only be able to take up a place on the Committee if they secure another term on Senate commencing in August 2023;

58.4. In the event that the number of eligible nominees for a Committee does not exceed the three available places each nominee will be assigned to the membership of the Committee;

58.5. If vacancies remain following each College being assigned a position, any remaining positions will be allocated to interested nominees;

58.6. In the event that the number of eligible nominations for a Committee exceeds the three available places, an election will determine which nominees are assigned to the membership of the Committee;

58.7. Current elected academic staff members of Senate plus Senate Assessors and the Academic Staff Member of Court would be eligible to vote in this election (if an election is required);

59. If required, the election would be conducted by means of the Single Transferrable Vote, Weighted Inclusive Gregory Method (STV WIGM). For each Committee, the three candidates with the greatest share of the vote would automatically be elected to the relevant Committee. In the event of a tie, the successful candidate or candidates would be determined by the drawing of lots;

60. Voting would be conducted online, and the counting of votes would be conducted using an electronic counting system;

61. For members assigned to a Committee, the term of office will run from 1 August 2024 until the end of 2024-25 (31 July 2025), with scope to subsequently seek election to the relevant Committee (in line with the arrangements agreed by Senate) for up to two further sessions;

62. Should one or more of the three places on a Committee remain unfilled following the conclusion of these nomination and (if required) election processes, the vacant place(s) would be offered to member(s) who had unsuccessfully nominated themselves for a place on a different Committee for 2024-25. Were there more members than places, the place(s) would be distributed to the member(s) who had received the most votes for the Committee that they had stood for (if an election had been held) or by drawing lots (if an election had not been held);

63. Should the members cease to be members of Senate prior to or during 2024-25, their membership of the relevant Committee will cease with immediate effect
64. Senate is asked to approve the appointment of a Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer for the Senate Standing Committee election. Lisa Dawson, Academic Registrar is nominated as the Returning Officer of the Senate Elections. Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer, is nominated as the Deputy Returning Officer. Senate is invited to approve these nominations and appoint these candidates.
65. Senate is invited to approve the dates of the nomination and election process set out below, which align with those for election to Senate.

Wednesday 29 May 2024	Nominations open
Wednesday 12 June 2024	Nominations close
Wednesday 19 June 2024 (9am) to Wednesday 26 June 2024 (12 noon)	Voting open online

66. For information, a table of the positions open for election in 2024 is provided below.

Position	Total positions
Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee	3: Each position is nominally assigned to a College.
Senate Education Committee	3: Each position is nominally assigned to a College.
Senate Quality Assurance Committee	3: Each position is nominally assigned to a College.

Senate Election Regulations – Senate Assessor positions

67. Court Services have identified three drafting errors in the current Senate Election Regulations in relation to Assessor and Academic Staff Member positions on the University Court and it is proposed to correct these:
1. The categorisation of two Senate Assessors on the University Court as *ex officio* members of Senate throughout their term as Senate Assessors. This is only correct under certain circumstances and has caused confusion.
 2. The description in one section of the regulations of the position on the University Court held by a member of academic staff elected by all academic staff as the 'Joint Academic and Senate Assessor', when this should be described as the 'Academic Staff Member on the University Court', which is correctly described as such in another section of the regulations.

3. The Academic Staff Member on the University Court is categorised in the regulations as an *ex officio* member of Senate but this should only apply if they are not otherwise a member of Senate.

Senate Assessor positions – proposed amendments

68. Senate elects two of its members to join the University Court in positions known as Senate Assessors. Senate Assessors serve for terms of four years on the University Court (a length of term specified in primary legislation, along with the right to stand for re-election), it is possible that, if the Senate Assessors are themselves elected to Senate, their typically three year term as elected Senate members might end before they complete their four year term on the University Court and they would therefore have to demit office early from the University Court unless they are re-elected for new terms as Senate members.
69. To avoid this eventuality Senate Assessors can become *ex officio* members of Senate should their term as elected Senate members end before their term on Court (and to enable them to stand for re-election for a second term on Court if they are no longer in the category of elected Senate members).
70. The current version of the Senate Election Regulations does not capture this nuance that a Senate Assessor may be either an elected Senate member or an *ex officio* Senate member depending on their particular term of office as a Senate member and simply categorises them as *ex officio* members of Senate.
71. To rectify this, it is proposed to amend the Election Regulations as follows, the marked up Regulations are also provided in Appendix 1:

8. . . . Assessors are elected for a four-year term on Court; they ~~retain~~ **hold** Senate membership as *ex officio* members for the duration of their term as Court members **if their term as a Senate member would otherwise have concluded**

22. . . . Senate Assessors will be included in the count of College elected members ~~throughout their term of office as a Senate Assessor~~ **if they are continuing a term of office as a College elected member, otherwise they are classed as an *ex officio* member and are not included in the count.**

Appendix 1: Senate *Ex officio* membership: Table

. . . 2 Senate Assessors on the University Court **if not serving a term as an elected member**

72. Separately, a member of academic staff is elected by all academic staff to serve on the University Court in a position known 'Academic Staff Member on the University Court.' The holder of this position also becomes an *ex officio* member of the Senate if they are not already a Senate member. The regulations describe this position incorrectly in one section and states they are an *ex officio* member in another section without adding the caveat that this applies only if they are not otherwise a member of Senate. To rectify this, it is proposed to amend the Election Regulations as follows, the marked up Regulations are also provided in Appendix 1:

8 . . . Senate Assessors on the University Court will comprise ~~one Joint Academic and Senate Assessor~~ and two Senate Assessors

Appendix 1: Senate *Ex officio* membership: Table
. . . 1 Academic Staff member on the University Court if not already a Senate member

Resource implications

73. The cost of the Senate elections and the Senate Standing Committee elections will be met from within existing budgets.

Risk Management

74. The University's Risk Policy and Risk Appetite statement refers to the University holding 'no appetite for any breaches in statute, regulation.' Senate elections are mandated by University Ordinance 212.

Equality and Diversity

75. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted and is available on the [Equality and Diversity webpages](#). This assessment assumes a regular rotation/refreshment of members and the filling of most elected vacancies.

76. Senate Election advertising materials highlight the University's commitment to improving the diversity of key University committees, and encourage all academic staff to consider standing. The Senate elections will be advertised widely through multiple channels.

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

77. Senate and Senate Standing Committee elections will be managed by staff within Registry Services.

78. Information on the Senate Elections is available on the [Senate webpages](#).

79. Following approval by Senate, the opening of nominations for candidates to stand for election to Senate will be announced through multiple channels including the Senate website, all-staff email, and social media.

80. Following approval by Senate the opening of nominations for candidates to stand for election to Senate Standing Committees will be announced via email to the elected staff members of Senate.

81. Depending on Senate's decisions, actions of Court may be required to confirm changes to Election Regulations. These will be managed by Court Services in communication with Senate Support.

Author

Olivia Hayes
Academic Policy Officer
Registry Services

Presenter

Olivia Hayes
Academic Policy Officer

Lewis Allen (paragraphs 42-47)
Senior Governance Advisor to the Vice-
Principal & University Secretary
Governance & Court Services

31 January 2024

Freedom of information

Open

Appendix 1: Senate Academic Staff Election Regulations



Senatus Academicus (Senate) Election Regulations

Composition of the Senate (Ordinance 212 Paragraphs 1-3 and 5)

1. The Principal of the University will preside at any meeting of the Senate.¹
2. The Senate model will comprise the following categories with numbers apportioned as follows²:

Table 1

Position	Membership
Principal	1
Heads of Schools	21
Heads of Colleges	3
Other <i>ex officio</i> appointments	Approximately 50
Total <i>ex officio</i>	Approximately 70 (maximum 80)
Elected academic staff (Professorial)	100
Elected academic staff (Non-professorial)	100
Elected students	30
Total elected	230
Total Senate membership	Approximately 300

3. The elected membership of Senate will be broken down as follows:

Table 2

Position	Membership	Membership Breakdown
Elected academic staff (Professorial)	100 ³	34 Professors from the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
		33 Professors from the College of Science and Engineering
		33 Professors from the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Elected academic staff (Non-professorial)	100 ⁴	34 academic staff members from the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, <u>with 3 positions reserved for staff who hold a junior research position</u>
		33 academic staff members from the College of Science and Engineering, <u>with 3 positions reserved for staff who hold a junior research position</u>

¹ Ordinance 212 Paragraph 1.

² Ordinance 212 Paragraphs 2, 3, and 5.

³ Ordinance 212 Paragraph 3a.

⁴ Ordinance 212 Paragraph 3a.

		33 academic staff members from the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, <u>with 3 positions reserved for staff who hold a junior research position</u>
Elected students	30 ⁵	See Appendix 2

4. Staff *ex officio* roles are detailed in Appendix 1. This list may be amended by the University Secretary from time to time, to reflect changes in organisational structures and job titles. Any changes will be notified to Senate at the next meeting of Senate.
5. The Students' Association will determine the office holders whose roles will entitle them to take up Senate membership and will be responsible for appointing these students to Senate.
6. The Students' Association must inform the Senate Support team if it is necessary to make any alteration to the list of office holders in Appendix 2 whose roles entitle them to Senate membership. Any changes will be notified to Senate at the next meeting of Senate.
7. Should a relevant Students' Association position become vacant for a period of time or a relevant student office holder be otherwise unavailable, the Students' Association will identify another appropriate elected student office holder to fill the vacant Senate position.
8. Election of Senate Assessors and Professional Services Staff to the University Court operates under separate regulations relating to election to University Court. Senate Assessors on the University Court will comprise ~~one Joint Academic and Senate Assessor and~~ two Senate Assessors. The Professional Services Staff Member elected to the University Court will also serve on Senate. Assessors and Professional Services Staff are elected for a four-year term on Court; they ~~hold retain~~ Senate membership as *ex officio* members for the duration of their term as Court members if their term as a Senate member would otherwise have concluded.

Term of Office (Ordinance 212 Paragraphs 4 and 6)

Elected academic staff

9. Elected academic staff will stand for a term of office which will not exceed three years from the first day of August of the year of election.⁶ Elected academic staff will demit office on 31 July of their final year in office.
10. There is no cap on the number of terms of office for which academic staff members may stand; academic staff members will be eligible for re-election for the same term of office provided that they demit office on ceasing to hold a contract of employment with the University.⁷

⁵ Ordinance 212 Paragraph 5.

⁶ Ordinance 212 Paragraph 4.

⁷ Ordinance 212 Paragraph 4a.

11. Elected academic staff members may resign membership at any time.⁸ Their membership will remain vacant until the next scheduled Senate election.

Elected students

12. The term of office for undergraduate student members will be one year, starting on the first day of August in the year of election. The terms of office for postgraduate student members will be one year, starting on the first day of November in the year of election. Students will be eligible to stand for multiple terms of office consecutively. There is no cap on the number of terms of office for student members.
13. A student member will demit office on ceasing to be a student at the University. Student members may resign membership at any time.⁹

The Electoral Roll (Ordinance 212 Paragraphs 3 and 5)

Elected academic staff

14. Academic staff members who are eligible to stand for membership of Senate and elect members from their own number will hold appointments from the University Court, as attested by a contract of employment issued by the University.¹⁰ In practice, 'Academic staff' will apply to all members of staff who are categorised as 'academic' in the University's Human Resources records.
15. All members of staff who are categorised as 'academic', and who also hold a personal or established chair, will be eligible to stand and vote in the 'elected academic staff (professorial)' category. All members of staff who are categorised as 'academic,' and who do not hold a personal or established chair, will be eligible to stand and vote in the 'elected academic staff (non-professorial)' category. All members of staff who are categorised as holding a junior research position will be eligible for election to the dedicated junior research positions contained within the 'elected academic staff (non-professorial)' category.
16. Members of the academic staff who hold a personal or established chair will not be eligible to stand and vote in the 'elected academic staff (non-professorial)' category. Members of the academic staff who do not hold a personal or established chair will not be eligible to stand and vote in the 'elected academic staff (professorial)' category. Members of staff who are categorised as holding a junior research position will be eligible to stand and vote for the dedicated junior research positions contained within the 'elected academic staff (non-professorial)' category.
17. Academic staff members who hold any of the posts or offices which qualify them for *ex officio* membership will not be eligible to stand for membership of Senate in either of the elected academic staff categories,¹¹ but are entitled to vote in the election for the academic staff category relevant to their role.

⁸ Ordinance 212 Paragraph 4b.

⁹ Ordinance 212 Paragraph 6a, 6b.

¹⁰ Ordinance 212 Paragraph 3

¹¹ Ordinance 212 Paragraph 3b

18. The electoral roll will be compiled from Human Resources' records on 31 January preceding the call for nominations meaning that nominees for the elected academic staff places will need to have been in their posts from this date in order to be eligible for nomination. Academic staff members who are allocated to the University Secretary's Group or Information Services Group will be included in the electoral roll for College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.
19. Academic staff in both elected categories will be eligible to stand for the places which have been allocated to the College of which they are a member. If an academic staff member is a member of multiple Colleges, they will stand in the College where they work a greater proportion of their time (based on full-time equivalent). If an academic staff member works for equal amounts of time across multiple Colleges, they will be permitted to select the College in which they intend to stand, on condition that they only stand for election in one College, and that they declare in writing to the Senate Support Team in which College they intend to stand.

Elected students

20. The eligibility for students to stand for offices which can entitle them to Senate membership will be determined according to the eligibility criteria used by the Students' Association to appoint students to official roles. All students who are registered on credit-bearing courses, or who hold sabbatical offices, will be eligible for student membership.

Election of Academic Staff Members to Senate (Ordinance 212 Paragraph 7)

21. Elections for academic staff members will be held annually and will be run by the Senate Support team. There will be two elections for each College each year, one for eligible professorial staff vacancies and one for eligible non-professorial academic staff vacancies. Both elections will usually be held on the same day.
22. The Senate Support team will inform Colleges of the number of vacancies in each elected academic staff category and will report on an annual basis the members of each College in each category who will continue in office. Senate Assessors will be included in the count of College elected members if they are continuing a term of office as a College elected member, otherwise they are classed as an *ex officio* member and are not included in the count. ~~throughout their term of office as a Senate Assessor.~~

Election Dates

23. The call for nominations for each election will be made after 31 January each year, normally at the next Senate meeting. No nominations will be accepted before this date. At this meeting, Senate will agree a deadline for the submission of nomination forms.
24. The elections will be conducted on a date which will be determined by the Senate in each year and all elections to Senate will usually take place on the same date in a given year. The elections must take place in time to communicate the results to Senate before its final meeting of the academic session, and the results must be communicated to Senate no later than 30 June each year.

Role of the Returning and Deputy Returning Officers

25. On an annual basis, Senate will appoint a Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer, who will be responsible for the management of the elections and the declaration of the results of the elections.
26. The Deputy Returning Officer will provide nomination forms calling for nominations and will draw attention to the correct procedure for making nominations. The call for nominations will be published by the Deputy Returning Officer and advertised via agreed channels.

Nomination and Validation of Candidates

27. Only members of the electorate in each category, as defined in paragraph 15, will be eligible to stand for election in that category. Eligible individuals will be entitled to nominate themselves as a candidate using the process specified in the call for nominations.
28. All nominations must be received by the deadline agreed by Senate. No nominations will be accepted after this date and time.
29. If the Deputy Returning Officer receives a nomination from an individual who is not eligible to stand for election under the terms defined in these regulations, the Deputy Returning Officer will contact the individual to inform them that their nomination will not be accepted. Where the individual whose nomination has not been accepted wishes to challenge the rejection of their nomination, they may do so by contacting the Returning Officer. The decision of the Returning Officer is final.
30. In the event of there being only one valid candidate for each vacancy and therefore an uncontested election, the Deputy Returning Officer will declare and publicise as soon as practicable the name of the valid candidate elected for each vacancy.

Conduct of election process

31. Each candidate will receive from the Deputy Returning Officer a copy of these Regulations.
32. If the Deputy Returning Officer has reason to believe that a candidate may have breached these Regulations, the Deputy Returning Officer will request a written explanation or clarification from the candidate. If the Deputy Returning Officer concludes that a material breach has occurred, the Deputy Returning Officer will inform the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer has the authority to disqualify a candidate, subject to the right of appeal by the candidate to the University Secretary (or specified delegated authority) within two working days of receiving written notification of the disqualification. The decision of the University Secretary (or delegated authority) will be final.
33. The validity of the elections will not be affected in the event that a candidate is unavailable to continue for any reason prior to the results of the election being announced and, where there is a greater number of candidates remaining than vacancies in any category, the election will proceed as planned. In the event of there being only one remaining candidate for each vacancy in any category and therefore an uncontested election in that category, the Deputy Returning Officer will declare and publicise as soon as practicable, and no later than two working days after confirmation of the uncontested election status, the names of the valid candidates elected.

34. The Deputy Returning Officer will distribute to each member of the electorate via email a link to the voting system along with a link to the relevant web page to view information about the candidates.

Voting arrangements

35. The elections will be conducted by means of the Single Transferrable Vote, Weighted Inclusive Gregory Method (STV WIGM). The candidates with the greatest share of the vote will automatically be elected.
36. Voting will be conducted by staff online. All those on the electoral roll will be permitted access and will be able to vote on the online voting system on the election date(s).
37. Members of staff who are formally employed in more than one College will be entitled to vote in all Colleges in which they are employed.

Counting

38. All votes cast online will be counted together using an electronic counting system.
39. In the event of a tie, the successful candidate or candidates will be determined by the drawing of lots. The Returning Officer will draw lots from the pool of candidates whose votes are tied until the available vacancies are filled.

Declaration

40. The Deputy Returning Officer will ensure that ~~a notice of~~ the result of the election is posted ~~on the Old College Notice Board and posted~~ to the Senate webpages as soon as is practicable after the result or results have been declared. The result of the election will be ~~and~~ communicated to Senate at the first meeting following the elections.

Election of Student Members to Senate (Ordinance 212 Paragraph 8)

41. Elections for student members will be held annually on dates to be determined by the Students' Association. Elections for student members will be conducted by the Students' Association in accordance with election regulations determined by the Students' Association, and with section 16 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016.

2 December 2019

Document control

Date of approval / amendment	Details
2/10/19	Approved by Senate
2/12/19	Approved by University Court
5/2/20	Amended under section 4 by the University Secretary, Senate informed 5/2/20
27/1/21	Amended under section 6 by the Edinburgh University Students' Association, Senate informed 27/1/21
9/2/22	Amended under sections 4 and 6, Senate informed 9/2/22
8/2/23	Amended Appendix 1, Senate informed 8/2/23
<u>7/2/24</u>	<u>Amended Table 2, Section 8, 15, 16, 22, 40 and Appendix 1</u>

Appendix 1

Senate *Ex Officio* membership

(See regulations 2 and 4)

Position	Membership	Membership Breakdown
Principal	1	(Required under Ordinance 212)
<i>Ex officio</i> appointments	Approximately 70, with a maximum 80 <i>ex officio</i> members in total.	Heads of Schools (Required under Ordinance 212) and Heads (Deans) of the Deaneries of the Edinburgh Medical School.
		Heads of College (Required under Ordinance 212)
		Provost
		Vice-Principals
		Assistant Principals
		Director of Library and University Collections
		Director of the Institute for Academic Development
		University Leads on Climate Responsibility and Sustainability; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
		Up to <u>65</u> College-level office holders per College nominated by that College. <u>5 office holders must who hold academic posts (for example, Deans and Associate Deans)</u> <u>1 office-holder will be a professional services staff member elected to that role by their peers.</u>
		Office-holders who are specifically entitled to Senate membership under the terms of collaborative agreements.
		2 Senate Assessors on the University Court <u>if not serving a term as an elected member.</u>
		1 Academic Staff member on the University Court <u>if not already a Senate member.</u>
		<u>1 Professional Services member on the University Court</u>

Appendix 2

Student membership
(See regulations 5 and 6)

Position	Membership	Membership breakdown
Elected students	30	5 Sabbatical Officers
		8 Section Representatives
		5 Liberation Officers
		6 Undergraduate School Representatives
		6 Postgraduate School Representatives

- In the event that the number of eligible nominees for the group exceeds the three available places, the drawing of lots will determine which nominees are assigned to the membership of the group;

8.3. If Senate supports these arrangements, Academic Services will take this forward on the following timelines:

- By Friday 9 February: call for nominations
- Wednesday 21 February: nominations close
- By Wednesday 28 February: elected members informed of the outcome
- Friday 1 March: term of office begins

Senate

7 February 2024

Response from some Elected Academic Members of Senate to the Curriculum Transformation Briefing

Description of paper

1. This paper responds to the CTP Briefing given at the special Senate session of January 15th 2024 and considers its implications for how to proceed with curriculum reform. The paper notes promising elements reported in the Briefing alongside significant concerns about the current state of some proposals, and asks Senate to take a series of decisions about the approach and parameters of reform on this basis. The paper also reaffirms the importance of Senate's continued governance of academic matters and the importance of continued School agency in curriculum developments.

The paper contributes to the following Strategy 2030 goals: *The undergraduate curriculum will support breadth and choice, preparing students, graduates and alumni to make a difference in whatever they do, wherever they do it.*

Action requested / Recommendation

2. Senate is asked to discuss and approve the following motions:

Agreement of goals

2.1 Senate notes the generally positive reception of the Edinburgh Student Vision (ESV), and in accordance with governance expectations approved in 2023, requests that final approval of the Edinburgh Student Vision (ESV) will be brought to Senate, without delegation to any other body, as soon as possible.

Separation of UG and PGT Curriculum Transformation Projects

2.2 Acknowledging that the PGT proposals attracted many positive comments from members at the January special session, CTP leadership will prepare formal proposals for the PGT Framework and bring these to Senate for approval as a priority action, with separate proposals for the UG Framework to follow at a later date.

The removal of compulsory elements in the UG Framework

2.3 To promote appropriate subsidiarity of decision-making about degree components and to make space for new curriculum elements to win adoption by proving their worth in practice, and to preserve the importance of student choice, the UG Framework for CTP shall not mandate the introduction of compulsory courses or compulsory credit-bearing elements into degree programmes.

Importance of local decision-making

2.4 We recommend an implementation model of 'accreditation' is adopted for CTP, which will allow Schools to demonstrate how they are meeting the important aspirations promoted by CTP, such as inclusive assessment, experiential learning, addressing key contemporary challenges and improving students' employability. Where Schools resolve to adopt new compulsory elements within programmes, in order to deliver CTP, this will be

managed through usual governance structures including subject-area teaching committees and School Boards of Studies.

Successful change management

2.5 As a large-scale strategic change project, we recommend that CTP proceed in accordance with key principles, including that change must have a purpose that can be evaluated, change must have comprehensive risk management, and change must be properly resourced. Accordingly, and in line with the expectations established by the external review into People & Money, all recommendations and proposals emerging from the CTP will be accompanied by

- specific and measurable indicators of success aligned to university strategic priorities;
- a comprehensive risk assessment and risk management plan;
- a detailed costing and demonstration of appropriate resource.

These documents will be reviewed by appropriate Senate committees and approved by full Senate prior to the adoption of any such changes.

Challenge Courses

2.6 We recommend that optional Challenge Courses are not confined to pre-Honours, and instead propose the development of optional Challenge Courses at Honours as well as pre-Honours, matched to appropriate SQCF criteria, in order to develop the full potential of cross-disciplinary content.

Background and context

3. Senate has discussed CTP for a number of years and concerns and questions have been repeatedly expressed, in particular with regard to the delivery of proposed compulsory Challenge Courses, the protection of existing, smaller-scale pre-Honours electives, the financial consequences for smaller Schools of the loss of outside students on their own electives, the protection of flexibility for students to transition to different degree programmes, and the consequences for student experience.

4. A paper was presented to Senate in February and again in March 2023, asking for further details about CTP, in particular: its aims, what problems it solves, how it will improve specific degree programmes, resourcing for CTP, risks, costs, benefits, details of delivery and other matters. This paper was approved. However, the requested details were not supplied to Senate at its subsequent meeting or at the revised October 2023 deadline. A CTP Briefing Document was presented to a special session of Senate in January 2024, giving further details of CTP but not providing all of the details previously requested by Senate. The continued lack of details on some points (e.g. delivery of Challenge Courses), lack of risk management, and resourcing details are causes of concern.

5. The CTP Briefing proposes new governance mechanisms for CTP which do not reflect the governance decisions made in March 2023 by Senate as the University's supreme academic body, and which do not feature the engagement of Schools as decision-making bodies. This is a cause of concern for the authors, who want CTP to respect existing governance mechanisms for curriculum development.

Discussion

6. Members of Senate recognise the importance of continually reviewing, renewing and improving curriculum. We welcome the ambition of the CTP to further develop and enhance existing curricula, and to identify and resource useful improvements across the University. Many of the values and priorities of CTP command broad support across members of Senate, and indeed are felt to be features of existing curricula, which

members would welcome the opportunity to strengthen. We also recognise that there is a place for a consultative and constructive, cross-University approach to solving some problems including: timetabling electives in ways that maximise their accessibility to interested students; developing models of programme-level assessment; investing in essential skills-for-learning courses at pre-Honours and in the first year of PGT; streamlining course approvals; improving systems such as Euclid and university learning platforms and tools so that they support rather than constrain our offerings; and other topics.

7. However, there is consensus amongst a number of elected academic members of Senate from across a broad range of disciplines that the UG Framework should not proceed in its current form, owing to its elements of compulsion and prescription. A consequence of this aspect of the Framework is that there is likely to be a very high cost of achieving minimal compliance with the structural model, that in itself will have limited scope for pedagogical gain. Furthermore, the potential for transformation in the long run is severely and unnecessarily limited by the rigidity of programme archetypes that have been proposed, which in practice would restrict student choice, diminish the diversity and richness of our current offering of pre-Honours courses, and fundamentally fail to take into account the variety of teaching requirements across different disciplines.

8. A major concern is the inclusion of 40 credits of pre-Honours Challenge Courses conceived as 'core and compulsory' to all undergraduate degree programmes. We recognise that the 'phased' approach to CTP means that Challenge Courses will be introduced as optional to begin with, but want to emphasise there should be no expectation that Challenge Courses will ever become compulsory. Many of the desirable and welcome features of Challenge Courses would be retained by making them optional rather than compulsory, and this would have the benefit of enhancing rather than reducing student choice. In addition, the vision for Challenge Courses will be more effectively realised if some are offered at pre-Honours and some at Honours. Finally, the authors are united in the view that any proposed very large-scale (500+) courses come with special pedagogical challenges and risks and should be thoroughly tested to demonstrate they can be delivered well at this scale.

9. We think a more promising approach to the UG Framework would adopt the best features we see in the PGT Framework, which focus on facilitating and enabling the innovative pedagogy already present, with maximum flexibility for local implementation, to the point that structural compliance is of little to no cost. As a way to achieve this, we recommend that the CTP team adopt an alternative implementation model of 'accreditation' rather than prescription for CTP, so that Schools are supported in demonstrating how they are meeting the aspirations embedded in CTP (e.g. to make assessment inclusive, to embed experiential learning, to address key contemporary challenges, to improve students' employability). The mechanism to assess this could be internal audits such as the existing Internal Periodic Reviews. Reducing the resource implications associated with structural compliance will allow that resource to be used more effectively in enabling Schools and subject areas to implement enhancements that coherently demonstrate how the aspirations of CTP are met within disciplinary specific courses. This would further correct the structural tendency of the present CTP model to position 'challenge', 'enrichment' and 'experiential' activities as separate from and unachievable within the disciplinary content of programmes, and as requiring to be added as new, separate components. Such a model would also be enhanced by giving Schools and/or subject areas their own budget for 'Curriculum Enhancement' activities, to be spent as locally determined, within an agreed framework.

10. Overall, the authors share concerns that the Undergraduate Framework for CTP as currently conceived risks significant damage to our existing educational offering. It should

be acknowledged that the standard of our existing curricula and delivery of teaching is high, as indicated by a number of measures including NSS; meaning there is a risk CTP will break things which are not currently broken, whilst failing to identify or address areas where we know improvements are needed. These risks are not currently sufficiently addressed in the documents available to date. A more detailed risk analysis and implementation plan, coupled with a realistic resourcing assessment, needs to be carried out within Schools for us to gain confidence that the programme's aspirations are deliverable.

11. In light of the recent experience of P&M, apprehension concerning the university's capacity to manage large-scale change is high, and appetite for risk is low. Furthermore, the stakes of curriculum transformation at this scale are very high, due to the central role of teaching in our mission and international reputation. Given the specific failings highlighted in the external report, including management failures to respond adequately to concerns raised from staff on the ground, one of the most important ways that CTP leadership could demonstrate that it is taking P&M lessons on board is not by devising new oversight and governance procedures (as outlined in the current Briefing), but using the governance mechanisms already in place, in particular, acknowledging Senate's role as University's supreme academic body, whose core function is to superintend the teaching and discipline of the University, and showing that it will work with Senate to respond to feedback like this from Senate members, and change the outlines of CTP.

Resource implications

12. As a large-scale strategic change project, CTP is likely to be resource-intensive, and this paper asks CTP leadership to provide a clearer indication of the resource required. It proposes a more efficient model for implementation of CTP, which would limit the amount of resource required for compliance, freeing resource for initiatives which achieve the aims of CTP. These proposals require time to be dedicated to discussion and approval of CTP at Senate and within subject areas and Schools, which is deemed an appropriate and necessary level of resource for effective conduct and governance of CTP.

Risk Management

13. The proposals here are designed to mitigate the risks to student experience and the quality and integrity of existing UoE degree programmes, arising as a potential result of CTP. They are also designed to address risks to secure governance by seeking to ensure subject-area engagement with and appropriate Senate oversight of CTP.

Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

14. The proposals here contribute to goal 4, ensuring *inclusive and equitable quality education for all*.

Equality and Diversity

15. The paper contributes to the effective and responsible implementation of curriculum reforms, for which equality and diversity are major goals and considerations.

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

16. Actions will be taken forward by the CTP Board, bringing materials to Senate Committees for reviews, and to subject-areas, Schools and Senate for approval.

Consultation

17. The paper is informed by discussions among Elected Academic Senate members, correspondence with CTP leadership, and consultation with directors of Education and other role-holders within Schools. A version of this paper, signed by 38 members, was

sent as an open letter to CTP leaders and circulated to members of the CTP Board and Senate Education Committee. The Authors have sought to agree the wording of specific motions through consensus with members of the CTP Board.

Further information

Author(s)

Presenter(s) (if required)

Diana Paton, HCA

Tamara Trodd

Tom Leinster, Mathematics

Vashti Galpin, Informatics

Josephine Pemberton, SBS

Michael Barany, SPS

Richard Blythe, Physics & Astronomy

Tamara Trodd, ECA

Rupert Nash, EPCC

Freedom of information

Open

Senate**Curriculum Transformation Project (CTP) Reflection paper****7 February 2024****Description of paper**

1. This paper provides a reflection from the Project Sponsor and Project Lead on the 15th January meeting of Senate and Senate Education Committee and the summary response to the meeting and briefing paper provided by a group of elected academic members of Senate, including proposals for next steps. There has been constructive discussion with these elected members of Senate comparing our proposals with a set of motions they have prepared. While there has been agreement on the detail of some of the proposed motions and intention of others there are some substantive differences in opinion. We therefore propose an alternative set of motions for Senate to consider at its meeting on 7th February 2024.

Curriculum Transformation contributes to Strategy 2030 outcomes ii, v, vi, and ix, and is relevant to other outcomes including iv, x and xiii.

Action Requested/recommendation

2. Senate is asked to approve the following next steps and approach:
3. Senate notes the generally positive reception of the Edinburgh Student Vision (ESV), and in accordance with governance expectations approved in 2023, requests that final approval of the Edinburgh Student Vision (ESV) will be brought to Senate, without delegation to any other body, as soon as possible.
4. Acknowledging that the PGT proposals attracted many positive comments from members at the January special session, CTP leadership will prepare formal proposals for the PGT Framework and bring these to Senate for approval as a priority action, with separate proposals for the UG Framework to follow at a later date.
5. The project team will use the feedback, questions and concerns raised by Senate and SEC as set out in this paper to guide the ongoing development of formal proposals for the PGT Curriculum Framework and UG Curriculum Framework for onward recommendation by the CT Board. Such proposals will be taken to the appropriate School and College governance structures and University committees, to SEC for endorsement, Senate for approval and then APRC to take forward the technical implementation and detail of policies in line with Senate's oversight of the University's academic mission and regulations.
6. As a large-scale strategic change project, we recommend that CTP proceed in accordance with key principles, including that change must have a purpose

that can be evaluated, change must have comprehensive risk management, and change must be properly resourced. Accordingly, all proposed changes to curriculum arising from CTP will be brought to Senate for approval following consideration and recommendation where appropriate from the subcommittees of Senate.

7. Reflecting the feedback and discussion to date, for the avoidance of doubt all decisions on the progression of any proposals for Challenge Courses, experiential learning and Enrichment Elements to be made mandatory, and associated decisions such as credit weighting, will be reserved to Senate following careful assessment of staff and student experiences during phased implementation periods.

Background and context

8. Curriculum Transformation is a major long term investment project for the University.
9. At its meeting on 8th February 2023 Senate endorsed proposals for the continued development and design of key elements of the undergraduate curriculum framework and the next steps for in-depth engagement with Schools on their response to the framework to inform its further development. Further motions were approved at the meeting of Senate on 29th March 2023 confirming the role of Senate in approving strategic elements of CTP, to review the CTP approach, consider the direction of travel emerging from this review and increase the role of Colleges in CTP.
10. A meeting of Senate and Senate Education Committee members was arranged for Monday 15th January 2024 to discuss the work undertaken in response to these motions and decisions of Senate. A Briefing Paper¹ was circulated to Senate and Senate Education Committees in advance of the meeting. This provided an update on progress, outlined the proposals and plans as currently formed, together with a summary of key reactions to date and preparations for the next steps in seeking approval for a new Curriculum Framework (Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate) and associated planning and resourcing for its successful implementation.

Discussion

11. Reflections from Project Sponsor and Project Lead

12. We, as Curriculum Transformation Project Sponsor and Project Lead, thank members of Senate and Senate Education Committee for the feedback and

¹ This Briefing Paper can be viewed and downloaded from the Curriculum Transformation Hub: <https://uoesharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation/SitePages/Curriculum-Transformation-Briefing-Paper-for-Senate-Senate-Education-Committee-%E2%80%93-January-2024.aspx>

discussion we had with them in advance, during and following the meeting on 15th January. We are particularly grateful for the summary response from the group of elected academic members of Senate. We appreciate the identification of areas of agreement and support (e.g. PGT Framework and opportunity to use Curriculum Transformation to develop a cross-University approach to addressing practical problems and priority themes) alongside areas where there are significant concerns and questions.

13. Many of the critical issues highlighted by the group of elected members of Senate are live issues for the project team and CT Board and have featured in our ongoing engagement with Schools and other groups. Formal proposals for the UG Framework (including programme archetypes and Challenge Courses) and the Outline Business Case (including the development of key enablers, resourcing and project management) will need to address these concerns and provide the clarity that colleagues are looking for.

14. UG Framework and programme archetypes

Our intention is to develop a set of UG programme archetypes that provide enough consistency in structure (the minimum necessary) to provide a foundation for cross-institutional systems and processes (e.g. timetabling, assessment tools), achievement of the Edinburgh Student Vision, support transfer routes and sharing of courses across programmes. These archetypes need to be sufficiently flexible to respond to different disciplinary requirements and local contexts, now and in the future. The current phase of engagement with Schools is helping us to identify potential adjustments to the archetypes, the rules and guidance for their use needed to support this flexibility. We are working with Schools to produce ~40 worked examples of how the archetypes could be adopted in different disciplines and contexts. These will be shared as part of a formal proposal for consideration by SEC and APRC before the end of the current academic year.

15. Challenge Courses

Engagement with Schools, the CT Board and Challenge Courses working group has highlighted the potential benefits of an alternative or more flexible approach to Challenge Courses. It has also highlighted the risks, difficulties and potential negative consequences of 40 credits of compulsory Challenge Courses by the end of second year. We are using this feedback to explore a range of alternative approaches for the introduction of Challenge Courses and the positive benefits for students that they are intended to support. We will discuss these options with the Board and bring a revised proposal for feedback and consideration to SEC before preparing formal proposals as part of the UG Curriculum Framework.

16. Approach to achieving the benefits of Curriculum Transformation

There is a high level of alignment between the recommendations of elected members of Senate and the CT project on how best to achieve the intended

benefits of Curriculum Transformation. This includes the importance of local flexibility and support for Schools in responding to priority themes linked to Curriculum Transformation, the use of existing QA/QE mechanisms to support and monitor change, and investment for Schools to develop enhancement plans linked to Curriculum Transformation.

17. Project Management

We agree that lessons from People & Money (P&M) and the review of large change projects must be thoroughly understood and reflected in the future management and governance of the Curriculum Transformation Project. While we feel that progress has been made in some areas there is work to do in others. The recommendations from the external review will be discussed at an upcoming meeting of the Curriculum Transformation Board. This will include the development of an action plan that will include consideration of risk management, resourcing and governance.

18. Governance

We are committed to working with Senate and its sub-committees on the development of proposals and plans for Curriculum Transformation. In the short term this will include proposals for discussion with Colleges, SEC and APRC around the PGT Curriculum Framework, UG Curriculum Framework and Challenge Courses. Proposals will be taken to SEC for endorsement, Senate for approval and then APRC to take forward the technical implementation and detail of policies in line with Senate's oversight of the University's academic mission and regulations.

19. Proposed Next Steps

The next steps described here were shared with the authors of Paper S23/24 2H and used to explore the potential for proposing a single set of motions to Senate at its meeting on 7th February 2024. While agreement was reached on the detail of some of the proposed motions there are some substantive differences in opinion. The motions we are proposing are set out in paragraphs 2-7. Included here for information are our initial proposals for next steps:

20. The project team will use the feedback, questions and concerns raised by Senate and SEC as set out in this paper to guide the ongoing development of formal proposals for the PGT Curriculum Framework and UG Curriculum Framework for onward recommendation by the CT Board. Such proposals will be taken to the appropriate School and College governance structures and University committees, to SEC for endorsement, Senate for approval and then APRC to take forward the technical implementation and detail of policies in line with Senate's oversight of the University's academic mission and regulations.

21. Reflecting the feedback and discussion to date, for the avoidance of doubt all decisions on the progression of any proposals for Challenge Courses, experiential learning and Enrichment Elements to be made mandatory, and associated decisions such as credit weighting, will be reserved to Senate following careful assessment of staff and student experiences during phased implementation periods.
22. Acknowledging the sense of support for PGT proposals, the project will prepare formal proposals for the PGT framework as a priority action.

Resource implications

23. An Outline Business Case is being prepared that sets out the resource requirements and implications of Curriculum Transformation.

Risk management

24. The project team maintain a risk register which is reviewed, presented and discussed at the Curriculum Transformation Project Board in addition to follow up actions with the risk owners and those responsible for taking any actions set out to mitigate the risks. The approach to risk management will be reviewed and refined in response to the recommendations of the external review of P&M.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

25. Curriculum Transformation will support a positive contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the University. Objectives around inclusive and equitable access to education (SDG4), wellbeing (SDG3) and gender equality (SDG5) align with the purpose of Curriculum Transformation and the prototype Curriculum Design Principles. SDG13 (action to combat climate change and its impact) features directly in the Edinburgh Student Vision and through consideration by a Climate and Sustainability working group.

Equality & Diversity

26. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for the overall approach to Curriculum Transformation, the organisation and management of the Curriculum Transformation Project was completed in November 2022. Further EqIA will be undertaken as part of the development and implementation phases of Curriculum Transformation.
27. Work is underway, based on discussions with the Curriculum Transformation Board, the University Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee and other stakeholders, on the development of an Equality Impact Assessment for the proposed Curriculum Framework. The approach being taken is to identify opportunities to design in positive action and support for equity, diversity and inclusion, and to identify risks and amelioration around roll out and adoption.

This will be discussed by the Board and with Senate Quality Assurance Committee.

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

28. The project team will continue the current phase of engagement with Schools to refine the proposed Undergraduate Curriculum Framework (particularly programme archetypes and Challenge Courses).
29. The feedback, questions and concerns raised by Senate and SEC as set out in this paper will be used to guide the development of formal proposals for the PGT Curriculum Framework, UG Curriculum Framework and Challenge Courses. These proposals will be taken to SEC for endorsement, Senate for approval and then APCR to take forward the technical implementation and detail of policies.
30. Regular updates will be provided to Colleges, Senate Committees, Directors of Teaching and other groups alongside updates via the Bulletin and other routes.

Further Information

Authors

Professor Colm Harmon
Curriculum Transformation Project Sponsor
Vice Principal Students

Dr Jon Turner
Curriculum Transformation Project Lead

Presenter

Colm Harmon

Senate

7 February 2024

Suppressed Items from Senate Business

Description of paper

1. This paper notes the recent fact of motions and papers competent under the Standing Orders not being included on the Billet of Senate meetings, and proposes an approach for greater transparency when this occurs.

Action requested / Recommendation

2. Senate is asked to *note* the Background summarised below.
3. Senate is asked to *approve* that:
 - 3.1. A written report shall be expected for the next e-Senate or ordinary meeting of Senate disclosing motions and papers since 2022 that were submitted by members before the release of the Billet but not included on the Billet. Authors of suppressed items shall have the opportunity to provide corrections or contextualisations as part of this report.
 - 3.2. Going forward, in the event that an item is submitted for Senate business prior to the release of the Billet and it is not included on the Billet, the title of the paper and a reason for the suppression shall be noted in the Billet together with a response at the discretion of the author(s) of the suppressed item.

Background and context

4. Advice has been provided to Senate by Legal Services that the Principal is legally entitled to suppress timely submitted items for Senate business (see S 22/23 5G).
5. Analysis has been provided to Senate by a group of members suggesting that timely submitted items for Senate business ought not be subject to screening or suppression (see S 22/23 5H).
6. Several member-submitted papers and motions from the last two years have been suppressed by the Principal, on the basis of advice from Legal Services and others; the extent and reasons for such suppression have not routinely or systematically been disclosed to members of Senate.
7. Authors of suppressed items have questioned the factual basis of stated rationales for suppressing their contributions, in addition to questioning the applicability of suppression in general.
8. This paper is a minor update to a motion that the convener suppressed from the Billet despite its timely submission for the 11 October 2023 meeting of Senate.

Discussion

9. Transparency in the exercise of conveners' authority is a minimum expectation for accountability regarding the responsible use of that authority. We may disagree about whether items should be suppressed, but we cannot engage that disagreement in a democratic manner if the very fact of suppression is not disclosed.

Resource implications

10. This paper makes a small demand on Senate Support time in line with routine activities supporting Senate operations and transparency.

Risk Management

11. Good governance is understood to promote responsible management of governance-related risks.

Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

12. N/a.

Equality and Diversity

13. Transparency will allow consideration of equality and diversity considerations around governance activities.

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

14. To be carried out by Senate Support with cooperation of the convener and authors of suppressed papers.

Consultation

15. N/a.

Further information

Author(s)

Michael Barany

Presenter(s) (if required)

Freedom of information

OPEN

Senate**7 February 2024****Senate Role in the Response to People and Money External Review****Description of paper**

1. This paper continues paper S22/23 4C (Senate Role in the Response to People and Money Crisis), noting the findings of PA Consulting's 'People and Money External Review' and articulates an ongoing Senate prerogative to be fully informed and involved in the response to the external review, and indeed to the underlying crisis, as an academic matter.

Action requested / Recommendation

2. Senate is asked to note the attached additional responses from the University community on the ongoing academic impacts of People and Money solicited between 21st and 30th August 2023.
3. Senate is asked to note that the concerns raised by Senate members on behalf of university staff regarding People and Money in paper S22/23 4C, the attached additional responses and the issues raised internally by Senate and other staff bodies from the University Community closely correspond with PA's expert analysis of the problematic implementation and continuing issues with People and Money.
4. Senate is asked to adopt the following motions:
 - 4.1. Senate requests to be duly consulted and informed of current and future plans and strategic directions for People and Money going forwards.
 - 4.2. Senate requests that a rigorous assessment of the academic impact of the problematic implementation of People and Money is undertaken, which should include remedial actions to address the harms caused.
 - 4.3. Senate requests to be duly consulted, informed and represented within the new University Initiatives Programme Board.
 - 4.4. Senate requests that the Senior Leadership Team provide regular updates on the development and implementation of a new and complete change management framework - as indicated is required within PA expert external review - to all staff within the University, and that all subsequent discussion of on-going and future change projects be presented in accordance with this framework.

Background and context

5. Please refer to paper S22/23 4C for the longer background and context.
6. That paper included three motions, each agreed by unanimous consent:
 - 6.1. "In view of the concerns raised by Senate members on behalf of university staff regarding People and Money, the responses and commitments provided to Senate are not an adequate foundation for confidence in the university executive's approach to resolving and accounting for the academic consequences of the People and Money implementation."
 - 6.2. "Senate expects to be duly informed of all measures affecting teaching, learning, and research from the People and Money crisis, to be consulted

where appropriate, and to have approval (together with Court and/or other relevant parties) of academic-related responses.”

6.3. “Senate expects to be duly consulted and to have approval of the process and outcome of a thorough review of the causes and effects of academic-related impacts of the People and Money implementation. This should not preclude other review processes from proceeding as appropriate under other auspices.”

7. As far as we are aware, none of the motions have been acted upon or visibly communicated to the university community or other stakeholders. Senate has received brief and nonspecific updates on the executive response to the crisis, and as outlined in the attached responses from the University community, the major impacts of the implementation of the People and Money system on academic matters continue.
8. In December 2022, the University Court requested an External Review of the People and Money Programme by PA Consulting.
9. The results of this were circulated to the University community on the 7th December 2023.
10. The external review highlights that the issues have been serious and substantial, with impacts on the wellbeing of impacted students as well as staff across all Budget Groups, especially at School level, in Departments / Directorates, in Finance and in the programme team itself.
11. The review finds that there are many things that could and should have been done differently with important lessons to be learned for future programmes
12. The most notable challenges at the University of Edinburgh were: *‘The division and lack of trust between many staff across Colleges, Schools and Departments and senior University management which has been exacerbated by People and Money.’* and *‘Significant organisational design changes, such as Finance business partnering and line management approvals, which were operationalised at the same time as the system implementation without the appropriate change management to support this.’*
13. The external review highlights considerable challenges identified from stakeholder interviews and documentation reviews.
14. These include: People Challenges of Change management: engagement, training and communication, Organisational & process designs, Cultural division and lack of trust and the Strategy & approach and Operational and technical challenges in the Planning, Resourcing, Governance and System, data, integration and reporting.
15. There are a number of Strategic lessons to be learned to support all future organisational and technology change programmes, specifically *‘Addressing the division and lack of trust’* and *‘Developing and embedding a fit for purpose and consistent change management approach’*.
16. Lessons to be learned to support individual change programmes include: Focusing on people and delivering change management, Outlining and maintaining a clear and deliverable change strategy, Embedding organisational and process designs, Improved planning, Sufficient resourcing and effective governance.
17. The External review recommends that a plan and strategic direction for People and Money is developed going forwards, to include Establishing where People and Money currently is and where it wants to get to (the vision, outcomes and

benefits), Assessing key design decisions and ensuring that the organisational structures and processes are still accurate and fit-for-purpose, Developing the roadmap and plan to achieve the vision, structures and processes and an effective and efficient People and Money service and system, Outlining the approach to change management and how things will be different going forward and Demonstrating how the roadmap will be achieved including governance, resourcing and budget.

Discussion

18. Staff surveys confirm extremely low confidence in university leadership and change management, exacerbated by inadequate preparation for the People and Money implementation and inadequate response to the ensuing systems crisis, especially the most recent phase, as well as shortcomings in the specific responses provided to the Senate letters. The PA consulting review has clearly highlighted many of the issues raised by members of senate in previous letters to the Senior Leadership Team and in paper S22/23C 4C.
19. The Court-commissioned internal review calls for major improvements to systems and management approaches that have significant academic and governance implications. Senate has a right to be fully involved in these.
20. The Court-commissioned review does not include a comprehensive assessment of the academic costs - to careers, research programmes, partnerships, curriculum, and beyond of the People and Money crisis, nor does it consider how the university must take responsibility for these and remediate them to the best extent possible. Such matters are a high priority for Senate and appear at risk of being deprioritised in favour of managerial concerns.
21. Based on the responses from the University community attached and the critical findings of the External Review more must be done to resolve and account for the crisis, including making good on Senate's adopted motions of March 2023.

Resource implications

22. As in S22/23 4C.

Risk Management

23. As in S22/23 4C.

Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

24. As in S22/23 4C.

Equality and Diversity

25. As in S22/23 4C.

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

26. Senior management to communicate and consult with senate for approval of the process and outcome of a thorough review of the causes and effects of academic-related impacts of the People and Money implementation, and outline a plan for remediation for those impacted.

Consultation

27. Responses in the appendix were solicited using a mailing list for university community members interested in Senate responses to the People and Money crisis.

Further information

Author(s)

Stuart Gilfillan

Tom Booth

Michael Barany

Presenter(s) (if required)

Stuart Gilfillan

Freedom of information

OPEN

Appendices

1. Survey update on ongoing staff experiences of People and Money solicited between 21st to 30th August 2024.

Appendix 1: Survey update on ongoing staff experiences of People and Money

The following survey was distributed on 21st August 2023 and received 225 responses before this paper's deadline of 30th August 2023. The question response options were taken to match the February survey previously reported.

1. One year into the transition, do you have confidence in university leadership's approach to resolving and accounting for the academic consequences of the People and Money implementation?

Yes – 5

No – 220

2. Are you **currently affected** by any of the following (select any/all that apply):

Results in order of frequency:

194 - Increased workload or inability to do aspects of your job due to requirements or (lack of) functionality from the P and M system.

189 - Stress or negative morale from P and M or university leadership responses.

151 - Delayed or pending payment to suppliers, collaborators, or other partners.

124 - Issues with grant or project setup, management, or reporting.

100 - Delays or inability to conduct **research** activities due to P and M issues.

78 - Inability or reluctance to enter into new relationships or partnerships that would involve P and M.

57 - Delayed or incorrect reimbursement or one-off payment to yourself or others to whom you feel responsible.

51 - Problems with accessing financial or employment documentation (e.g. tax documents, historical pay records).

19 - Unresolved or uncompensated personal financial impacts from any aspect of the P and M transition.

17 - Issues with reward, career progression, or career continuity related to P and M issues.

15 - Delays or inability to conduct **teaching** activities due to P and M issues.

12 - Delayed or incorrect salary or stipend payment.

3. Are you **currently experiencing impacts from** any of the following *whether the issues themselves are current or in the past* (select any/all that apply):

Results in order of frequency:

188 - Increased workload or inability to do aspects of your job due to requirements or (lack of) functionality from the P and M system.

170 - Stress or negative morale from P and M or university leadership responses.

130 - Delayed or pending payment to suppliers, collaborators, or other partners.

125 - Issues with grant or project setup, management, or reporting.

100 - Delays or inability to conduct **research** activities due to P and M issues.

78 - Inability or reluctance to enter into new relationships or partnerships that would involve P and M.

57 - Delayed or incorrect reimbursement or one-off payment to yourself or others to whom you feel responsible.

49 - Problems with accessing financial or employment documentation (e.g. tax documents, historical pay records).

18 - Unresolved or uncompensated personal financial impacts from any aspect of the P and M transition.

17 - Issues with reward, career progression, or career continuity related to P and M issues.

13 - Delayed or incorrect salary or stipend payment.

12 - Delays or inability to conduct **teaching** activities due to P and M issues.

4. Any other comments or **recent/ongoing** impacts of the People and Money transition?

Responses in randomised order.

The extremely lengthy and opaque processes involved in carrying out any processes using P&M are having a very detrimental impact on work practices and morale. Any activity that involves P&M will take many times longer than it needs to. The amount of extra work some colleagues are facing is unacceptable. The "one size fits all" approach the University of Edinburgh has to various systems is not fit for purpose and P&M is a good example of this. Working in a school which had very simple and clear ordering and finance processes, which did not take inordinate amounts of time and then moving to this dreadful system has had a huge negative impact on myself and colleagues.

This year I received a small research grant with a one year duration, but was unable to access the funds until month 10 of the 12 month grant. Moreover, when trying to transfer expenses purchased for this project onto the grant, we were unable to locate the financial records of my purchases. This has greatly impacted my research, and I am concerned about the impact on my career progression as I am currently a fellow and do not yet have a permanent contract. Also, ordering takes twice as long as it used to, I am forced to bother my line manager for approvals when spending off my own grant, and a number of order never arrived because many companies have blacklisted UoE for non-payment of invoices.

"Business Scholl staff here. Due to P&M related processes linked to the end of the financial year ALL expenses reimbursements have been put on hold since a non specified date in June. I have personally been waiting for a reimbursement from the end of July

(we are the end of August) and it has been confirmed to me that there are dozens of claims (some of which predate mine) that have not been taken care of for weeks and weeks. The present backlog will probably take again weeks to clear. This is not a one off. On the basis of my understanding this will happen EVERY year when the financial year ends. Incidentally, this is also coinciding with the middle of conference season for staff.

It should be noted this is also creating frictions among academic and professional service staff. I know of incidents in which professional service staff have being accused of maliciously delaying claims. This is of course nonsense, but the point remains that the system is creating an unsafe working environment uncondusive of good employment relations."

"My main ongoing issue with P&M as an academic is the burden of admin that has switched onto researchers, which used to be taken care of by finance/administrative staff. I am a research scientist - I have the task of doing orders for our lab group - I used to place the order on Sciquest then wouldn't hear anything else about it until good arrived. However now I get regularly contacted at least once a month from my local finance team about unpaid invoices due to things like invoice/PO mismatches. Local finance tell me that they have been informed that researchers have to deal with this ourselves now and they won't do anything to help resolve these types of issues. I then have to contact finance helpline and/or suppliers to get it sorted. Sometimes I end up going round in circles with slow/no responses, and there are some issues I've been trying to get resolved for months now where I just don't get anywhere and no one responds to the query. I am not a trained financial administrator, I sometimes don't even understand some of the replies I am sent as they contain abbreviations etc which are new to me. I don't think that academic staff were ever briefed that we were being signed up to a new system that carries so much extra burden for us. I

just want to be able to place an order without issue and spend more time at the lab bench doing research which is what I've trained to post-doctoral level for.

Another issue I'd like to comment on is that the system still doesn't allow easy overview of what has been spent on R/CoA accounts, which makes life difficult for my PI for forward planning of research and contract extensions. What we can view is not useful. We keep our own private record of expenditure on a spreadsheet as a more reliable tool of keeping track. Things like internal billing for BVS services are way behind for us, so we also don't know what bills may still come."

"People and Money continues to greatly impact my lab's ability to conduct effective research. This will be felt over the next few years as a reduction in research publications. The reduced research capacity has significant career implications for the researchers who I supervise, whose productivity has been hampered by the combination of supply-chain disruption and increased workload. I feel helpless to assist those I mentor whose careers have been competitively disadvantaged as a result of the finance system, which has been exacerbated by the knock-on effect this has had on the professional services within the university on which we rely. So many key services have long response times and are over-run with work: the system feels close to collapse.

The decline in staff morale is palpable. Initially, there was a hope that these issues could be resolved or reversed, but now we are facing the reality that this system is here to stay. We have lost the ability to react quickly to research opportunities, to be nimble and creative.

The central fact is that as bungled as the implementation of P&M has been, the continuous march to centralise the university's research and teaching across multiple colleges is bound to failure. It all stems from a lack of trust that individual institutes and schools are competent and trustworthy in conducting their own affairs. "

I've been waiting on a shipment for 3 months now, it was delayed at customs and the buyer is now on holiday for 3 weeks. It would have arrived by now under the old system. It's costing my service about £1000 per week

I work within a Finance role and many aspects of my role appear to now be more time consuming and cumbersome. One example is that I can no longer look at invoices on the system, which is impractical and causes more work. Many of the old, inefficient (Word document) forms remain, when I had presumed that by bringing in a new system these would be replaced by more modern, functional forms/ways of working conducive with technology available in 2022.

Quick turn over of administrative staff in a department that had been used to longevity of team members; impact on those staff who decided to leave their jobs, sometimes without another job to go to; impact on the department and our Service as we are still catching up on the disruption and the lack of continuity due to turnover of staff and due to clunky implementation of P&M.

Due to P and M been sent same set of keys 5 times. Also been sent £1600 of reagent we did not order, system duplicated order from November in March for no apparent reason - still trying to rectify it 5 months later.

The increased workload due to P&M is not just caused by delayed or incorrect payments and having to follow up these issues, just using the P&M system requires more input and time than the old system.

Some improvement to reporting and finance helpline calls are being answered, however I still find myself having to resolve queries myself by going between different finance areas, research grants, etc. There seems to be no communication between different finance areas which impacts on us as we spend longer trying to resolve queries ourselves.

Requiring research staff to tick a box on this system for every single tiny administrative item continues to be a colossal waste of time and energy. Please pay administrators to do administration.

"Still no direct access to transactions reports for the grant I manage. Those I was passed on for the last 12 months included alarming mistakes which required a long list of internal transfers in order to be corrected. Students stipends contain mistakes and this was discovered 9 months later. Some costs have still not been charged (probably charged elsewhere despite proper coding when payment was requested but no-one knows where to find them).

Procurement continues to generate stress and tension around delays in paying suppliers, inconsistencies of the system, sometimes sending emails prompting receipt of goods and sometimes not, impossibility of getting individualised advice and guidance instead of seeing requisitions rejected with unhelpful explanations.

The HR system is another overcomplex and unhelpful part of P&M which does not pick up changes easily and correctly. It needs constant checking and is not reliable in terms of annual leave allowance for example. I spotted mistakes and inconsistencies for several staff members and these take ages to be corrected by Ops."

Why do as a post doctoral researcher have to deal with raising and correcting PO, invoice issues etc?

As PhD students we still cannot log expenses through People and Money and need to submit forms manually

Any other comments or recent/ongoing impacts of the People and Money transition?

There seems to be little acknowledgement by senior management of the huge impact this is having and no indication as to how it will be sorted. P&M will never work well. It is a useless inappropriate system and has been designed to move more responsibility to PIs for everything admin so that all the services we need to access we have to sort and just get told when we have done it wrong. Edinburgh will continue to lose staff over this and not be an attractive place to come and do research until this is all sorted.

I would have to employ someone about 0.25 FTE just to cope with my research group's purchasing and financial control of grants--something that took very little time before P&M. I have therefore outsourced a lot of my research to other organisations.

The system remains very challenging to use. There is some progress from the worst of challenging times with it autumn '22. I have been aware of professional services staff working intensively to mitigate challenges of the new system. There are also lots of training courses available in it, however, I am not hugely motivated to spend precious time on these, as to my mind, a more intuitive/well explained system should not require a huge investment

of time for staff for whom tasks around procurement are only a very peripheral part of their job.

It is very difficult to continue working blind with regards knowing how much budget is available in each project

summer 2023: leave hours incorrectly reported, January - July 2023, as a result, leave had to be manually calculated and confirmed with HR and finance, taken in August, leave payout made when I left paid position with the University. Now that I left my paid position with the University, I am locked out of P&M and have no direct access to my tax records I will need (will have to request they be sent to me.)

The process surrounding approving expenses claims now is ridiculous. I recently had to go through 4 or 5 levels of approval including the head of deanery in order for my claim to be approved. This was greatly hampered by the fact most of the approvers were on annual leave and had not set up delegation so my claim was greatly delayed. It is completely ridiculous to have so many levels of approvers, especially when they become so far removed from the original claimant.

Centralisation of emails has made it very hard for information to efficiently get to the correct person and for timely resolution of issues. I am being contacted to do work that is out of my remit and that I am not qualified to do or have access to the information needed to do it. Work I would expect professional services/procurement (invoicing, dealing with non-fulfillment of orders) to do is being pushed back onto me (an academic). It is laughable that I am asked to approve spending and make sure it is within budget when I have zero ability to get an accurate budget, and bizarre that travel costs for students through diversity travel have no formal route for approval but that I have to approve low value standard lab items or they cannot do their research.

My colleagues continue to endure stress (sometimes leading to sickness leave of several weeks) from the opaque and frustrating processes within P&M. They and I spend considerable time requesting help with what should be basic functions.

"Guidance materials are vague, inconsistent, badly signposted and do not contain enough example situations.

Guidance/emails from Finance Helpline are vague, cryptic, inconsistent and do not offer much help. They are occasionally abrupt and bordering on rude. The answer and level of helpfulness often depends on who responds.

Procedures are still unclear even after 1 year.

The requisition process is clumsy, not user friendly, inflexible and not fit for purpose.

The entire system is opaque. There is little way of knowing what happens in the background once requests are sent through. It is near impossible to find out basic information about suppliers.

The difference between trade and non-trade suppliers is not clear. Decisions are inconsistent and sometimes questionable.

The online employment status check still has errors which have not been corrected despite being reported.

Issues with PO/Requisitions (including minor issues) still take a great deal of time and effort to resolve. "

This was a total debacle. I have never felt this depressed and fed up with my job in the last 16 years of working at the University and the repercussions of this mess are never ending. It's impossible for me to retain staff and everyone is angry, annoyed or upset all the time.

I continue to face major delays and difficulties in setting up and managing major external grants, seriously jeopardising my ability to deliver research outcomes and pursue future opportunities.

Purchasing via P and M is essentially impossible. If I want to get research done I either have to buy consumables out of my pocket (not refunded) or not to do it.

I can see that there has been positive impact from the College representatives sitting on groups and committees attempting to find solutions. Thank you for all their hard work.

I spend several hours ordering multiple items, which used to be a 5-10 minute job on Sciquest. Additionally, many of the products I require are no longer listed or indeed orderable via P&M.

I use my maiden name in professional context (research, teaching, outreach). Unfortunately P&M and related systems do not support "preferred surname". In some of the places this can be manually overwritten, but requires my intervention and a ticket with IS. Any time any of my details change in the P&M system my display name reverts to the incorrect (married) name. I believe it shouldn't be that complicated to accommodate my situation.

Relationships with partners in the Global South (including refugee-led organisations) are severely damaged because of longstanding payment issues. One year into my three-year fellowship, I still haven't received cost codes - the same for another one-year project that began in February 2023.

The low-level tedium of the system requiring sign off in multiple places is frustrating and distracting. For example, a requisition of a laptop which previously would have been managed by procurement team in my School now requires me to process and accept invoices or purchase orders in the system in an obscure way. Also (because of payment delays and FY end) I had to provide a formal confirmation to affirm that an item had been received when it had been sent direct to the School and processed by the procurement team before being issued to me.

I feel like I'm still negatively impacted by the P&M system and the associated process, a year after the launch, due to the continuous problems with implementation, and usage. There is still a number of bad workarounds, we still have lots of manual non-system driven process, such as non-PO payments; budget holders still have no finance reports issued to them, which carries an organisational risk of financial mismanagement due to the lack of visibility. Many job holders in finance support do not have access to the accounts on the system, nor finance reports. Many grant holders have zero access to grant finance information, such as CDT grants, centres for doctoral training. Many things that we were promised would be corrected by the end of FY 2022/23, were not. Nor did we receive honest review or communication as to why.

"Reporting on the many millions of pounds of donations we have held in the general ledger is incredibly difficult. This is a key part of my job and yet I have to wait for a report to be sent every month, which sometimes is delayed or doesn't happen at all if the member of staff charged with doing this is on leave. Furthermore there is still no report available on overall balance.

On research project reports I often find inexplicable differences between total amount spent depending on what report I use. I don't have trust that the numbers are right."

Staff are leaving to work at better run places

I am still finding that it is difficult to resolve issues in a timely manner regarding grants and ordering issues relating to P&M. Much of this relates to the difficulties of our local centre finance team are having with accessing information relating to our grants/orders. Previously they had been able to chase up and create PO's, make sure bills got paid, and just generally explain any issues we had. Now they struggle to investigate the most basic of problems and are clearly frustraighted and stressed.

Unclear and incomplete instructions on how to process some financial transactions. Inconsistent responses to helpline enquiries. Some of the Finance forms have not been properly updated since the introduction of People and Money. A regards the

The impacts are tightened by the R(D)SVS/Roslin's utter failure to do anything about the problem. Escalation forms are ignored (for months) and P and M and the person at Roslin responsible for helping refuses to respond to Emails. My line manager simply sends things round in circles when pretending to help. I am now facing legal action from collaborators who have not been paid, despite my raising purchase orders as instructed on the day of receiving their invoices. I have nowhere left to turn, and the R(D)SVS/Roslin have been unhelpful and utterly unsupportive. I am periodically told that this is because everybody is in the same situation, and they simply cannot get to my requests for help. This doesn't change the fact that I cannot do my job, and am facing legal action. Also, professional collaborations that have taken decades rot be establish are being eroded.

One of the more depressing aspects in filling out this form is the belief that it will have very little impact. I have no confidence that the university leadership cares about the effect this has had on employees at the University. I have't heard anything, or more importantly, seen any actions that suggest the leadership have much sympathy, understanding or have taken any personal responsibility. It adds to the general feeling that those that work at the university are not valued by leadership. People are leaving academia and we are struggling to recruit at all levels. The university leadership need to start recognising the impact this is having and start to properly value those that work at the University before lasting damage occurs.

It has been a year since the implementation of P&M. Issues haven't really resolved, it only that there are now work rounds that allow progression and also the teams in the Finance office who have worked tirelessly to help with problems on the shop floor

"I have yet to hear an apology from the SLT for the impact of P&M. They allude to the fact that all is not well, but no one has actually said the words ""we're sorry"". The FD continues to believe that this is the right system for the University, despite having no idea of the complexities of managing research grants / research finance. He obfuscates and lies in meetings, stating that things are better than they are on the ground.

I would like to have routes to speak to actual people when requests / forms submitted do not get actioned. I realise that the AP@ email address is designed to track queries and to protect staff, but the staff on the front line dealing with partners/suppliers are simply unable to resolve certain problems and this is having a massive toll on resilience and mental health. I have seen nothing in any of the plans for resolving P&M issues that deals with this ongoing staff resilience issue. "

The system remains opaque and is very labour intensive in its use. No-one in senior management apparently cares about the massive opportunity costs of running a complex accounting system. As a member of academic staff my time filling in expense claims often costs more than the claims are worth, but the cynical view is that just fine because it encourages me to bear the cost of work related costs from my own salary. The unholy combination of P&M and the lock into Diversity Travel, whose operations increase costs and delay activities, is one of the factors that will destroy this University's ability to be a world-class institution.

Not having the tools or access to information to complete my job and responsibilities to the standard and timescales that were previously met. Which in turn is causing stress and increased workloads for individuals and teams the information was available before now third parties have to be contacted for certain reports and information which is not a LEAN process and increasing others workloads.

Lack of accountability from leadership. Who is responsible for procuring this system?

"P&M is completely inflexible. I have recently returned to UoE in a short term post. Initial contract full of errors. No new contract and no available access to P&M. No-one seems to know how to sort this out. I nearly resigned before I started!

"

I have spent considerable amount of time arranging expense reimbursement for 3rd parties and trying to follow up if payment has been done. Some payments are still outstanding after ~5months, which does not leave me in a good place when I am trying to set up a large collaborative project at a stage in my career where this is crucial. It does not reflect well on the university either, but it is causing me unnecessary stress and translates in a significant amount of extra workload for myself and all in the finance team involved in this.

Suppliers threatening legal action, contacting me directly (nurse role) as they are not getting response from finance staff. Difficult to do job with lack of supplies. Today I found out my orders had not been placed because someone thought we were placing them (we have not done this since before P&M). I found out the supplier had not received the orders by ringing them. Increased stress and workload since it was introduced. We need to store more stock as delivery of goods much slower, deliveries arriving with not name on them so nobody knows who they are for.

There have been improvements throughout the year with procurement through P and M for example, but still some glitches to iron out every now and then.

The expenses and travel booking require so many unintuitive codes as to make it almost impossible to use, thankfully I rarely have to use P&M

The system is too complex with too many stages to complete an action. Staff that did not take on a financial role when employed are now having to do finance tasks (specifically processing invoices and student expenses claims). We are not trained in this area and do not know every stage. It takes up at least 25% of my role now and this was not what I was employed to do. These should be dealt with at finance level and then less errors will occur. The guidance is not the best, very complex screen shots that are too small and even then I never find the answer to my question. The issuing of personal grant codes to new students has still not happened over 12 months later, therefore charges are made to general grant and need to be moved when codes are given. This is not acceptable, it should not be this long to give students their grant codes to be able to function. This whole P&M system

have caused a lot of stress and anxiety to the point of dreading an invoice coming in as it is not straight forward to deal with. People should not dread coming to their work. To bring in a new system and reduce finance staff in the assumption that the non finance staff will just take on these tasks and then to make the system so complex is not fair. The system is also found to be inconsistent, things work one week then not the next time you do them.

As director of research, i am aware of projects that still struggle to pay international field assistants, and of funding we have not applied for because staff members felt no confidence they could deliver them reliably given the difficulty of international payments.

"-The fact that we still do not have a budget set within my School for the current financial year is a good indication of how P&M continues to affect basic operations.

-I strongly suspect that innumerable issues with FY22-23 will never be properly resolved (e.g. incorrect billing of accounts). For most of the year we were simply told to charge general School accounts when we could not access accounts for externally funded projects. I suspected that a lot of people have taken advantage of this. The loss of money across the University is likely high.

-The approval structure is not appropriate. Approval is based on line management structures which simply do not reflect University business. Anyone from across the University can, for example, spend against an account for which I am the grant holder (i.e. externally funded grant income). As the grant holder, I do not approve spending on my own account unless it is a request from someone I line manage. This is simply incorrect. Most line managers will not check account information during approval (aside from workload issues they actually cannot do this as they do not have account information). P&M also defaults to previously used account information, so there is an obvious way in which mistakes can be made. Whoever thought through the procedures used clearly has little idea how large parts of the University functions.

-I have a management role where I line manage staff who run facilities. Stress caused by P&M persists. Delays in purchasing, mistakes and problems persist. Operationally, this must be costing the University a staggering amount of money. "

It's clear P and M is not fit for purpose and that the work-arounds brushed off as "teething pains" are actually built-in lack of functionality which require an enormous amount of staff time from professional services and academic staff alike.

It is difficult to overstate the negative impact of the People and Money rollout. This impact is made first on the livelihoods of those with whom my colleagues and I collaborate (perhaps especially in the developing world, where even small payments represent the difference between school fees and rent paid and one's children being out of school or homeless). But the negative impact is also significant for the university, which has suffered a massive loss of reputation in every one of its financial relationships across the world as a result of this debacle.

"The system has been a problem and remains problematic for us and the academics for a number of reasons:

- How the system works was drip fed by central finance and with no real idea of the consequences that this had on individuals in the School and for pre and post award teams. No one centrally appeared to actually have a handle on how it worked
- The transaction reports and manual cost uploaders and transfers took a long time to be made available and are still clunky and are not user friendly,

- The monthly salary allocation report is extra work that did not exist previously
- The GL and project modules being separate with PMs only having sight of the GL spend via the business partner team is a step backwards
- Delays in setting up grants on P&M leads to further work for all involved and for internal awards such as EPSRC IAA is unacceptable with codes coming as the grants are ending
- Salary reports having to come from business partners or centrally again is a step backwards and again the reports are not user friendly
- The approval hierarchy is ridiculous and is not fit for purpose with staff having to delegate approvals to ensure the people controlling the budgets have sight of the costs
- The training of staff in RGS appears to be inconsistent with staff giving different advice "

All the issues I was previously having have been resolved. The Procurement drop-in sessions have been beneficial.

Loss of personal interactions that greatly facilitate transactions within and outside UoE. E.g. experts who knew how to enable research activity have been removed leaving call-centre type contacts with people who are unable to deal with detail because their portfolio is so broad and consequently their knowledge is shallow. Finding a contact who remains conscientious and knowledgeable is like discovering gold, but such people are under intolerable pressure because everyone is desperate for their input. Meanwhile research grant income meant to support discovery science has now to pay for people to cope with a financial system that is not fit for purpose.

Not noticed significant improvement I'm afraid.

just an example: ordering a £0.22 battery takes about half an hour and needs to be approved by another person too....

Our ultra cold freezer purchase is pending due to unpaid bills for the same company. The delay is causing domino effect issue and potentially impact in various ongoing clinical research due to the freezer space limitation (risking to stop patient recruitment).

P&M information should be more reliable.

I still don't have easy access to see how much consumables/small-equipment money I have left in a grant or general research account. I basically just guess, with likely consequences for overspend or lost funds through underspend in due course. I may be able to extract this information from financial colleagues, but they are so overworked it's difficult in practice.

"In my role managing multiple international research grants, I observe that every administrative and financial task now takes longer in P&M than pre P&M, with the on knock effect that everyone is constantly spinning more and more tasks - nothing is as quick to square off, call done and move onto the next task. This means everyone feels like they have more work at any one time resulting in very real feelings of stress, anxiety and burn out. As nothing seems straight forward to action it is leading to people experiencing feelings of incompetency - it is the system, rather than individuals' skills, that is the problem, but if you feel like you can not complete something satisfactorily can leads to feelings of failure on the part of the individual.

It also feels like a complete re-structure without being stated as such - things that could easily have been done locally previously now have to be done centrally. If one wants to check on progress of a matter (which is frequently due to how long it takes for things to be completed), the only route is a central 'black box' email inbox - which auto replies with a message saying it's very busy and please don't send follow-ups! Very frustrating.

Due to all the issues above, most things are at the bottom of a priority list until they become urgent, and then everyone is fire fighting on the last minute. I had a very real example where a research grant was supporting an international meeting - the hotel payment (which Diversity travel were unable to handle) was finally sorted out with less than 24 hours to go before 40 plus international delegates began arriving in the UK. This left me pondering paying for significant bills on personal credit cards to ensure the delegates could check in. Whilst personal expenditure wasn't necessary in the end, the stress and worry it caused was entirely unnecessary and could, and should, be avoidable if systems worked better and there wasn't a constant backlog for relevant teams to be dealing with. "

"The inability of grantholders to view live budgets on P&M is simply inexcusable at this stage post-implementation - this makes budget management and spend forecast all but impossible.

I also want to comment on the stress this is placing on our employees in finance, who are at the sharp end of dealing with people and trying to find answers - I have had several conversations with members of staff who want to resign and move, as they feel like they cannot do their job properly. This includes some of whom I would consider amongst the most valuable employees at the university, who used to be central to keeping the university finance systems moving and functional. This is just another unacceptable facet of this ongoing farce.

The reputational damage that the implementation of P&M has done to the University of Edinburgh is incalculable, whether with external collaborators (and particular partners in the global south - in my case delays in payments to partners in Africa has been unacceptable and embarrassing, bearing in mind these have been to institutions who do not have large budgets to cover spend), suppliers, or through media coverage. I have never witnessed a decision at a university that has done so much damage, and one result of this is that it makes it very difficult to take commentary by senior management on other issues (strikes, MAB, pay and pensions) with any seriousness. This is not a trivial matter - if the majority of staff have lost confidence in senior management (see recent staff survey), then senior management should consider their positions. "

It takes a ridiculous amount of time to do anything on P&M when it comes to ordering.

"I have a PhD student coming up to one year into their studies who does not have cost codes yet. Their project was also delayed due to a 4 month wait for a computer, for a 50% bioinformatics project.

Myself and at least two senior colleagues have considered/ are considering leaving the University due to the impact of P&M on our research, and the consequences that the loss in productivity will have on future funding bids."

Since people and money was implemented we can't no longer access to the vehicle fleet of Arnol Clark, which included people carriers with larger capacity than what is currently available, making institutional trips more expensive as more hired vehicles are needed to transport the same amount of people

There are simply no words to describe this disaster. It has affected my work as well as me personally. The negative effect it has had on everyone day to day (including undergraduate and postgraduate students) is immense and unmeasured by senior management at the university. It has taken a toll on my health and I'm working longer hours. My research has been severely affected. Examples include major delays in receiving orders, unable to see balances on my R and G codes so unable to manage grant finances. Issues setting up new grant codes and delays. As a manager I spend a proportion of my time now approving orders. This eats into the day because it distracts from my main work activities. I have lost so much time because of P&M and its administrative load; I expect I am 10-15% less productive and my publication output has been affected. Morale is low across staff as they are dealing with a system that is not fit for purpose. The impact of P&M on my research output is greater than the impact of Covid.

It remains the case that anyone, anywhere in the university can charge anything to grants that I'm responsible for. This can happen without me being notified - let alone approving. I cannot access any statement to check if this had happened. Furthermore, my school finance team cannot access statements to check.

Previously it was not in my job role to order goods or raise purchase orders for goods or services, our administrator did these tasks. Due to the line management structure being used in P&M this has now become my job on the programme I teach. This is an example of us having to restructure roles to fit with a system rather than a system being utilised for our needs. This has increased my workload significantly, at a time when I should be concentrating on supporting students.

Increased workload (without reward) to fix mistakes made on a wide range of processes and procedures for ALL phases of People and Money implementation - not just phase 3 Finance.

"It is the one year anniversary of starting my life sciences PhD. I still do not have a grant code. My PI took me as I had my own funding and she had little to offer me financially at the end of her grant. The consequence is that I have now spent thousands of pounds of my own money buying consumables, attending conferences &c.

I have no faith that I will ever be reimbursed for these losses, but it was the only way to progress my PhD. I have many peers in an identical position.

I cannot understand the University's impotence."

"Budgetary reporting has been entirely absent, except for the incredible efforts of our FBP who has spent a huge amount of effort and time manually compiled reports every few months. This means that our College has not been watching very closely and overspend has been tolerated tacitly. I still don't know what my budget's position was at the end of the FY.

One of my staff received a termination letter despite being on secondment and returning to her substantive post next month. She was unable to get a salary reference letter without a lot of chasing, which almost lost her a tenancy."

Still battling the cumbersome, confusing and long winded workarounds from the HR part of P&M launched in Nov 2020

"- I have been said ""you cannot use this provider because it is not in the system (P&M) and there is no time to set it up"" when it is a provider that has been used in other departments at the university. There is a lack of consistency.

- At my school, the procedure for registering on a conference is a unnecessarily long process. We need to request a PO, then we need to wait for someone to contact us, then we need to meet with them and we need to register while someone provides the e-card number. Other schools allow the old system where researcher registers and then get reimbursed. The worst case is a conference on our same university where they have asked me to asked the organizer if they can set up a ""journal"" for me to pay. If that is not compulsory, then it is a waste of my time and the organizer time to do that all the time."

We organised an International Workshop in May 2023 with months of preparation and support from the Institute for Micro and Nano Systems. Despite the expertise of the support staff in engineering in setup and invoicing, all the major expenditures were delayed, all had the suppliers chasing us repeatedly for payment, all had to be "elevated" to Finance Business Partners. Even now we still have one outstanding which means I still cannot transfer the funds to the organising society. If we can't do basics like this right how can you expect us to be a leading world University. I feel demoralised and let down, this also affects our research projects where basic equipment requires vigilant monitoring and repeated intervention.

"1) On several occasions we have raised requisitions but the purchase order has not been transmitted to the supplier.

2) Cost codes for research projects are not set up in a timely manner. For one project, I received the cost code only after the project had concluded.

3) It is not obvious how to purchase small sundry items through People and Money if they can't be found through the catalogues and it is not obvious which supplier to use. Example: SD card, can be purchased on Amazon in under one minute, can't be found on P&M catalogue, no clear approved supplier for this type of product so no way to do an off-catalogue order.

4) The P&M interface is very difficult to use. Buttons have bizarre names, the search tools only work if you know *exactly* the right form of words for which to search, and the layout as a whole is counter-intuitive.

5) The data on research project expenditure is completely unintelligible and often inaccurate. Costs incurred on 'suspense' accounts are not transferred promptly to the project accounts.

6) For some research projects, the university has to invoice the funder after each work package to get the money transferred. Invoices are not sent automatically, and academics have to do a lot of chasing in order for the invoices to be generated and sent.

7) We have experienced delays in getting procurement access for new members of staff e.g. postdocs.

8) For bench fee accounts and start up funds, it is impossible to get any kind of statement of expenditure because money from multiple academics has been pooled and there is no mechanism for tracking expenditure by individuals.

9) The routing of purchase approvals is not sensible. Academics' line managers are often not involved in the research projects of the people they manage, for which they are approving expenditure. Asking them to approve purchases adds to their workload. The

inability to delegate the approval to others also creates a culture where approvers have to log in during their holidays or risk delaying vital research.

10) There is a lack of transparency about who does what and how the system supposedly works.

"

We are working for P&M when it should be the other way round.

"The system is not reliable or efficient. Payment processing takes much longer than before PAM, often requiring 'chasing' payments.

The system has resulted in increased bureaucracy, more people involved in simple financial processes.

The idea of having the freedom to enter any codes, no matter which administrative unit/school you belong to, is a huge mistake as many costs are charged to wrong budgets.

Another misguided idea is submitting expenses that go for authorisation to the line-manager instead of the financial administrator.

To ensure that budgets are reconciled as accurately as possible, it is necessary to check four different reports (transaction reports, GL, P2P, FS4888), whereas previously I could rely on a single WebFirst report.

From my perspective as a person with a degree in economics and many years of experience in the financial field, PAM is not a financial system but an application for payment requests, with many defects and glitches.

To make matters worse, all this chaos and overwhelming situations, sometimes extremely stressful, were ignored by senior management, the whole problem was swept under the carpet, and instead of receiving support, staff was pressured to develop/implement new projects, activities, without considering that all our time and energy was and is dedicated to the implementation and management of the PAM. This resulted in the resignation of administrative staff from their jobs or in many cases health problems.

Summarising, it is a huge failure of this prestigious institution and not only because of the decision to implement PAM, but the subsequent actions of the people from whom I would have expected to receive the necessary support.

"

Repeated delays to payment due to mismatch between PO vs invoice, usually caused by slight increases i.e. increased shipping cost. No notification if generated that a mis-match exists and generally the first time I will hear of any issues is when the supplier contacts to say they haven't been paid. Very frustrating as it has taken many years to build relationships which have now been significantly eroded.

Despite being repeatedly reassured by the SLT that the situation would improve, I see no sign of improvement at all. The reputational damage to the University continues to increase and many suppliers are still refusing to accept orders from the University because of non-payment or late payments of invoices. It frequently takes up to ten times longer to place orders, make payments, and receive research supplies than before the P&M system was implemented. The morale of staff, particularly among Professional Services staff within the

School who are struggling valiantly to mitigate against the undesirable features and consequences of P&M, continues to plummet. Yet we have still not received an apology from the SLT about the dreadful decision-making processes and implementation that have led us to this situation. It is no wonder that the results of the Staff Survey are so dire that they cannot be published. All of the warning lights on the dashboard of this University are flashing red, but the members of the SLT at the controls appear to be either oblivious or unable to take the decisive remedial action that is required to ameliorate the situation.

1. If my default delivery location is set to one of the stores, the P&M system will automatically pass on the receipting function to the store staff rather than the requester, even if the actual delivery location is changed in the request form. 2. Sometimes even if I write a note to the buyer asking him/her to include my detailed delivery address on the PO, that information gets ignored and the parcel goes to the wrong place.

People are too tired and dispirited to complain or go to helplines which are black holes, leading to the 'we haven't had a query on the helpline about that recently so it must be fine'. No one from finance monitors and picks up on the questions on the Teams channel. People are fed up being asked repeatedly to give examples, repeat observations, search through multiple teams conversations in hope of a solution. We have countless individually created spreadsheets and workarounds (increasing both workload and risk) to deal with the failures of P&M and the lack of co-ordinated leadership or ownership by Finance in general. No-one has faith in content or functionality. Other systems and processes are being corrupted to cater to the failure to include essential functionalities in P&M. People who used to pride themselves on doing a good job are miserable because they feel now they can't and that reflects on them, unfairly. We continue to lose people and with those people we lose knowledge and experience and networks.

Financial end of year was difficult. Interaction with payments team and buyers to get basic things done, all taking quite a bit of time. Some excellent people working as buyers thankfully, but clearly they're holding up a deficient system and process.

Backlog of payments through PPMS system still no cleared, unable to use money to upgrade/service microscopes in the facility.

People and Money attracts criticism as a whole but this perception feels much worse through colleagues' interactions with the Procurement procedure. One year on and still no tangible improvement of the new system. Nor even any acknowledgement that the whole procurement debacle is fundamentally flawed in so many ways, in theory and in practice. We can feel that a lack of staff knowledge and training is being blamed but that is definitely not the case nor should be the scapegoat. We are all too busy with our own jobs to become procurement experts, even though most of us are experts in how to purchase those items and supplies that we need to do our work. The system needs to be changed to be a help to the staff rather than an unpleasant obstacle to be overcome to perform our core duties. It needs to be more staff/customer focused, rather than an opportunity for the University to employ an army of Procurement and Finance Professionals that we never needed before and no matter the propaganda, don't need now. However it appears that the only way to get us out of this self-inflicted predicament is to employ even more people and spend more time, money and resources just to get even a basic operation. It cannot be sustainable, for all I see is a fraction of the productivity that we used to have before P&M but especially this last year and the changes to procurement.

"Impacts have included a complete lack of responsiveness from the Finance Helpdesk, with every request I have submitted being ignored. One request was closed without it being

addressed (issue still ongoing), and any response from the Helpdesk has been to close cases but only after resolution through other means. The Finance Helpdesk offers no practical help in the resolution of P&M issues.

Purchasing remains cumbersome. Prior to P&M many orders were fulfilled on a next day basis (i.e goods supplied the day after placing an order). It can now take days to a week to gain buyer approval and have orders submitted. Many orders submitted go astray and I find that I have to check with every supplier that they have, in fact, received the order. A complete waste of my time. The delay in purchasing has a significant impact upon the pace of a research project, especially one which demands equipment development and construction.

We still regularly face the inability to order from suppliers because Edinburgh has failed to pay it bills.

I find that those at the sharp end of procurement and research finance are helpful and recognise the problems with P&M. Senior management, however, appear to be in denial, or worse, don't give a f*** that their pet project has hamstrung research (and much else) in this university. "

Financial management practises are non-existent since July 22. The University has no current forecast and is increasingly out of control.

"Things are slightly better in regard to expense claims and payments, but the amount of time required is certainly a total waste, the software has no 'default memory' or easy-to-use personalised menus (e.g. preferred grants, etc.), and is quite arcane/slow/non-responsive sometimes.

I don't do a great deal of procurement/orders myself, but it affects a lot of procedures that I manage, and it makes it much harder to spend funds as we should and avoid underspending..."

Some of our overseas research partners are charities with limited financial reserves. They are experiencing real financial hardship because although our research grant was awarded in March, we are still unable to make payments to them, and we still do not have this grant baselined, after 5 months..

The university management have caused an immense, stressful, wasteful and ongoing change-management shambles. Huge respect to our local finance staff for coping under the very difficult circumstances that have been imposed. Why do we have to keep involving them when we wish to see grant balances? Why is everything financial delayed for new projects? Why do PhD students still submit separate claim forms?

I moved roles within the Uni to move away from the impossible job i'd ended up with due to P&M. The team i managed were all affected - off sick with stress, clear mental health issues which had arisen due to P&M, leaving the team. Recruiting new team members was extremely difficult due to lack of written guidance and processes, lack of training, lack of answers to questions arising.

Exhaustion and ever lowering morale due to the overly complex and completely unintuitive front end of P&M. I end up consulting our "business partners" every time I have any contractual interaction, including with government agencies such as the Health and Safety Executive.

I have a lot of close colleagues who are actively seeking to leave the university as a direct result of the P&M implementation. Their morale is really low. The PGR students we are supporting have become very combative because of the P&M debacle; whatever we try to do to support them now we get 'the university doesn't care about us' in return, and it's very disheartening.

"I hosted an international seminar speaker. It took over 8 WEEKS to reimburse her. It was hugely embarrassing, and has made me less willing to host international collaborators in the future, and made our less likely that she will give a seminar again.

It took over 3 weeks to reimburse me for £1500 in conference fees last month because of complications with the approvals process in P&M- this is a huge amount to sit in my credit card, and it took hours of my time chasing it.

Our group is still on temporary grant codes as our grant codes (started May 23) have not been assigned.

I have struggled to pay suppliers for key research supplies, which is embarrassing and damaging to the university's reputation.

"

The system is not suited for purpose. At this point, despite how much it will cost and how painful it will be, I think we need to abandon this system and find a more suitable one under new senior leadership.

My problems are small compared to those who have tried to help me. It takes 3 or 4 Professional services staff to sort a minor problem of mine. This is replicated with other colleagues in the school. These professional services staff are bearing a huge burden & I worry for them.

"The P&M system and its technical flaws and frustrations have been well documented and are slowly being fixed (very slowly). The very important related issue is the overarching change in culture to a 'top down' centralised corporate model that accompanied P&M (and is my guess the main reason for its implementation).

This has had a very demoralising effect on research focussed group leaders due to the excessive bureaucracy, processes, and lack of transparency. All the things which the Adam Tickell review has said are problematic in Universities.

I provide three examples:

Why are PIs being asked to write business cases to recruit staff that are already covered on research grants? This is ludicrous. How could these ever not be approved? It is simply wasting time and resource.

Why are full costings needed for preliminary applications for grants - this is nonsensical. 2 stage applications were supposed to make things simpler - now we have twice the work.

Why are G accounts being swept each year? Why are these no longer managed at the institute/centre level and instead central accountancy teams (and therefore I've not understanding for the past year what funding I have in these accounts).

These discretionary funds (often hard-won or donated from private honorarium or royalties) provide all of the flexible funding that is needed to support many of the activities associated with improved 'culture' for research- such as extensions for PhD students or postdocs, travel funds for staff to go to conferences or course, lab retreats and celebrations, new equipment, new reagents/pilot projects, pump-priming of new ideas.

How does the SLT think that these activities are paid for at the moment? The University wants to act like a corporate machine and control all the people and money. But they are not really the holders of the people or money.

If I relocate to another university the people and money move with me. "

There continues to be an increased administrative burden imposed on staff because of the P&M system: tasks that previously were done by dedicated departmental staff are now having to be done, in full or in part, by teaching- or research-focussed staff, and this creates delays and frustration. It's unclear why these tasks now have to be done by others, when the previous system seemed to work well.

Ability to retain and recruit staff to my research team is impacted now.

"Use of P and M for procurement remains time-consuming and unpredictable. The biggest problem remains the shift of workload from admin staff (who used to deal with ordering) to academic staff (who should be using their time to teach students or do research NOT spending it wrestling with P and M in order to obtain essential supplies for their research).

There are still systemic problems eg. the catalogue is very poor - many items are missing, or else there are items in the catalogue that turn out to be no longer available after you have ordered them (so the order has to be cancelled and you have start again).

Also, the buyers are not always consistent - everyone I know has examples where a requisition has been submitted and a PO generated, but the buyer then forgets to send the

PO to the company, so the order is never placed. I spend a large amount of time following up on orders to find out why items have not arrived.

Another ongoing issue is that it is not possible to easily find out how much money has been spent on different grants. And the coding is so obscure that other people could order from your grants by accident (or vice versa).

In summary, the whole process is clunky and awkward, and demands that individual PIs devote considerable time and head-space to ordering supplies for their group (therefore less time for what we are uniquely qualified to do i.e. research and teaching). Remember the days when we used to just press a button on sciquest and someone else would do the rest of the ordering process!

Most of the above problems seems to be intrinsic to the design of P and M. The only solution I can think of is that each institute or school needs to employ someone who does the ordering on behalf of PIs. "

Suppliers do not always receive purchase orders generated by P&M, resulting in delays and increased workload phoning suppliers to check on orders.

"Total shambles.

I have spent at least 20% of the last week trying to fight mindless P&M problems. I am on one of the university's most senior positions and this is a total waste of time and money. It is not getting better."

As part of my academic role, I work with a small group of professional services staff in the University, who deliver research reports and analysis for EU Horizon projects and commercial funders, often with University research partners. This is self funding from contracts won. We have been encouraged by College to undertake more contract work, on a promise that we will retain the profits to continue funding our staff. We calculate in FY 2022-2023, we earned £80,000 profit. However the P&M system has "lost" all these funds, and finance support staff state that they are not able to trace these flows of funds. If unresolved in P&M, the UoE will default on contract durations with individual professional staff, signed by assuming these contract work payments would be delivered. This would lose staff with 10 years experience.

Inability to access research grant balances is a big concern.

Over a year on and we still have a system that is poorly functional at its best. My postdocs and I have learned how to cope with or sidestep much of it, but this has taken a vast amount of time and energy and the coping strategies still consume far more time than managing a research group under the old system did. My lab manager wishes to apply for independent fellowship positions - the amount of time it takes her to deal with the failure of a system inflicted on all of us is directly damaging her career progression. We have sort of got used to it, as I said, but every time I hear an update at a senior management committee on the (lack of) progress of PaM and the impending problems coming down the line because it will never be fit for purpose, I once again start looking for positions in another University

It's been a very stressful year on top of the pandemic and you go and introduce such a big change and you can't fix it after a year! I have complete absence of finance oversight since the introduction of P&M and no sight into how this will improve because our support staff are overwhelmed.

The system remains cumbersome and unintuitive. Whilst written guidance documents have been provided for many processes, the processes themselves are, in general, more complex and opaque than they should be. Accurate spending and budget reporting is still not fit for purpose. Payment and helpdesk response times are back to being too long. Still no easy or reliable way to check if a supplier has been paid.

"I find I'm still unable to order some basic computing items and peripherals due to issues involving p&m and suppliers. These are in stock sundry items but issues surrounding p&m has meant I still have not received them.

I've had a research project delayed by 3+months due to complications in ordering hardware caused by a breakdown as soon as p&m we're contacted by the vendor.

I've had delivery of an item required to deliver lectures be held over broader payment to vendor p&m dispute. I've then been chased about not receipting the non received item.

I have had to contact several vendors directly about non delivery of items due to p&m confusions. Mostly they have been forgiving, but clearly the extra work is taking a toll on professional relationships.

After contacting several people within p&m I still can't get a clear picture of what to do when there is a problem.

I've had p&m cancel approved orders because the system makes them think they know better. When questioned why this action was taken I received no reply from the staff and p&m seems to offer them no ability to undo a mistake.

I've had one order reach a vendor which was incomplete due to something within p&m. There is still confusion about the state of this order several months later, but the vendor had been contacted to cancel this and p&m have been informed with no reply.

I've been told to fix my delivery address multiple times over the year despite having already received items for over several months. When questioned why there seems to be confusion as to what the problem is.

I have one failed order which I have requested through multiple contacts be removed or cancelled but some staff seem confused that the vendor may have been paid despite the item never arriving.

I've been told by several vendors that they are receiving parts of orders being returned and marked as undeliverable despite them being shipped to the same address as items which have been good receipted in the same batch order.

Multiple people from the p&m system have been harass me over incomplete or non delivered items first rather than contacting the vendor or replying to the vendor when the vendor has asked for clarification. This has caused time and effort to be wasted internally chasing down the fact that someone in p&m will not reply to emails.

Several staff contact me concerned that money has not been spent from grants that have a deadline associated with them which has led to additional work to determine what the problem is.

There is no oversight when I'm asked to check on an order for another member or staff which means I have to wait for them to return from leave before a query can be checked.

I've also been unable to use a department bank card to place an order for multiple months due to the payment being declined."

Very quickly, finance staff normalised the issues. As in, there was a resignation and acceptance that the system was a problem. This went on for quite some time before some level of contrition appeared in everyday messages. Whilst I understand that the frontline finance staff were not at fault and were dealing with issues as best they could, they were non the less the public face of the University. I had various suppliers and external collaborators waiting on payments for months - thousands of pounds worth - and I could not get anyone senior to apologise for the delays and lack of answers and what, it turned out, was a lack of training of frontline staff. I was literally begging for us to show some kind of customer service and acknowledge the problems to my suppliers but I was ignored.

A year on, P&M remains infuriating and a huge waste of time and effort across the university. The opportunity costs must run into tens of millions of pounds by now and easily outweigh the cost of the system.

In January 2023, the University Executive approved an electric vehicle scheme for employees. This has not yet been launched, despite a proposal first coming to the Executive in October 2022. Upon inquiring with the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability, I was advised the delay was because: "some of the processes we need to put in place require updates to systems within People & Money". This is a major employee benefit designed to support staff to participate in the green transition and efforts to improve air quality in the City of Edinburgh that has not yet been implemented due to P&M.

There are still major problems with research grant setup, monthly research salaries on grants and the lack of clear communications. There was a research stabilisation exercise started in Feb23 where there was a plan to sort out these issues. We have heard nothing since and a lot of the problems remain unresolved. The new finance business partner structure launched concurrently with P&M still doesn't work. If you are unlucky in your allocation of an FBP then it is a huge bottleneck.

I have no access to my consultancy income.

"1) The inability to look back at expenses claims, SciQuest Orders and EITs is impacting efficiency where response to audit is required.

2) There is still an feeling that I don't fully understand the workings of the system, and my colleagues all share this view. We are all experienced members of staff. Where is the training, where are the up-to-date, accurate and helpful guides that would assist?

3) The affect on my personal health has been significant due to stress. I refer to both mental and physical health. Why don't I get another job? Why should I be forced to feel that I can't do a job I had done with ease previously? Do you want to continue to lose experienced staff by pretending that everything is rosy in the P&M garden? Do you want to ignore the impact this is having on staff and students?

4) It is clear that there are conscientious, hard working staff in Procurement and Finance who are trying their best to advise and assist, but sometimes even they don't have answers. Why are we all still fighting fires, some new, many old, a year later?

"

After 14 months of chaos, university leadership still keeps staff in the dark on any progress that has been made. Currently, it feels as if no progress is made as P&M continues to cause the same problems as when it first opened. It has become impossible to run a lab or any research activities at the UoE when budgets remain unknown already for 14 months. Moreover, grant reporting is now completely failing, causing significant stress to the PI and their staff, as funders consider withdrawing their periodic payments. Support teams are now fully overwhelmed and indeed, many support staff have left their jobs. My lab manager now spends 80% of her time on P&M (compared to 20% of admin time previously), which has caused a large amount of frustration and stress leading to sick leave. The Principal personally promised me >6 months ago that (1) positive changes would become apparent quickly, (2) funders would be collectively approached to discuss UoE reporting delays, (3) support for the most vulnerable staff (e.g. early-career staff) would be considered asap, and (4) university leadership would take a transparent approach to how P&M problems are addressed. None of these points have been addressed and it is absolutely appalling that zero transparency or outlook has been given. There are really only two options left: either the incompetent university leadership resigns and more capable hands are found or I will leave UoE as it is now impossible to be a researcher here.

I started this position a year ago and I still cannot access the ordering system for People and Money even though my supervisor and I have requested access several times. I am unable to fully do my role without access.

"1. Centralised support is often very slow (no reply after 3 weeks) and often useless due to lack of knowledge of specific issues. I am often directed to FAQ's that are generic and useless.

2. We need institute level assistance with PAM issues, from people who understand the commin issues we face and have time to find out solutions that they can share. The wastage of PI effort remains substantial, and School of Biology support for staff is well-meaning but wholly inadequate.

3. The equipment and consumables catalogue in people and money is very poor. Often the same basic consumables item (eg gloves, plasticware, ethanol) is available at multiple prices and we should automatically be quoted the cheapest one. Information on specific items is often incomplete or wrong, and finding what you need takes substantial staff time. It is not in the job description of local support staff to assist in this process - even when they know a solution."

"The stipend of a managee has been delayed by more than 10 days. It has taken more than 3 months to set their stipend up so that its paid out automatically by P&M rather than one off payments. We think this has now been sorted for the remainder of their contract (1 year), but we don't know.

It's as if the P&M system is surprised it needs to make recurring payments."

The time and energy that this P&M fiasco has taken up are just appalling. No organisation of our caliber should have this problem. It's embarassing and infuriating. And just a pain, on a day to day basis. The quality of my and my colleagues' work is really suffering.

We experience issues with salary reporting which affect our ability to allocate these to grants. Expenses related to study grants is also difficult. There are so many work-around processes as a result of missing functionality in P&M. We also need an additional staff member to conduct these processes due to the associated high workload.

Procurement is still a complete mess of stressed and distressed individuals unable to do their jobs because the issues around training, efficiency, logical workflow etc. have still not been resolved. Efforts so far in regard to training have been very limited and are inadequate. There are still overly complicated (and often incorrect) guides on the university website.

Interns/Residents who are considered students and not staff cannot access P&M, which causes issues for accessing mandatory training. Also, The approval process of PO's does not seem to align with the managers of that account but defaults to managers and they may not have access to the account codes - this causes significant delays or worse, people approving expenditure that they don't manage.

Waiting for the audit result. Little confidence that the University will implement the necessary structural and management changes required to fix the underlying causes (wider than just P&M). Waiting on technical improvements in P&M and integrations to avoid local duplication of effort that the introduction of P&M added rather than removed.

Inability to manage research budgets causes stress and serious concerns

Reputation damage due to delays in paying external partners

Still little to no communication. What are the results of the external review bodies.

It's embarrassing having to keep apologising to suppliers; it's been a year since launch and we're still not getting payments to them on time.

The list of issues is endless - it eats up huge amounts of time of people who should be doing other things, various things are impossible to achieve (e.g. authorization by people who are no longer employees of the University).

Lack of notifications of required/outstanding actions in P&M meaning that items requiring receipting (literally a tick box exercise) are not processed properly, preventing payment of suppliers. These items do not show up as outstanding on P&M so there is no way to tell action is required. Also receiving aggressive emails from Procurement re. incomplete actions for processes requesters are unfamiliar with. The system is not at all intuitive. The new online guidance in the Procurement Hub is helpful.

We are months late in reporting to our funder due to the inaccuracy of p&m reporting,

"Since implementing the new P&M system, we've experienced a significant loss of suppliers that were previously integrated into the system. The process of adding new suppliers to our list has become undeniably time-consuming. An illustration of this is our engagement with an African supplier last August, where payment was only successfully processed recently. Regrettably, we are hesitant to consider their services again due to these delays, and interestingly, they have also expressed disinterest in further collaboration.

The process of obtaining information about invoice payment status has proven to be rather lengthy. We often face considerable delays before receiving the relevant information, and occasionally our queries directed to the finance helpline go unanswered."

P&M Transition has affected massively the ability to contact my role as required, as well as the time to complete tasks. This has put a great burden to my workload, resulting to excessive stress and deteriorating mental health.

Poor or non-existent reports. Having to go through our FBP or finance helpline for any detail, seems counter-productive, when in the past I was able to interrogate the system and deal with any issues quickly. For a new system it is very "clunky" and ill conceived. Who signed this off without it being properly tested? How can a University of our standing not realise this folly? The cost of the system is astronomical and the suppliers must be positively gleeful that they came to UoE

I'm trying to find out what percentage of my salary is paid for by external grants but the university is unable to tell me

No intuitive way to receipt purchases; difficult to find the correct person to contact about purchases that haven't been approved. Certain stocked items (e.g. white roll) show incorrect pricing in the catalogue and others (i.e. clipboards) are unable to be ordered at all despite being listed in the catalogue

People and Money means that we have routed research grant opportunities through other Universities, rather than through our own. The University is not tracking lost income in any way.

Am currently waiting for an invoice to a new supplier to be paid. Suppliers have not been paid and no response from finance helpline after 3 emails. My only contact is a single person (the buyer) who is probably handling multiple cases and cannot respond quickly enough (weeks before I get a response). It is immensely frustrating when something as simple as paying an invoice from a new supplier such a difficult thing to do, and despite promises to the contrary, there has been no support available to help resolve this in a timely manner?

It is still difficult to track progress of procurement processes through to payment. It would be helpful to be notified as the requester when payments are finally made.

In addition to delays when setting up and accessing budget information for a small internal grant, I've also experienced an unrelated issue, in connection with setting up Shared Parental Leave. I'm not sure to what extent this is PaM specific, or a result of restructuring the SPL process, but despite trying to sort this out as early as possible, I've received somewhat inconsistent information from HR regarding the application process, and forms that were submitted through PaM on my behalf have been lost in the system/didn't reach the relevant parties in HR. The process is complicated, because while maternity leave can be applied for directly through PaM, SPL has a different procedure. I'd be curious whether others have had similar added difficulty in the SPL process recently.

There are lots of unnecessary and complicated steps for buying reagents for experiments. There are lots inexperienced buyers or financial staffs who do not know what they are doing with the unfunctional people and money system. There is no way to find out who is in charge of answering or helping to solve the problems generated by this unfunctional people and money system because nobody knows the answers. for example: Why is the people and money system asking to attach vat exemption form for every single item in the same company? It is ridiculous to attach 14 times same vat exemption form when I purchase 14 primers from IDT company plus to click 14 times for same intended use. There is no way to find out why the project manager can not approve the edited requisition (even the financial helpline doesn't have any answers). There is not response from the helpline or some buyers regarding the enquiry of the requisition which was returned by the buyer. I am still trying to find out who can help with one of my orders after three weeks. The efficiency was hugely effected by this complicated system. I am wasting hours hours every day to dealing with the problem from this inefficient ordering system.

"I am a committee member of EngGradSoc (Engineering Graduate Society). We're funded by the Engineering Graduate School to provide educational and social activities for Engineering PhD students. The School has always been generous and as helpful as they can be for facilitating the payments for our events.

However, these payment processes have become significantly harder since the introduction of P&M. The school now has no control of when invoices are settled and they are not able to get in contact with people in the finance team very easily to hurry the payments along. We've had instances where the suppliers for our trips were not paid in time and we have had to cancel or postpone trips after having had people register for them. We have had to pay upfront ourselves (often close to £1000!) and had to wait over a month to be reimbursed. This may be small change for the university, but is obviously not a good situation for us as we are postgrads ourselves and our finances are already being stretched due to the current cost of living crisis.

We have now reached a stage where some payments are able to be made by finance, but these often have lengthy delays. Some suppliers are able to issue an invoice after the trip and this is the ideal situation for us as we never know how long the payments can take as they often get stalled in P&M for seemingly no reason (we've never had a satisfactory explanation for this!) The worst instance of a payment taking very long to be made was our trip to the National Museum of Flight in April this year. We are still waiting for the payment of that invoice to be made and I've recently been chased again by the museum despite assurances a couple of months ago that payment would be made within a few days! This

adds to our workload and has prevented us holding some of our events when we had initially planned to due to non payment of invoices.

We are constantly concerned that trip providers may not allow us to visit or prevent a future committee from doing so as non payment of invoices negatively affects our reputation. Recently the coach provider we use had not been paid on time (despite them being a long term and regularly used provider by the university) and we had concerns that they may refuse to take bookings from us for future trips due to the lack of payment of invoices.

We are currently trying to organise another trip where we may have to pay in advance ourselves as the invoice raised a month ago (~£800) has still not been paid. This is due to finance being hard to contact as the company had issues with registering as a supplier with the university.

It is not fair on us as a committee to have to finance these trips ourselves only to have to wait a lengthy period to be reimbursed. It also reflects badly on our committee when invoices are not settled in a timely manner. We now spend most of our time in meetings and outside of them discussing finances and having to chase payment for our events. This adds to our workload and makes doing our voluntary role much more difficult."

I have had to apologise to a publisher who for over six months this year did not receive payment for a publication. This is highly embarrassing and has done a lot of damage to the university's reputation and standing.

"To highlight for those of us working in HR, the effects of PAM and the transition have been felt for a lot longer than this form or cover email states. We have been using (or attempting to use) the system for our day to day work since 2021, and whilst we have in the main ""got used"" to some of the functionality (or lack of), it is still affecting our workload and in turn lack of time for other projects/career development.

It has therefore been around 2 years + of inability to focus on actual improvement projects we wish to look at, as well as the general toll of stress and lack of morale meaning encouraging the team (or even myself) to undertake CPD has basically been a non starter.

Tasks that were once quite simple are now inordinately complex. Running reports to look at variances that may need to be paid to GH staff for example, results in unreliable data that we need to look through line by line to sense check.

Other offline tasks such as the reallocation of funds from ""research bucket"" accounts to project codes, takes several hours of PS staff time and is all done via centralised spreadsheet. This is basically 10 steps back compared to previous ways of working, and massively time-consuming (and inaccurate).

"

P&M has led to an intolerable level of procurement functions that lead me to question the job I do. It has taken some time to learn but the time requirement is still significant. Chasing

orders, invoices, adding suppliers, and getting close to teaching deadlines is very stressful. I wake up tired every day and I think P&M is a major contributor.

At this stage a year in there has been no training on the system we have been left to "work" things out ourselves. We are unable to operate or support staff to the level we used to due to the lack of functionality. Every task is much more complicated and convoluted, task that used to take minutes now take hours. Each area that has to use P&M has its own priorities, and these do not align with the day-to-day issues in Schools. For example, the University still prioritise application submission, even although we are unable to cope with the ongoing grants we have. Projects need to be set-up in a timely manner otherwise there is constant re-charging of costs from GL to projects or from the suspense accounts. The process of completing the cost loader itself is too laborious.

Poor communication. Still seems to be culture that Schools are simply not following process correctly - this is causing a huge 'them and us' divide

"P&M continues to create a huge amount of additional work for everyone. Processes previously undertaken (efficiently) by Finance/Accounts teams have been passed to 'originators' who have no financial background and no capacity to take on the extra workload, even without the added complications of an utterly inefficient and opaque system. Even the originators cant trace a payment once it has passed into another team's hands, and there is no way of finding out who it is sitting with, or why. In addition, processes that we as a (non-finance) team have taken hours to decipher change without any notification, and do not come to light until something else has gone wrong/we have received a complaint about non-payment and tried to investigate.

The helpdesk system is also impenetrable and my service requests are often picked up by a team who does not understand my question because it has been triaged incorrectly. But I don't know who they are or what they do so have no idea who they are answering on behalf of, whether the information they give me is actually applicable, or how to get it passed to the correct team.

The guidance documents are indecipherable to someone without knowledge of financial terminology, and often lead to dead ends and broken links, hence we were forced to develop our own through trial and error.

I have a huge amount of sympathy for the accounts/finance teams but also for the rest of us who have had this unexpectedly huge and unnavigable burden landed on our shoulders. We do not have bottomless capacity to deal with things others won't or cant, especially when they relate to areas entirely outwith our remit, skill and knowledge. Additional resourcing, both short and long term, is absolutely necessary but it must be put into the accounts/finance teams, it can't become another team/manager's problem. The longer the responsibility rests with us, the more concerned I am that it will become an expected part of our roles and that cannot be reversed.

"

"My grant spending on P+M bear no resemblance to reality. Wrong things are added frequently. There are bills coming now from 1-2y ago for grants which have finished.

New recruits - have not managed to set anyone up on P+M yet at all.

Travel - It is so difficult to organise this that if not too expensive I am paying myself as my life/time is worth more than trying to do it through diversity travel.

The delay in ordering is improved, but I am still needing to approve everything my lab buy etc. Has increased workload. As PI, I have to approve these, set up my new staff on P+M, approve leave etc - I feel this is not good use of my time, and I didn't use to have to do this."

"I was off sick recently with work-related stress for several weeks, and P&M, together with the cumbersome processes it has created, played a significant part in this. I really would like senior management to understand that P&M & its associated processes have a real impact on the work and personal lives of employees; for example, now that I have been off sick, I was declined an update to my Income Protection insurance policy (which I take in relation to my mortgage), and I'll have to apply for it again in a few months.

Processes continue to be more complicated than they could/should be, constant updates mean looking at user guides all the time although I have been in my job for almost 2 years, things get delayed because of the long approval chains, and having to raise an SR even for the simplest of questions is time-consuming. "

"-Extremely late payments to suppliers. Including a conference venue October 2022- that still has not been paid in Brazil. This is affecting the trust companies, venues etc have in the University of Edinburgh and doing further business with us

-Very difficult and convoluted way to pay invoices when a supplier is finally set up

-No direct contact with staff - rather automated emails - not helpful at all

-Too many steps and apps to complete 1 procedure. It should all be in one place, rather than using an app, creating a form , emailing the form, updating the document with a PO and then receiving it. Far too many steps that mean mistakes can be made and nobody is aware or able to help

-Very difficult to receive funds when seeking sponsorship from other Universities, Research groups, government entities- and nobody to contact for help or guidance. This is money coming into the university and nobody will help with the financial transactions

-Very difficult to run events and make payments on time, set up suppliers, and justify costs

- Need of credit card occasionally - not everyone will invoice (including Zoom)"

The supplier set up process continues to be an issue - takes far too long. The continued failure of the automated supplier process - PO/invoice. This is working in some cases but not all so this needs to be monitored.

The system has led to delays in reimbursement and delays in purchasing related to research activities, which has made it more difficult for me to carry out my research in a timely manner, and some delays in being repaid for research expenses. There were also major delays in transferring money to a partner university to pay the research fellow, which was problematic for the research fellow but also has been very detrimental for our institution's reputation, and I have felt personally very embarrassed about our inability to transfer money within a reasonable time frame. It also took about a month to process the purchase of a voucher for a research participant (i.e., an incentive); the participant is a vulnerable person, for whom the voucher represented a not insignificant amount of money, and again I was embarrassed that I had to keep apologising for the delays and could not even tell them how

long it would take for them to receive it. I am glad to say this process was much quicker last time I had to go through it. I also feel for the people administering the process who have to waste a great deal of time trying to resolve issues with the process (e.g., if one number is input incorrectly into an expense claim the whole thing needs to be redone, which wastes a lot of time, and because the system is so user-unfriendly, it is very easy to get things wrong). My confidence has sunk so low that I am highly reluctant to start any research projects that rely on efficient financial processes, or enter into any partnerships with other universities or institutions that would involve the transfer of money or payment of research staff.

only a year after implementation are relevant training sessions run.

I'm very concerned about the ongoing impacts on the credibility of the university as a partner, especially in parts of the Global South where colleagues have had repayments delayed for totally unreasonable lengths of time. Why should they trust us in future? How can we treat them with the respect they deserve?

A year on and we seem to have seen little improvement with many of the same negative impacts still ongoing. Staff are being ground down and there is little evidence that senior management really appreciate just how bad the situation (still) is.

As someone who has just started up their own research group, I have found that P&M has made starting my own group significantly more difficult.

During the transition period last year, I have undoubtedly lost grant money due to being unable to see how much money was left in a grant at around the time it was finishing. To avoid overspends, funds were underspend at had to be returned to the funders when the grant closed. This could have been used to purchase much needed consumables and extend contracts. I have been lucky enough to work in a department with a good finance team that has provided extensive guidance on using P&M and work-arounds to problems with the system. However, this will have undoubtedly have put a huge workload and pressure on these individuals and a feel guilty going to them and so I have tried to minimise my use of P&M where I can. Where I have to use the system, it is complex and unwieldy and requires me to repeated watch long training videos to remind me of the procedures to do even the most basic of tasks like ordering items. Where there are problems, such as being unable to receipt good or partially completed orders where items are unavailable, the problems are long-running and require many E-mails from many people to rectify. It has been, and continues to be a huge sink in my time, and the time of my colleagues, and a source of stress.

5. What are your most important questions or observations for a review of the People and Money transition?

Responses in randomised order.

stop reviewing - make it work!

The P&M impact has been transferred to staff overworking in order to cover the inability of the system and the counter-productiveness of it. What steps are taken to address this and return to healthy working conditions.

A better communication culture in the university, starting at the top. Very unlikely to happen with the current university leadership.

"An experienced procurement team is needed.

The Help Desk staff should report frequent problems to the relevant team for resolution so similar issues don't recur."

This system still appears as clearly unfit for purpose and should only be used by people with financial skills and training. These people should be located in departments and able to help colleagues on a daily basis. This system is such a loss of time for all staff whose main activity is not financial and continues to create frustration. Proper training is only recently offered (12 months later), which is a step forward but I have not attended yet so cannot comment on this. When is the external audit on the system due?

People and Money is not the problem. It is the attitude of the central University which has imposed people and money, diversity travel and a whole bunch of other clueless centralisations on staff with no care or understanding of how the University actually runs. Staff are dispensable workhorses whose main job is to fix the complete messes made by central University decisions. It is only when this University realises that decentralisation and allowing people to actually do their jobs is the route to success that UEd will start to improve its teaching, reputation, research, ratings, income back to the excellent standing it once used to have.

I am still finding that there are issues with ordering reagents for use in research. Prices in the catalogue and often not correct which leads to a back-and-forth with buyers and suppliers. There is less information available regarding the products, or it is less well presented, making product comparison difficult. This means I am spending much more time on ordering than previously. We have been told that this is due to suppliers not inputting the data correctly and essentially nothing can be done.

The system, the support materials and processes are not user friendly. I am frustrated that nobody is investing in user experience specialists who would help to make basic tasks easier to do. I'm an IT professional and am repeatedly going back to crib sheets, videos etc to get stuff done which shows how unintuitive it all is, not easy to learn or remember. I accept that changing how the system works is costly and time consuming, but support mechanisms and the approach to training/support materials could be significantly improved with relatively little cost/effort. Standards in usability, accessibility and plain English simply aren't being met.

why has no one taken responsibility for this fiasco? Why has no one in senior management resigned? why are there no plans to get a function finance system in place?

The system for ordering needs to be simplified. The costing coding needs to be simplified, especially for use in other systems e.g. booking with Diversity travel. Overall, the whole

system needs to be made more user friendly and intuitive. There is a need for more local finance support to assist researchers with finance and P&M issues.

Rather than telling us that people are doing their best to help to resolve the situation - for which there is no evidence, people need to be employed who can clear the backlog. Otherwise the University cannot continue to function.

"What is the realistic time frame for systems to work properly? Not just 'we are working on it', but how long until University staff and students can be confident the systems work and are fit for purpose.

What is being done to address the underlying stress and burn out amongst staff as a result of all this? The well being services are important, but addressing the underlying causes and preventing staff feeling stressed and burnt out in the first place is more important - prevention, rather than cure.

Importantly, what is being done to retain staff? Moral and goodwill are at an all time low amongst staff - I have observed a lot of experienced and well qualified staff leaving the University - a far higher staff turnover than usual and we are losing valued staff as a result of the low moral and stress P&M is causing. "

What was the point of this experiment? Why wasn't this tested more before rolling it out? Who is accountable and have they been held accountable for this decision? There are certain schools that would have been ideal candidates but it's really disheartened me that whoever was in charge of this hasn't thought this through. It's embarrassing. It's one of the reasons I'm resigning from the University

I would like to see complete clarity and transparency as to which committee will have ultimate responsibility for agreeing on the timetable for remedial works/improvements to the system. I would also like to know how schools and other end-users will be represented/involved in decision making.

Senior leadership need to realise that a "self-service" approach to many processes is not acceptable and is moving people's attention away from the main purpose of their jobs. This is having a very negative impact on the University, its business and its reputation. The negative press UoE has gained over the past year has damaged its reputation and made working for this institution very disheartening and unattractive.

"It's abundantly clear that no proper testing was done. There was no training offered and is little or no guidance to help support people to do their day to day jobs.

We went LIVE for all phases on a wing and a prayer and those in charge ignored the warnings and grave concerns of the real subject-matter experts. They ploughed on regardless and created the utter carnage that we see today and will take many more years to recover from.

But guess what, they were rewarded for their incompetence and continue to be rewarded instead of being brought to account and dealt with accordingly.

The system implementation is only half the story, the people changes and restructures are just as big a problem, but shush they don't want to talk about that either. "

Above all, you should listen to administrators and junior managers, as they are the most experienced and knowledgeable about working in this system and the difficulties that arise from it.

How can the people responsible for P&M still be "leading" our university?!

"What consultation and testing was done to assess whether the P&M system would be fit for purpose across the many different areas of the University with diverse and complex requirements?"

Why was support for the rollout so inadequate?"

It is surely time for senior management to accept that these are not teething problems (as the rest of us knew all along) but are intrinsic to a system that is completely unfit for purpose and should never have been introduced, particularly in a research heavy HEI.

I would still like it to be made clear what are the roles of different people in the P&M system. Why do central finance ask local finance to ask requestors to ask finance helpline to sort out issues like PO amendments? why do so many people have to be involved in these types of issues now instead of sorting this in a streamlined manner? And when will we able to easily view our up-to-date budget information with proper breakdown of expenditures, bills etc.

The P&M debacle is a symptom of a bigger issue: the desire by the centre of the University to push through a change to its management and culture by stealth, taking more control back to the centre and away from the Schools. The fact that the software was poorly specified, and not fit for the broad range of the University's needs, demonstrated that key individuals in the centre did not understand the complexity of running a major, research university. That those individuals are still central to the efforts to put this right gives me no confidence that the P&M problems will be fixed, and certainly not in any reasonable timescale. The new software was meant to streamline the operation of core University functions. Instead, it has gone significantly over budget and requires additional staff. I fear that the effects will be felt for many years, not only through a decline in morale, an increase in stress and staff turnover but also a drop in the University's international standing.

Shutting down an entire system for a month and then being met with the absolutely ridiculous situation on its implementation was something that should have been worked through ahead of time. I cannot believe what is being spent on this stupid thing and this happening during a massive cost of living crisis has impacted on morale here for years to come. Watching the principal and other senior managers and the consultants for P&M making insane amounts of money while my staff struggle on £20K a year with an increased workload and absolutely no job satisfaction has made me seriously consider my life choices. If I had any viable options, I'd have quit long ago.

"The messaging around the fixes and changes suggest things are now starting to work as they should be, however, there is a real risk that the workarounds and lack of customer service from the University becomes business as usual.

The lack of visibility and access to staff working in support roles within the School is one of the biggest obstacles we have to overcome to be able to achieve change for the better with this system."

What issues were encountered during beta-testing? Did these issues mirror current problems with the system, and if so, why were they not addressed? If not, does the transition team have confidence that their testing was suitably robust and thorough?

That nobody even thought to check if the system they were about to implement was fit for purpose

"Why were profiles set up on P&M for people without focus groups and consulting staff on what teams and individuals needed to have access in P&M to continue to do their jobs?"

Why no official training given on the system? there was presentations given on teams which were marked as training but actual hands on training is required "

Who and why decided it was beneficial to implement a system that increases staff workloads, particularly staff with no finance background and experience? Was the impact of that decision on colleagues' progression, career development and well-being considered and assessed?

Why aren't we able to see any accountability and responsibility in regards to the P&M disaster? What is being done to fix things, can we see a timeline for changes/updates that will have a positive impact?

Don't lose sight of issues with the HR recruitment side of P&M. We feel these aren't being addressed as issues with the Financial side have grabbed more headlines

Ensure that the system notifies users of outstanding actions so that suppliers can be paid promptly

I wish I could revert back to the old system where everything was simple and hassle-free.

When will the senior leadership offer their resignations? With resignations new leadership should be elected where they should start their roles be explicitly explaining what happened and why are we in the situation we are.

There needs to be an acknowledgement that this is significantly hampering the ability to do science at the UoE and solutions need to be devised. As an institution this puts us at a competitive disadvantage. It also is an issue for future recruitment, many fellowship applicants would be better suited elsewhere as I have found it very difficult as a new PI to perform my job and it is affecting both my work and mental health.

After over a year, at least some of the issues that arose from introduction of P&M are still outstanding, and even those actions for which a "Specific Protocol" has been put together after prolonged and painful experimentation remain so complicated and unintuitive as to tax the most experienced and insightful academics. The administrative and support staff who interact directly with academics are also perceptively tired and discouraged, although trying hard to keep positive and supportive. The people and processes allowing the original top-level decisions that led to this disastrous situation have not been identified, leading to the suspicion that administration and managers have closed ranks to protect their own (a divisive and wholly unacceptable response), and to the strong possibility that additional poor decisions will be made in the future.

Not fit for purpose currently

The system was clearly not prepared to go live and launch should have been delayed until it was functional and tested. What procedures were in place and what testing and evaluation took place to ensure that transition was smooth? Can we make sure we understand where

the shortcomings where, and how to avoid them in future projects? Also, someone or some group of people should surely own up to the mess...

More stress for staff as they are dealing with invoicing which they have never done before. Generally we have a worse system than before it was introduced.

Some of the issues would seem to have simple resolutions so why aren't they being addressed e.g. the ridiculous number of approvals that simple requests require.

Changes to prevent it happening again for the next systems change/upgrade. That the "people cost" (transition effort, adjustment effort and additional or reduced workload over time) in the centre and schools is fully accounted for in doing cost/benefit of solutions being procured and deployed.

Should have a more intuitive layout and be easier to find correct helplines

"Why are the Principal and the other people who chose this system and then failed so spectacularly to implement it or take any responsibility for the catastrophic effects still in post?"

And, please can we have a transparent and honest (hollow laughter) accounting of the direct and indirect financial costs of this fiasco?"

"- the search function on the procurement section of P&M is functionally useless. Search for almost any term and the most common result is 500 pages of alphanumerically named antibodies or DNA transcription primers.

- P&M is still often incredibly slow
- No easy access (hyperlinks, etc.) to available Punchouts
- User interface is generally designed in such a way that it is entirely counter-intuitive to use"

The new P&M system lacks efficiency and significantly prolongs the process of obtaining relevant information and making payments. There's a clear necessity for improvement in its functionality and performance.

The purchasing system will never work. Assigning a buyer in a different part of the University who has no clue about you or your research and no interest in following an order frequently leads to orders being lost or wrongly made. When an order does not turn up frequently you are told by the buyer to follow up with the company. Which then turns out to be impossible since we don't have the purchasing info.

"Why was a centralised 'top down' model of approvals and a one sized fits all approach deemed suitable? who approved this and why? Do they accept this was a huge error and a model in which institute and centres have autonomy would be more efficient, less risky and provide a healthier culture.

I'm sure there will be lots of other important questions about accountability. Its a shame that the Principal does not make public the reports he has received. what does this say about transparency and leadership?"

The change in finance procedures shifts a huge amount of work from finance to PIs. I'm spending a huge proportion of my time trying to raise requisitions, get POs, sort invoices etc., which is draining time that should be spent on research.

"1) Staff that are not employed to 'do' finance role should not be expected to have their workload added to by 25% to complete finance tasks. There should be a finance contact that does this per school.

2) Students personal grants for PhD should be set up before they start and so all charges can go directly to the personal grant not the PhD general grant. This means the student would know how much they have left in their grant at any time but currently with no personal grants they do not know and can't keep track.

3) Much better printed guidance to each step, not just 'look at the sharepoint' as the answer is not always obvious.

4) Consistency in tasks being completed, one day it works another day it doesn't"

"we need an intuitive system (that does not require wading through reams of verbose guidance), and also one that can handle basic realities such as that many staff work part-time and their leave quota should reflect that.

"

Why did we get this so wrong?

Response times for help requests needs to be improved.

"The official apology - we're sorry we didn't have time to train the staff to properly use this system because we wanted to roll it out - is unacceptable.

What would it take for the Senate to have the ability to force the Principal to stand down from office?

I think that until we have that ability, he will never feel accountable to the staff and students whose safety and well-being is being routinely put at risk by his Court."

Does the University evaluate the total stability and impact of P&M fully?

"Is the university guaranteeing that no other funding than the already significant £8m will have to be allocated to the programme?

(I suspect they will have to put more money; this kind of failed programmes of works are cash drains that just never stop)"

"Why was so little attention been paid to the views of finance teams embedded within the Schools?

Why has there been (and continues to be) a singular lack of accountability of the part of senior staff involved in the procurement of this dysfunctional system?"

"1) Why did Oracle get the contract in the first place?

2) Why did P&M cost so much?

3) How is it possible for the system to be this bad?

4) Do university finances ever need to be audited and how is any auditor going to unpick how money has been spent, given the state of the records?

5) Why was P&M not beta-tested properly before being rolled out university-wide?"

Why isn't it getting better?

"Why does so much time and effort have to be spent for approvals even for modest amounts?

(and even as a PI of one's own grant?)

Why does UoE always have to build such insufferable admin. structures and procedures, as if 'computers and web is light-speed fast' (they are NOT), always ignoring that it's the HUMANS that have to spend time specifying, troubleshooting, editing, modifying, uploading, checking, approving?

This is a total waste of our time, and sets us back vs. the pressing Russell Group competition, big time."

I suspect there is no appetite at this stage for getting rid of P&M, but I would appreciate a full and frank review / mapping / discussion with research managers about the ongoing issues. Oracle systems are very powerful and I believe that with the right co-creation approach, it may be possible to create a research finance module through P&M that can be aligned with the rest of the system to deliver what we require. However, that would require senior management to actually listen, and not say things in meetings like "I don't recognise that problem" and brush our concerns and issues to one side.

"1) Why was the migration not halted when major concerns were raised with respect to the system?

2) Why has there been no accountability for the waste of money, damage to the university's reputation and impact on the University's staff, students, suppliers and external partners?"

The Procurement requisition procedures do not appear to take into account the different needs of the various Schools within the University. Often the examples given in training are not applicable and therefore not useful. It is not possible to see whether a payment has been made without requesting a report from a senior member of staff, so the P & M system does not appear to be an improvement on the previous Finance systems.

"1. Why has there not been severe disciplinary actions and accountability at the most senior levels for the chaos and pain that this has and continues to cause ?

2. Why is there still a complete denial at the senior management levels that this is crippling our ability to run research groups, inducing staff to move elsewhere. "

It is not just the P&M system is the whole movement towards procedures that require more bureaucracy and the complete disregard for the time this takes from staff (both academic and administration). For example, how many emails and people are needed for one academic registering on a conference? Tasks that should be less than 5 min, take ages and involve interacting with several staff members over different days, with the additional mental load of remembering that the task is unfinished, the distress of the risk it is not done before the conference. And that is only an example, similar things happening for every task big or small that we do.

Were the leadership aware of the risks of systems issues and go ahead despite this?

We need improvements that simplify workflows and make our work smoother, not more difficult.

The level of training available for the start of the roll-out was atrocious and many of the issues could have been fixed if proper training had been available to staff during the launch.

P&M is still not fit for purpose in supporting management of research projects. Feedback is not listened too and questions remain unanswered. P&M has increased workload rather than reduce it and processes remain unclear. A glossary of terms for P&M would be useful.

"You should get experienced external help that will:

1) remove the backlog

2) create clear and easy to use (for dummies) documentation on processes (it feels like the current documentation has been done ad-hoc by people who know lots, while we users are overwhelmed with other work and I cannot spend hours reading some half-baked disorganised documentation - I need simple step by step documentation)

3) develop and deliver regular training sessions (I know there are some sessions ongoing, but whenever it's scheduled I have some other work booked in my calendar ahead of time)"

Will those within a Finance role be able to view invoices within the system in due course? One observation is that finding information within Finance Hub/SharePoint is extremely difficult and frustrating. I think it would be beneficial for future change transitions to make sure they include staff members who actually use the systems/do the work in designing/implementing such large scale changes (certainly to a greater level than with P&M) to ensure the functionality is there within new systems. I'm sure this was intended/attempted but I'm not sure this was actually managed in reality.

P&M has been, and still is, a disaster. My health, work life balance and research productivity has been severely negatively affected by its implementation. I don't see any improvement. Things are as bad now as they were last year. Views from staff at the coal face dealing with the P&M system everyday are not being considered, acknowledged or listened to.

As PhD students, are we going to be set up in People and Money? It makes it much more difficult to log expenses now than it did before, because we need to use a manual system which makes everything slower.

Clarity on VAT; sometimes P&M calculates VAT automatically, sometimes it doesn't, other times we're asked to add it as a separate line on an order.

"Still can't get a grant report - no idea what was spent, how much is left....."

No improvements noticed on 'old system'

Huge numbers of problems remain."

"Why has nobody lost their job due to incompetence?"

What is the latest estimate of when I will be given my grant money ? This was after all awarded to me, not the university."

"Will it cost less in the long run to scrap People and Money now and replace it with something else/ return to the old system.

Who's decision was it give the contract to Oracle? Do they have a personal interest in that company?

What exactly are the University and Peter Matheson doing to restore confidence in staff and students? "

Some demonstration of personal responsibility from leadership, acknowledgement of the damage done and genuine steps taken to repair morale - more than just lip service to this with general statements of how leadership recognises the difficulties that have arisen. This should be in the form of significantly improving working conditions and making working in academia more attractive, or the sector will continue to decline and people will leave.

There are still a lot of unresolved issues with P&M. The amount of time I spend putting through financial transactions remains much higher than pre-P&M. This is not efficient and is also stressful. I do not feel enough is being done to improve the system.

Why are front line staff (in Schools especially) so much ignored? We are at the forefront of things but the focus is always on central teams. Moreover, Finance is always talked about, but HR has also been very impacted, and for longer (since Phase 1), and it feels like it has been forgotten. As an HR Officer based in a school, I find this very demotivating.

"1. Centralised support is often very slow (no reply after 3 weeks) and often useless due to lack of knowledge of specific issues. I am often directed to FAQ's that are generic and useless.

2. We need institute level assistance with PAM issues, from people who understand the common issues we face and have time to find out solutions that they can share. The wastage of PI effort remains substantial, and School of Biology support for staff is well-meaning but wholly inadequate.

3. The equipment and consumables catalogue in people and money is very poor. Often the same basic consumables item (eg gloves, plasticware, ethanol) is available at multiple prices and we should automatically be quoted the cheapest one. Information on specific items is often incomplete or wrong, and finding what you need takes substantial staff time. It is not in the job description of local support staff to assist in this process - even when they know a solution.

As a result, PAM remains a career blight on the productivity of fixed term staff and an appalling advertisement for Edinburgh University. It places a negative cap on the energy and productivity of senior research staff who spend too much time trying to navigate a hopelessly disorganised and esoteric system.

"

Would it be possible to go back to the previous system?

What were the reasons why the people and money transition failed, and how can we avoid similar disasters in the future?

As with all other major project implementations in the University (see EUCLID, Worktribe, etc) the people who use the systems day-to-day are never consulted. I can only imagine that

the systems are procured, designed and implemented by executives and senior managers who are taken in by pitches rather than considering practicalities. When it goes wrong, it is swept under the carpet and all of the faults in functionality and lack of promised outcomes that are identified are ignored and over the years, people work around them. Nothing is fixed. Things are hushed after a time. Unusually, and surprisingly, this time, the acknowledgement of failures and apologies did come from the very top, but what has happened since? We don't need emails telling us that so many millions have been paid out, we just need to know that our partners and collaborators are going to get their money back - personal or business. That's something we still cannot guarantee. To give an example, I am trying to pay the personal expenses of approximately £1400 an external advisor. We have paid this person twice already using the same account details. The claim was submitted in April and still hasn't been paid. We have no explanation! It's so embarrassing but also indicative of our whole approach to actual people. What I can never understand is how - as an organisation - we seem so baffled about NSS scores and poor student feedback. Edinburgh doesn't care about people and it affects every facet of our work - teaching, research, professional services, career development. It's fine to have countless policies on well-being and equality etc and planning (always planning) to within an inch of your life, but who ever evaluates their effectiveness? What are the benefits of Athena Swan beyond having a icon added to your email signature? Of what value are centrally-devised policies, systems and practices when no one is prepared to support implementation and work with staff rather than thrusting things upon them and running for cover when it doesn't work out? There is no sense of a shared vision at Edinburgh - if one exists, no one told us!! It's all silos, cottage industries and each to their own. It's a horrible place to work as a result. The PaM debacle is classic Edinburgh and there will, no doubt, be another to follow because there is a core problem - culturally ingrained - within the organisation that no one wants to address.

I believe that P&M is not fit for purpose because it hard-wires central control of things that are better decided locally and expresses a lack of trust. Having to have every purchase signed off by a 'line manager' is a good example.

"It still remains obscure exactly who made the decision to take on this disastrous system, and why? It would be good to know.

It is crucial to emphasize that the essential problems (i.e. the shift in workload to academic staff and the time-consuming nature of dealing with P and M) have NOT yet been addressed and have NOT improved over the course of the past year.

There is no sign of anything being done to lighten the burden of procurement processes that now falls on many PIs. Something needs to be done!"

We'd like to see a plan published that details the processes that are not currently supported within P&M (i.e. those that currently have workarounds or need to be conducted on excel spreadsheets) and how these will be integrated and streamlined.

When are we going to get a review? When are senior management going to take ownership of the situation and prove that they can take on responsibility and accountability? Surely we have enough unbiased metrics and financial information that proves how bad things are? Is University Research not so important any more. What price can you attach to staff morale and well-being? No matter what they say, there is a distinct lack of transparency and useful information of any kind.

"The system has been a problem and remains problematic for us and the academics for a number of reasons:

- How the system works was drip fed by central finance and with no real idea of the consequences that this had on individuals in the School and for pre and post award teams. No one centrally appeared to actually have a handle on how it worked
- The transaction reports and manual cost uploaders and transfers took a long time to be made available and are still clunky and are not user friendly,
- The monthly salary allocation report is extra work that did not exist previously
- The GL and project modules being separate with PMs only having sight of the GL spend via the business partner team is a step backwards
- Delays in setting up grants on P&M leads to further work for all involved and for internal awards such as EPSRC IAA is unacceptable with codes coming as the grants are ending
- Salary reports having to come from business partners or centrally again is a step backwards and again the reports are not user friendly
- The approval hierarchy is ridiculous and is not fit for purpose with staff having to delegate approvals to ensure the people controlling the budgets have sight of the costs

The training of staff in RGS appears to be inconsistent with staff giving different advice

"

who is responsible for initiating this inefficient system? Who can help to deal with the problems which generate by this system? How and when can this system be improved? What measurement?

"When will we get a system that functions?

Hope was this allowed to happen? How was the impact on reattach not foreseen, and once feed back was received why was nothing done to expedite a functional system? "

"- Why was a decision made to go ahead with it at the ""go / no go"" meeting in mid August 2022, with so much unresolved? It was definitely not unanimous from rumours.

- Why does the head of finance remain seemingly oblivious to the scale of the impact of this on all members of the University community? "

Can P&M actually deliver the functionality that we need even when the mess of implementation is complete? Or is it better to endure a changeover to a different, better system that is more suited to the needs of our University.

"Three requests regarding purchasing PLEASE:

1. Make it easier to see if an invoice has been paid, rather than having to dig through numerous pages.
2. Improved communication for purchasing. When trying to pay an invoice, if something goes wrong, there is totally INSUFFICIENT communication (that the system is waiting for a receipt, that a PO has not been accepted for some reason).
3. I know Finance staff are stressed, but HELPFUL support from finance.helpline, not just telling us we've done something wrong! We need to be told how to do it correctly.

"

When will senior management take responsibility for the mess they've created? Many in senior positions are clearly unfit for their job and certainly do not deserve the salaries that they have been given (I refuse to use the word "earn"). Resignations are long overdue.

I don't see anything fundamentally changed. The system is still unaccountable, has far too many impenetrable choices and when it goes wrong as it invariably does there is no easy way to understand why. Silence from the system usually means it is stuck somewhere with no warning.

The transition was a very stressful time for me. I was left unable to do my job effectively and could not order essential supplies needed for teaching. Once P and M was up and running I attended the training sessions offered, but still felt very much in the dark about whether I was using the system correctly. Even when I was inputting requisitions correctly, these were not being processed correctly/ in time which meant I was still without necessary supplies to do my job. I pride myself on getting tasks completed to a high standard within the timeframe dictated by the timetables, but the roll out of this system meant I was letting colleagues and students down on a daily basis, because I just couldn't get the items required for classes. This was completely out with my control, but it still left me feeling as if I was the one failing at my job.

It confuses people and I don't like the fact that work hours are calculated by either myself or the hr - this is not efficient and time-consuming.

there needs to be a better way for PIs to resolve long delays - it is difficult to find the correct person within the system where the delay is occurring, or with whom to escalate action to get this resolved. Local finance teams no longer have the ability or the visibility of the Central finance system to assist as they could previously.

"Complete lack of Trust in University senior management to plan and deliver any significant Transition. With P and M there has been a continual stream of failed statements, undelivered promises and no-notice changes to the system. Change Management in a Billion pound per year coporation cannot be left to a retired Professor and some mates of the Principal. And yet the Prinicipal accepts no responsibility for major and continuing errors of planning and delvery - whilst incidentally enriching himself whilst University staff struggle to the point of exhaustion. I expect that UoE has diectly list (tens) millions pounds. And lost more in damaged or terminated relationships with partners and suppliers. At a 2023 meeting of senior research council staff, I was told that they use Edinburgh as an example of how to not deliver change.

And whilst we are at it the ""Edinburgh teaching model "" seems to mean more and more web based remote delivery. I now have minimal personal contact with any students. Not surprising that student surveys feed back lower scores. If I wanted that - I could have worked for the Open University instead. Thats 5 years of salary and facilities support for a senior team. And nothing positive to show for it. What is the Plan, and when does it get delivered?"

"-Approval structure needs to be investigated. Is this appropriate? How do we ensure mistakes are not made? Are procedures adequate to ensure clarity?"

-What has been the additional cost in rolling out P&M, and now in continuing to operate P&M, beyond the initial amounts (i.e. additional salary costs, staff time lost through problems with the system, inability to implement accurate end-of-year spend etc)."

That it be forward-looking to fix outstanding problems (e.g. vendor payments), but also recognize and reward the extra efforts that local HR and finance staff made to fix things that higher level administration broke.

How do you plan to resolve these issues? When will the university be able to operate normally and efficiently?

"-Need to give back finance staff members the power and authority to run People and Money.

They are trained and specialist payments, HR, etc. They should receive the invoices etc and process them. This would eliminate about 4 additional steps- save time, reduce errors, pay invoices quickly and efficiently, and return PEOPLE at the heart of finance - not a faulty system that everyone dreads to use on a daily basis."

In light of this expensive mismanagement, leading to massive waste of time across the institution - and sustained, negative, poorly responded-to press coverage - why has no-one resigned? I am thinking of the Principal and one or two other senior people, symbolically and actually responsible for the poor management decisions that still cause problems for everyone.

When will there be a fully trained, competent, knowledgeable team in place who can provide training, guidance and a full finance support service?

The messaging from central administration is that this is all just a transition problem, but there is no prediction when this transition is completed and when we can work normally again. the messaging also suggests there is no real problem. this is not true and undermines trust.

They should let PhD students do their own Expense claims since is a very simple task that we can do ourselves to reduce the workload of PGR offices and finance so the can focus in more important tasks

"What individuals/groups took the decision in Summer '22 that the system was ready for use, when it so evidently was not?

Were more user friendly systems evaluated for adoption, but these ultimately rejected? If so, on what grounds?

What amelioration has taken place for those members of staff for whom this caused acute stress, and/or loss to research or teaching activities, and has this amelioration been sufficient?"

"1) approval routes of expenditure

2) mandatory training needs to be available/advertised to a wider cohort than just 'staff'

3) the platform itself is VERY challenging and slow "

"I know people who have worked for the University for over 30 years who have left or are considering leaving because they are broken by dealing with the P&M system, having to

apologise repeatedly to external providers on behalf of the University (and bearing the brunt of their (understandable) frustration), and completely despairing of the lack of action by those with the authority to do so once we all became aware of how disastrous the roll-out proved to be.

Apologies and acknowledgements of impact are appreciated but only go so far. We all need to start feeling the impact of action taken to resolve the problem. This matter has been hugely detrimental to morale and the reputation, both internally and externally, of the University and its leadership, in an already challenging climate for the UK higher education sector as a whole. The amount of money, resources and good faith that have been wasted, and continue to be wasted by throwing good money after bad, is a lesson in how not to lead.

The P&M system is not fit for purpose and this should have been recognised during the procurement process. Appropriate testing prior to rollout - involving all of those who would come to be affected - should have revealed the flaws. Even the immediate aftermath of the disastrous launch could have been rolled back. But it seems the leadership were happy to sink us all further and further into the quagmire in an (unsuccessful) attempt to save face.

I have been very proud to work for the university for over 10 years but I am extremely disappointed by the way this matter has been handled. "

Why doesn't the university make financial information accessible to grantholders or school finance teams?

"It is imperative to review how the key users and stakeholders are informed of and updated on the following:

- a list of current known finance system and process issues, itemised and clear
- status of each issue (e.g. aware, in progress, resolved)
- regular updates on any changes to the above
- regular updates on resolution so that users know when they can access, use, or return to the system or module in question

Additionally, as an organisation who wants to succeed in business this financial year, we must have a **task-based** plan to resolve system and process defects, bottlenecks and inconsistencies. We must reduce workarounds, that we had so many of in the last financial year.

None of the above can succeed without proper, timely and **written** communication from the leadership. We have seen a big improvement in verbal updates, sometimes recorded information sessions which people can watch, but the Programme is still very poor in written communication on what's happening, what the plan is and how P&M and the associated processes will be improved and when.

"

A review of P&M must deal with the culture behind it: desire to centralise, lack of trust in professional judgement, assumption that those carrying out the core business of the university don't understand (pretty much everything) and are averse to change (of all sorts).

I'm curious about what was wrong with the previous system and how the new system was supposed to address this. Also, what is being done to update P&M so that the tedious drip of administrative tasks can be taken away from those who should be focussing their energy on teaching and research? I'm thinking of small things that together add up to create a larger burden, e.g. approving expense workflows, trying (and almost always failing) to receipt orders, and even placing orders (which was previously much easier using POs and Sciqwest, rather than the P&M procurement interface which takes much, much longer).

Totally counterintuitive system for our purposes - even with increased familiarity

we have all lost hours of our lives trying to navigate this system - it puts all responsibility on the researchers. e.g. the price of an item changed (by like £2) so the requisition didn't cover it - the supplier was not paid and send emails to us, we had to get in touch with finance to work out what is happening, then had to learn to modify an existing requisition, void the old one and resubmit for approval. ridiculous.

"1) Why was the system introduced before proper testing to ensure appropriate roll out?

2) In any business the leadership would fallen by now, so what justifies the continued presence of the current leadership group?

3) Why does leadership still not provide transparency?

4) Why is support for the most vulnerable apparently not a priority?

5) Does leadership continue to function without a timeline for resolutions? "

Who exactly is accountable and when and how is this accountability visible?

The university seems to have a growing track record for taking the cheaper option and for not investing in capacity building and resourcing. This is doing irreparable damage to staff and student morale, confidence and mental health. There is little indication that senior management are recognising that this has had serious impact on staff who are already buckling under unsafe workloads. In terms of questions - we need to ask what measures are needed when replacing any of our systems (including Learn) and building our capacity to deal with the mental health pandemic to ensure the University is future fit.

Was it incompetence or callousness that led to the adoption of this system?

Can we see the review, in full?

"Recent incident of Agency staff brought in to finance to help with workload, that are not fully trained, but are given a high level of access and authority to pay invoices. Instance of an invoice that was on hold by us waiting on report (£43k+) that was paid without our knowledge. One invoice paid (£9k) that was incorrect (we knew that it was and was waiting on a credit and new invoice) and one for £31k nearly paid - again we knew it was wrong from months ago and we were trying to get a credit note, but due this finance person contacting me for the codes (an old PO that was not migrated), I managed to stop it going any further, and it was this that lead to the discovery of the other invoices being paid incorrectly.

The transition period (July/August) now seems to be causing issues and more work to tie up wrongly actioned payments early on. Journals to correct entries, were duplicated and some were even paid twice (resulting in us being charged 3 times for one invoice) - slowly getting this corrected now. Major workload to sort all this out.

I've never had to write so many emails apologising to suppliers, I could go on (too many issues), but I'm losing the will to live with it. I used to enjoy my job, but now feel totally disheartened. "

I fail to see any substantial action taken by the senior management to address the problems other than relying on a patchwork of brute force hacks administrators have to come up with. The "improvements" they report seem to be the effects of such quick fixes, but they won't repair the damage that has been done to the infrastructure of the research capacity of this university.

I am less interested in blaming people than finding a way to improve the system. We need a system that is user friendly, makes sense, provides the necessary information in an accessible way, and is highly efficient. I would have thought that these were the priorities when creating the system in the first place; they certainly need to be the priorities in improving or replacing the system now.

how can we have more effective communications and how can training be more accessible and effective (its pretty much invisible still)

"We need a clear and transparent review of the tendering process for P&M - staff need to understand why this decision was made and who made it, and therefore who is accountable?"

Staff need to know that there is a clear pathway towards resolution of key P&M issues, what that looks like, and how long it will take.

P&M is a key reason for the recent terrible staff survey results. Senior management need to take this feedback seriously. Staff want answers as to how this is actually going to be resolved, not pat on the back it will all be ok nonsensical waffle.

Given the incomparable impact the decisions on P&M are having within the university, and on its reputation externally, it was simply incomprehensible to every member of staff I have spoken to as to how the principal was awarded a above-inflation pay rise (when they would not approve a below-inflation pay rise for all other staff). How this was approved, in the context of decisions made and impact of P&M, deserves to be reviewed independently.

Have senior management asked recent employees who have left Edinburgh whether P&M played any role in their decision?

"

lack of resources, low wages etc are making things worse - have we learnt from this and are we willing to properly invest in people to make future changes happen smoothly?

"P&M is not just a pain, it is an unending nightmare. Its destructive impact does not diminish with time so the case for change remains urgent. Solution: 1) Those responsible for bringing in this inappropriate system and who have a vested interest in making it seem to work

should be removed. 2) A team of totally independent consultants (e.g. from industry) should be appointed to look dispassionately at the situation and recommend a way forward. 3) Abandonment should be one option on the table.

My personal view: escape even at this late stage would be money eminently well spent. "

No accountability. Lack of communication. No clearly defined roadmap to any fixture or service improvements. No survey asking what functionality we want/should expect. Cost of the system and further costs relating to extra staffing and secondment to the Finance department. No real apology. Why did the results of a staff survey (with a very low response) done in February take 6 months to process?

I note that there are no longer service level agreements in relation to expenses reimbursement. This is not acceptable. We need a clear timeline with guaranteed processing time deadlines. Otherwise the university can delay reimbursement of expenses ad libitum. We are in the middle of the worst cost of living crisis the UK has ever seen! It is utterly irresponsible to treat staff this way.

This has been a travesty and an embarrassment, and it is baffling how senior 'leaders' involved have retained their jobs when they have cost the university and its staff so much.

"The finance system is seemingly impossible to navigate, even for those in the Graduate office who have now become accustomed to using it

It is very hard to get a straight answer from central finance regarding outstanding payments - the people we contact appear to be helpful, but don't seem to have control over the actual payments process

How and why do payments get stalled in P&M after they have had the necessary departmental approvals?"

Sorting out research. We are still dealing with a massive backlog of work/issues with no end in sight. It continues to cause a massive amount of stress. Because academic staff aren't directly involved they are starting to expect business as usual and we just can't answer questions or resolve reporting problems because there is so much outstanding work. There have been no management updates for months which makes me think they have prioritised suppliers and staff/student payments and have forgotten about the remaining problems

"Why do queries from vendors to p&m contacts go unanswered?"

Why do p&m staff take actions, such as cancelling orders _before_ first checking with staff who placed the order?

Why isn't there a record of all communications email/other around an order within p&m?

Why are parts of orders raised as late as Q2 2023 unable to be delivered when other items from the same order are received/receipted within days?

Why do queries about actions taken by central p&m staff go unanswered?

Why would a university credit card be rejected multiple times by an online payment system to a major international company that the university already has contacts/contracts with?"

"(1) Accountability - the SLT was repeatedly warned by those of us who understand the business that P&M was not fit for purpose. They repeatedly ignored us.

(2) A realistic assessment of how much P&M has cost the University in terms of people's time and lost opportunities

"

Some genuine acceptance of responsibility -- with some appropriate penalties -- would begin to lift morale. A complete review of the absurdity of treating academic staff as if we were front-line workers in a supermarket, and academic leaders as simple 'line managers' who must sign off (one after another) on everything we do -- or so it seems -- would also help. And get in people who know how to design people-systems interfaces so that they are intuitive for those of us unfortunates who have to grapple with them. Are these requests really too difficult to respond to?

Some issues, e.g. payment delays, seems solvable, but there seems to be no admission from senior leadership that grant reporting is broken, and so no hope for this being solved. The inaccuracies are gross, and we are not able to fix them at School level.

Someone needs to be accountable for this and resign. Preferably Mathieson.

We need a system that supports the activities we have to do. We need to be trusted more to see things ourselves, not rely on second hand information/data from people who don't really understand processes. We need reports that give us information we need in a useful format. We need training on how the system should be used to support research grants, not how we have managed to make things work. We are acutely aware that if things are not being done correctly and consistently there will be issues further down the line when it comes to audit but there doesn't seem to be any proposed training in the pipeline. We need projects to be set-up urgently to avoid all the double keying and moving costs. It can take a whole afternoon to try to attempt to come up with a figure when a PI asks what the budgets available in a grants due to visibility issues and having to try and "work out" where things are. The monthly allocation of staff salaries is a huge undertaking, the staff lists we get are not accurate and no one has responded to explain why.

"I don't think we are getting the service we need.

The responsibilities for each task is not very clear. For example, buyers ask us to receipt the goods when we don't have a right to do so on system. When company over-charge us, buyers changed the value to the invoice without checking with requisitor (who obtained the quotation from the company). A flowchart and guidance for buyer, requisitor, and any other staff/section involved to clearly explaining what to do for each situation would be beneficial. At the moment, we know a part of it and don't have broader understanding how we work."

Am I ever going to be able to have a budget of any grant that I don't have to calculate by hand?!

"Why was beta testing done on Law School rather than a department with complex supplier relationships e.g. the R(D)SVS?

Was appropriate canvassing done of other Universities who had already implemented systems by the same provider (Oracle), such as Birmingham University, and what challenges have they faced?

Has the number of animals that had to undergo non-essential anaesthesia due to delayed drug orders etc at R(D)SVS been calculated?"

"I am still not convinced that carrying on with P+M is better than starting again/ reversing this. Can you convince me?"

We have not had anyone taking responsibility for the catastrophe.

'It will all be fine' is unconvincing, untrue and patronising."

"Maybe not so much a question, but despite the publicity and strength of feeling on this topic, senior management are still very silent on what is going on, what is being done to review and importantly what we aim to get out of this process and how this information will be fed back.

One of the biggest cause of stress i feel personally is that fact we are almost being ""gas lit"" into being told there are no problems and ""the system is working as designed"". Having worked with uni systems before PAM, contributed to many pre-PAM workshops, and now used the system for 2 years, I feel its obvious what does and doesn't work and a little acknowledgement of how hard it still is to work with would go a long way. By not doing this it almost implies we are the problem, and that simply isn't a good way to make employees feel. "

"1. Who 'owns' People and Money within the University. All major change processes should have an 'owner'. It is inadequate to have a 'committee', that is then in-effect the 'implementation committee' for fixing.

2. Who has owned at what point in the process - a clear owner was listed at an early phase, but no longer is.

3. How much did financial questions influence the decision to roll out the second phase of the new systems in August 2022, when due warning had been given by multiple staff in writing of key issues that would arise. Finances were communicated to me when I raised concerns in July 2022, as a key reason why the system roll-out would not be delayed until clearly adequate.

4. I understand that at the time of roll-out the company responsible for designing the Oracle system was being paid £1 million a month retainer until the roll-out would acheive 'sign off'. Is this correct?

5. How much is the contract to the same Oracle provider for the remediation of the roll-out failures, and what is the duration and timelines of the contract. Is this correct, and if not, what was the figure.

6. Why was there no testing of the system with staff, and no consultation or focus group discussion with the major grant holders in the University, or with School research offices and Directors, or School financial directors.

7. Why was roll out of phase 2 undertaken, when Phase 1 relating to human resources was still showing key indicators of failure, in terms of increase of bureaucracy and systems not fit for purpose, in particular in terms of the sign-off received.

8. Can we have formal apologies for when staff were given information that local researchers in vulnerable countries were paid, when they were not, leading to life-risking travel to confront banks.

9. Has, or did, the University done a risk assessment for when and how the system's failures may cause risk to physical integrity for staff?

8. Can we have a mechanism for individual audit of salaries by an independent accountant? Despite rises I recently noticed that my monthly pay packet is lower than it was in 2019, I would like it checked the roll out did not affect pay or lead to new accounting practices. The difference could be due to pension, national insurance, etc rises, Scottish tax issues. However, I now fundamentally distrust all aspects of the University financial system and would like to see access to a transparent accounting mechanism.

9. What due diligence or investigation was undertaken before Oracle were chosen as a provider? There is an online business case study of a University in the US, suing Oracle, whose facts read like a carbon copy of the problems Edinburgh has experienced. Were University staff involved in procurement of the system aware of this case study, what steps had they undertaken to ascertain that the system was fit for purpose. The key conclusions of the 2012 study was that Oracle promises customisability to the business practices, but in practice the system only easily works if you change your business practice to fit with the Oracle system. The implementation at Edinburgh fits with this experience - the University unwittingly it would seem, changed the entire HR and Financial practices, and levels at which permissions were to be given, mostly shifting HR and finance decisions and sign-offs to academic staff, when there were full time financial and HR staff employed by schools to do these jobs and when the University 2030 commitment is that transformation should reduce bureaucracy from academic staff.

10. What steps are being taken to fix phase one issues - inappropriate tasks being placed with copious emails onto academic staff, that appropriately lie with professional services staff, or do not need done at all really (pro-active reporting involving several P&M interactions that an academic member of staff has shown up for the first day at work); multiple emails on one issue, requiring say reasons for granting annual leave.

"

"The stated aim of the HR/Finance transformation on the University website is ""Our University's strategy sets out our ambition to deliver more user-friendly processes and efficient systems to support our work. Our aim is to make life simpler and better for the people who work and study here."" One year after the implementation of the new finance system, this aim has manifestly not been reached - it is still my experience and those of immediate colleagues that day-to-day processes are more complex and take longer than previously.

MQI: When do senior management estimate that delivery of ""more user-friendly processes and efficient systems"" will be achieved, how will this be measured, and what happens if P&M fails to deliver on this ambition?"

It seems that leadership think that the issues with P&M have disappeared, whereas the reality is that we have learned to manage it as best as we can. However, this is not sustainable and needs revisiting as soon as possible.

Why is nobody paying for this mishap?

The lack of thought that went into the role out is mind boggling. I cannot believe how badly things were transitioned and the obviously lack of understanding of the requirements of front line staff has been illuminating.

Are the continued problems just (massive) teething issues that will be fixed some day, or is the system fundamentally flawed such that it will always be substandard?

"Is a system that takes longer for suppliers to be paid than before worth it to the University?"

One of the main aims of P&M is to save the University money. One example would be stationery - the current supplier often has items out of stock and much more expensive than other non-Procured suppliers but we are not allowed to use them in these cases. How is this saving the University money?"

"As a senior PI I find the whole procurement side a frustrating combination of minefield and black hole: full of totally unhelpful dialogs, drops downs and messages and yet totally unresponsive about the things we do want to know about, e.g. whether a receipted item been paid for.

We remain blocked from using some companies, notably Arnold Clark for car hire.

Dealing with small/sole traders in remote locations is a total nightmare, especially if they are new.

Reporting of the financial status of grants is inaccurate to the extent that local support staff are re-inventing their former systems to help us. If ever there was a thing P&M should be able to improve, this is it. If there is overspend on grants due to this failure then the university centre should pick up the bill."

Senate

7 February 2024

Senate Standing Orders

Description of paper

1. This paper notifies Senate of two errors identified in the Senate Standing Orders.
2. The paper notifies Senate of the need to undertake a comprehensive review of the Senate Standing Orders. It is anticipated that oversight of this review would be provided by the Senate External Review Task and Finish Group, if this Group is approved by Senate at its 7 February 2024 meeting.

Action requested / recommendation

3. This paper is provided to Senate for information.

Background and context

4. The last review of the Senate Standing Orders took place in February 2008 with changes made to key sections of the Standing Orders in response to the outcomes of a Senate Effectiveness Review. The Standing Orders have remained largely unchanged since 2008, with minor revisions made in the 2014/15 academic year and the 2020/21 academic year. The Standing Orders have not been substantially reviewed for some time.
5. It is good practice for a review of Committee procedural documentation to take place on a regular basis. Senate underwent a period of exceptional change in 2020, when the new Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act was implemented which included a change to the composition of Senate; and Senate External Review was completed in the 2022/23 academic year. A review of the Standing Orders is now proposed.
6. The current Senate Standing Orders set out the process for the amendment of the Standing Orders (SO 26). If an amendment to the Standing Orders is proposed, notice must be given at the last preceding Ordinary meeting of Senate. Therefore, Senate will be given notice when amendments to the Standing Orders are expected to be presented for approval.
7. The current Senate Standing Orders are available on the [Senate website](#).
8. Recent Senate meetings have demonstrated that the procedural elements relating to Senate meetings as provided in the Standing Orders are not accessible to many members, particularly those who have only served on Senate for a short period of time. The language used in the Standing Orders is outdated and the procedures contained within are complicated and not written in plain English.
9. The scope of this review is limited to the Standing Orders. It is expected that some actions arising from the Senate External Review Task and Finish Group may also result in revisions to the Senate Standing Orders. Therefore, any revisions arising from the Task and Finish Group's work will also be incorporated into the final draft.

Discussion

10. Two errors have been identified in the Senate Standing Orders. Whilst these errors do not substantially impact on the operation of Senate, it is good practice to resolve any errors within the Standing Orders once identified. Given the need for a broader review of the Standing Orders, these errors are to be noted and corrected via the review of the Standing Orders.
11. The errors identified to date are:

- a. Standing Orders 8 and 9 (e-business and Exception Committee) were added in 2008, and the Standing Orders 8 and 9 from the previous version (approved in 2006) were renumbered to Standing Orders 10 and 11.
Standing Order 16 (previously 14) was not updated to reflect this renumbering. Standing Order 16 refers to decisions on Senate business being rescinded except by motions which are competent. Therefore, Standing Order 16 erroneously refers to Standing Orders 8 and 9, and should refer to Standing Orders 10 and 11.
 - b. Standing Order 17 refers to decisions of Senate and provides an exception for voting as per Standing Order 23.
Standing Order 23 previously referred to the process for voting on vacancies on the University Court, however the Standing Orders were updated in 2014 to remove reference to the voting process and add in Standing Order 25 which outlines the procedures for the conduct of an election.
Therefore, Standing Order 17 erroneously refers to Standing Order 23 and should refer to Standing Order 25.
12. As indicated, it is believed that these errors have arisen due to the prior removal and renumbering of specific provisions within the Standing Orders.
13. Additionally, the Standing Orders are written in a format which make them inaccessible to the majority of members. The language used in the Standing Orders is outdated and the procedures contained within are complicated and not written in plain English. It is anticipated that any revision to the Standing Orders will be written in 'plain English' and to facilitate the engagement of Senate members with the procedures which underpin the operation of Senate.
14. The key aims of this review of the Senate Standing Orders are to:
- a. Ensure they are fit for purpose, enabling Senate meetings to run efficiently while ensuring Senate members have a functional process through which to raise items of business, conduct deliberations, make decisions, and fulfil their remit.
 - b. Present the Senate Standing Orders in language that is clear and accessible.
15. The proposed Senate Review Task and Finish Group will provide oversight of the review, though will not be expected to conduct the review. Should the Task and Finish Group not be formed, the review will still take place as outlined in paragraph 16. Any amendments to the Standing Orders would be handled in line with Standing Order 26, as outlined in paragraph 18.
16. The review will be undertaken by Senate Support, via the following means:
- a. A review of internal examples, in particular the [Standing Orders of the University Court](#).
 - b. A review external examples, such as the Standing Orders of Senates in comparable institutions.
 - c. Ensure compliance with relevant legislation such as the Universities (Scotland) Acts.
 - d. Consultation with Senate members, Court Services and other key stakeholders.
17. The review will take place over the remainder of the 2023/24 academic year and may extend into the 2024/25 academic year, subject to the progress of any actions from the External Review Task and Finish Group which also require implementation within the Standing Orders.
18. Standing Order 26 dictates the procedure that must be followed for amendments to the Senate Standing Orders. Senate will be provided with an update on the progress of the review via regular updates on the work of the External Review Task and Finish Group.

Resource implications

19. Some resource will be required to manage the revision process. This will be met from within Academic Services. It is not anticipated that revised Standing Orders, once implemented, will have any additional resource implications beyond those currently required to support the effective functioning of Senate.

Risk management

20. Effective academic governance assists the University in managing risk associated with its academic activities.

Equality & diversity

21. The review does not propose any changes that have EDI implications.

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

22. Academic Services will carry out the review process. Following that process, it is intended that any revisions to the Standing Orders will be handled in line with Standing Order 26, which dictate the procedure that must be followed for amendments to the Senate Standing Orders.

Author

Olivia Hayes
Academic Policy Officer & Clerk to Senate
January 2024

Freedom of Information

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Senate**7 February 2024****Quality Enhancement and Standards Review Report****Description of paper**

1. The final report from the University's Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR).

Action requested / recommendation

2. For information.

Background and context

3. QESR is the current method used by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to review higher education institutions in Scotland for the academic sessions 2022-23 and 2023-24. It forms Phase 1 of a two-phase approach to external institutional quality review which is being developed within the context of a major Scottish Funding Council (SFC) review, [Coherent Provision and Sustainability: A Review of Tertiary Education and Research](#). The SFC is currently working with the Scottish sector to develop tertiary arrangements for quality assurance and enhancement which will be implemented from the start of academic session 2024-25.
4. On Wednesday 24 January, 2024, QAA Scotland published the [final report](#) from the University's QESR that took place on 16 November, 2023.

Discussion

5. The overall headline outcome of the review is positive, but we still have considerable work to do. Overall, the review team was confident that the University is making effective progress in continuing to monitor, review and enhance its provision to enable effective arrangements to be in place for managing academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience.
6. The QESR team commended the Institute for Academic Development in establishing a network of secondees and associates embedded within Schools to support developments in learning and teaching.
7. The QESR team assessed our progress with the recommendations from the previous review ([ELIR 4](#)). The team considered four of the recommendations to be fully addressed and recognised the action taken to date towards the remaining six recommendations. The team also made a number of additional recommendations, two of which require immediate action within the remainder of this academic year.
8. The further recommendations for action based on, and in addition to, the outstanding ELIR 4 recommendations are:

- **Pace of change** - the University should make progress on and accelerate its actions in response to the recommendations from the previous ELIR, ensuring effective and consistent implementation by all Schools, and monitor the outcomes, in order to evidence significant progress **within the next academic year**.
 - **Learning and Teaching Strategy** - the University should **expedite the final drafting, approval and implementation** of the Learning and Teaching Strategy to help staff and students understand how major strategic projects work together and provide clarity on the strategic approach to enhancing learning and teaching.
 - **Assessment and feedback** - the University should **take immediate action, within the current academic year**, to ensure that the new Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities (developed in response to ELIR 4) are fully implemented in all Schools, that feedback turn-round times and quality are monitored effectively, and that prompt action is taken to address any shortcomings.
 - **Training for postgraduate research (PGR) students who teach**- the University should **take prompt action, within the current academic year**, to consistently implement its updated policy and to ensure that training for PGRs who teach is required at the University and School level, and that this action is monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that all PGRs are fully supported in undertaking their teaching duties.
 - **Promotion of academic staff based on teaching** - the University should clearly and accurately record data on promotion routes based on teaching excellence so it can effectively evidence the implementation of its goal to achieve parity between teaching and research and take action to ensure this aim is met.
 - **Attainment gap monitoring** – the University should pay particular attention to sharing good practice and supporting staff in understanding the causes of attainments gaps and taking effective action.
9. A number of the recommendations require **School-level action**. Over the remainder of this academic year, it will be essential that we commit to ensuring:
- Consistent implementation of policies, in particular implementation of the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities.
 - We deliver on the three-week feedback turnaround times.
 - All assessments have clear marking criteria and (where appropriate) marking rubrics.
 - All PGR students that teach have access to appropriate training and importantly that training is recorded and monitored on an ongoing basis.
10. We are currently in the process of establishing an oversight group (joint between Senate Education Committee and Senate Quality Assurance Committee) to take

the recommendations forward and ensure they are all addressed within the timelines indicated.

Resource implications

11. Consideration of resource implications will be integral to the work overseeing the review recommendations undertaken by the oversight group, Senate Education Committee and Senate Quality Assurance Committee.

Risk management

12. The provision of a high quality student experience is a high level risk on the University's Strategic Risk Register, and is overseen by the Risk Management Committee reporting to Audit & Risk Committee and Court.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

13. This paper does not contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a regulatory requirement.

Equality & diversity

14. Quality assurance policies and processes are subject to Equality Impact Assessment.

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

15. The Deputy Vice-Principal (Enhancement) communicated the outcome of the review to key stakeholders across the University.

16. The oversight group will report to Senate Education Committee and Senate Quality Assurance Committee to allow the Standing Committees to monitor progress against recommendations and ensure that appropriate action is being taken.

17. The oversight group will also advise the Student Experience Delivery and Monitoring Board (SEDaMOB) and the University Executive on progress against the recommendations and on any areas of concern.

Author

Professor Tina Harrison

(Convener)

Deputy Vice-Principal Students

(Enhancement)

31 January 2024

Freedom of Information

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Quality Enhancement and Standards Review

University of Edinburgh

Review Report

November 2023



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Introduction

This is a report of a review under the [Quality Enhancement and Standards Review](#) (QESR) method conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) as part of Phase 1 of the Scottish Quality Enhancement arrangements at the University of Edinburgh.

The review took place on 16 November 2023 and was conducted by a review team, as follows:

- Janet Allison (Coordinating Reviewer)
- Amy Gallacher (Student Reviewer)
- Professor Jonathan Scott (Academic Reviewer).

QESR is Phase 1 of a two-phase approach that enables the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to fulfil its statutory obligation under Section 13 of the *Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005* to ensure that provision is made for assessing and enhancing the quality of fundable higher education provided by fundable bodies for academic quality and enhancement between 2022-24. The second phase of QAA's external quality review arrangements starts in 2024-25 to coincide with the implementation of new tertiary quality arrangements.

The main purpose of this review was to:

- provide assurance about the provider's management of its responsibilities for academic standards to inform an enhancement-led full institutional review in Phase 2
- provide assurance about the provider's management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities for students to inform an enhancement-led full review in Phase 2
- report on any features of good practice
- make recommendations for action.

About the University of Edinburgh

The University of Edinburgh was founded in 1583 and is one of Scotland's four ancient universities. The University describes itself as a large and diverse, research-intensive university.

The University occupies an estate of more than 550 buildings organised in five main campuses spread across Edinburgh. The University's academic structure is based on three colleges, each led by a Vice-Principal: the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (28,570 students in 2022-23); the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (8,410 students in 2022-23); and the College of Science and Engineering (12,760 students in 2022-23) which are in turn arranged in 21 schools.

In 2022-23, the University had a total student population (headcount) of 49,740 of whom: 29,765 were undergraduate; 13,550 were postgraduate taught (PGT); and 6,425 were postgraduate research (PGR). Of the 2022-23 student population, 13,290 were studying part-time.

Findings

From the evidence presented, the review team is confident that the University of Edinburgh is making effective progress in continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision to enable effective arrangements to be in place for managing academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience.

Good practice

The QESR team found the following **features of good practice**.

- **School networks in support of learning and teaching development:** The work of the Institute for Academic Development in establishing a network of secondees and associates embedded within the schools to support developments in learning and teaching (paragraph 7).

Recommendations for action

In 2021, the University of Edinburgh received 10 recommendations from Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR 4). The QESR team acknowledged the University's progress on four of those recommendations. However, for the remainder, the QESR team considers further progress and more timely action must be undertaken to fulfil the recommendations. The University should prioritise action on the following [recommendations from ELIR 4](#) so that the impact of the action being undertaken is completed effectively, impacts positively on the student learning experience and is being implemented consistently across schools. In addition, the QESR team makes the following **recommendations for action** based on, and in addition to, the ELIR 4 recommendations:

- **Pace of change:** The University should make progress on and accelerate its actions in response to the recommendations from the previous ELIR, ensuring effective and consistent implementation by all schools, and monitor the outcomes, in order to evidence significant progress within the next academic year (paragraph 20).
- **Learning and Teaching Strategy:** The University should expedite the final drafting, approval and implementation of the Learning and Teaching Strategy to help staff and students understand how major strategic projects work together and provide clarity on the strategic approach to enhancing learning and teaching (paragraph 19).
- **Assessment and feedback:** The University should take immediate action, within the current academic year, to ensure that the new Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities (developed in response to ELIR 4) are fully implemented in all schools, that feedback turnaround times and quality are monitored effectively, and that prompt action is taken to address any shortcomings (paragraphs 23-25).
- **Training for postgraduate research (PGR) students who teach:** The University should take prompt action, within the current academic year, to consistently implement its updated policy and to ensure that training for PGRs who teach is required at the university and school-level, and that this action is monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that all PGRs are fully supported in undertaking their teaching duties (paragraph 21).
- **Promotion of academic staff based on teaching:** The University should clearly and accurately record data on promotion routes based on teaching excellence so it can effectively evidence the implementation of its goal to achieve parity between teaching and research, and take action to ensure this aim is met (paragraph 26).

- **Attainment gap monitoring:** The University should pay particular attention to sharing good practice and supporting staff in understanding the causes of attainment gaps and taking effective action (paragraph 27).

Institutional approach to quality enhancement

Strategic approach to enhancement

1 The QESR team is confident that the University has effective arrangements in place to monitor, review and enhance its strategic approach to enhancement. The team considered a range of documents, including: the University's Strategy 2030; the report to the Scottish Funding Council; the Outcome Agreement; the proposals and associated action plans in relation to development of the Learning and Teaching Strategy; the mapping of learning and teaching to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code); and the minutes of the Senate Quality Assurance Committee and the Senate Education Committee (SEC). The team also met with staff and students.

2 The University's Strategy 2030 sets out four areas of focus for the University. In the area of learning and teaching, the overarching objectives are that teaching will match the excellence of the research and that there will be sustained improvements in student satisfaction and wellbeing. The University has set out its current strategic approach to enhancement which is linked to four main projects: the Curriculum Transformation Programme (CTP); the new Student Support Model; Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities; and the Continuous Service Improvement Programme. At present, the University recognises that, while each project has a set of action plans, there is not a high-level action plan providing coordinating oversight of all the projects: it is planned that this should form part of the Learning and Teaching Strategy when this is formulated. Oversight of the projects is currently maintained by reporting lines to Court, the University Executive, and the Senate. The University has also recently approved the establishment of a University Initiative Portfolio Board which will provide oversight of strategic projects and the development of new initiatives along with managing prioritisation.

3 The CTP is planned to run until academic year (AY) 2025-26, setting out a 'vision of an outstanding educational experience for students'. As such, it is seen as underpinning the current strategic direction in learning and teaching with progress being reported on to SEC as a standing agenda item, as well as update reports to the University Executive. Key features of the CTP include the development of Challenge Courses and Experiential Learning as well as improving teaching efficiency and more effective use of the physical and digital estate. The QESR team was informed by senior staff that the University has engaged with academic champions in the schools to help identify the core elements of CTP and to strengthen communications. However, in meetings with the team, some staff and students observed that they were unclear about the direction and timescale for the project.

4 Progress with the new Student Support Model is reported by the University in its self-evaluation for QESR as being excellent, with initial implementation taking place in AY 2022-23 and full roll-out in AY 2023-24. The overview report indicated that the new model was well received by staff and students with the provision of more effective and consistent levels of student support. This perspective was also confirmed by staff who met with the team, although some students observed that there was confusion over the channels of communication and role responsibilities of key staff, resulting in lack of clarity for some students.

5 The Continuous Service Improvement Programme (CSIP) is monitored by the Student Lifecycle Management Group, with reporting to the University Executive. The CSIP incorporates several projects intended to improve the student journey. Task and finish groups have been established 'with a view to implementing initial small changes for AY 2023-24'. These include large-scale projects such as timetabling, which are seen as a priority and are ongoing, as well as improved planning for course enrolments; review of the schemes for fees, bursaries and scholarships; improved induction and enhanced creation of

a sense of belonging; improvements in the capture and use of student feedback and an enhanced communications strategy. Outcomes of the CSIP have included guidance on the recognition, reward and remuneration for students who support the work of the University.

6 The University's plans to enhance the student learning experience are also articulated in the Digital Strategy which is linked to its engagement with the sector-wide enhancement topic (paragraphs 28-29), and underpinned through the objectives of the Curriculum Transformation Programme and the pre-existing work undertaken by the Edinburgh Futures Institute. This is also supported through the work of the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) which offers a range of focused workshops on developing digital teaching practices and the opportunity to engage in a peer observation of teaching (POT scheme), specifically focused on digital teaching practices. The University has also committed significant resource to prioritise major investments totalling over £2 million to enhance the digital estate.

7 The IAD has developed an ongoing provision of staff development activities in support of learning and teaching. These have included an annual learning and teaching conference, staff engagement with the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice and recognition of fellowships at all four levels of the Professional Standards Framework. The IAD also delivered a wide range of workshops for staff covering different topics to support enhancement of academic practice. The IAD also hosts a number of staff on secondment each year, enabling them to focus time on specific enhancement projects. Former secondees remain engaged with the IAD as associates who form a network linking the IAD with their academic schools as well as being active contributors to the University's Teaching Matters blog. The embedding of the current and former secondees within the schools has helped disseminate good practice and drive developments in learning and teaching. The QESR team consider that the work of the Institute for Academic Development in establishing a network of secondees and associates embedded within the schools to support pedagogic developments, is a feature of **good practice**.

Student partnership

8 The QESR team is confident that the University has effective arrangements in place to monitor, review and enhance its approach to student partnership. The team considered the Student Partnership Agreement (SPA); Outcome Agreement to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) 2022-23; Annual report to the SFC on Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity 2022-23; UK Quality Code Mapping; Internal Periodic Review (IPR) Handbook and Guidance; relevant institutional committee minutes considering student survey feedback; and met with staff and students.

9 The overarching framework for student engagement is set out in the University's revised Student Voice Policy (SVP), which outlines the role and responsibilities of students, staff and university-level committees to ensure that partnership arrangements meet sector expectations. This is supported by extensive mapping to the Quality Code which provides an overview of student engagement activities at course, programme and institutional-levels. At school and college-level, students are given the opportunity to provide feedback through locally managed course evaluation, programme representatives, student-staff liaison committees and engagement with IPR in review meetings and as panel members; which is then used by staff to support reflection during annual monitoring self-evaluation activities. Opportunities for students to provide institution-level feedback are provided through Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) student officers, university-wide student surveys (NSS, PTES, PRES, pulse surveys) and student panels and focus groups; with feedback then being used to inform institutional planning and development of strategic initiatives.

10 The University's commitment to working in partnership with students is outlined

through its Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) - which is updated annually - and identifies shared priority areas between the University and the EUSA, reflecting key challenges affecting the student experience. As each of the SPA themes is intended to recognise existing areas of partnership, work in relation to the SPA is progressed through university-level project or task groups, as well as through new initiatives. In particular, the Curriculum Transformation Programme (CTP) and Continuous Service Improvement Programme (CSIP), both of which are feeding into the development of the new Learning and Teaching Strategy, were highlighted as examples of where ongoing work addresses SPA themes.

11 The University is taking action to address 2023 NSS scores around Student Voice that indicate that 82.27% of students are satisfied with the opportunities available to provide feedback on their course but only 46.16% agree that they know how their feedback is acted upon. This is also reflected in IPR report recommendations from AY 2022-23 which highlight the need to close the feedback loop with students. As part of the SVP, schools have transitioned from using centrally-managed Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQ) to locally-managed course evaluation. This change is intended to facilitate closer student-staff interaction at a local level, with school staff responsible for monitoring and evaluating their approach to student voice activities. Progress reports on university-level actions arising from thematic analysis of Annual Quality Reports state that a toolkit has been developed to help support school staff and that monitoring of school-level approaches would continue to ensure effectiveness of the various approaches adopted and enable the sharing of best practice. Students highlighted examples of where course leaders have already taken steps to strengthen communication channels, including use of personalised emails updating cohorts on any actions taken in response to feedback provided.

12 Student representatives that met with the QESR team recognised the closing of the feedback loop as an issue, explaining that they often encounter the same feedback at both school and institutional-levels, and that when feedback is provided, they 'hope' it is acted upon. Student representatives explained that receiving blanket 'nothing can be done' responses from staff was particularly frustrating and demoralising. Staff confirmed that they had experience of receiving feedback that could not be resolved at school-level; however, they highlighted that some Colleges had established Student-Staff Liaison Committees to ensure that feedback can progress through appropriate channels. The QESR team heard that the University is exploring training for staff on how to respond to student feedback when it cannot be actioned; recognising that when action is taken in response to student feedback, either at course-level or when it informs the development of a strand of a strategic initiative, the timescales may prohibit student awareness of the impact of their contribution. Senior staff reported an increasing trend towards use of 'mid-course feedback collection' by schools as it allows action to be taken within the semester and increases opportunities to close the feedback loop with students.

13 Despite the reported NSS student satisfaction with feedback opportunities, reporting to the SFC identifies that schools and deaneries have experienced 'persistently low levels of student engagement with centrally and locally managed feedback initiatives', which has frustrated staff due to the impact on the utility of any feedback acquired. Staff explained while they have run focus groups to understand why students have not engaged with feedback opportunities, focused on building constructive relationships with student representatives and have trialled different feedback gathering initiatives which recognise and reflect 'what matters to students', engaging students continues to be extremely difficult. Examples of where staff have taken action to improve partnership working arrangements with student representatives is recorded in the SFC report, which provides specific examples of where collaboration has resulted in the design of course evaluation methods, creation of additional in-house surveys, and development of supporting guidance for student representatives.

14 Senior staff recognised both closing the feedback loop and low levels of student engagement as ongoing challenges for the University, and confirmed they are working closely with EUSA, student representatives and the wider student body using student panels, pulse surveys and focus groups to enhance institutional understanding of both issues. The QESR heard that while the Student Lifecycle Management Group continues to identify and disseminate best practice from monitoring of school-level approaches, it was felt that the increased flexibility of the new model had undermined clarity on expectations underpinning student engagement and has meant that continuous improvement to student engagement activities is not currently 'self-fulfilling'. The University should continue to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the new arrangements to assure itself that the SVP vision of student-staff owned, strategically-led student engagement is fully realised.

Action taken since ELIR 4

15 In 2021, the University of Edinburgh received 10 recommendations from Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR 4). The QESR team concludes that the University has made sufficient progress on four of those recommendations but further action is required on the remaining recommendations from ELIR 4. In coming to this conclusion, the team considered the ELIR 4 action plan progress update, the ELIR follow-up report, the annual reports to the Scottish Funding Council, the minutes of the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC), the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee and the ELIR Oversight Group. The team also met with staff and students.

16 ELIR 4 (2021) identified 10 areas for development. The University was asked to make significant progress, within the following academic year on two of those recommendations (assessment and feedback, and the personal tutor scheme). The University has initiated actions in all areas but there is still further work to be done to progress a number of these where the impact of the action being undertaken is not yet complete, fully impacting positively on the student learning experience or being implemented consistently across schools. In aiming to address the recommendations, the University has established several working groups with reporting lines through to the ELIR Oversight Group which, in turn reports to the University Executive.

17 The ELIR 4 team recommended that the University increased oversight and planning for growth of student numbers and the QESR team concludes that sufficient progress has been made. In AY 2022-23, the University agreed a set of objectives - for on-campus undergraduate, taught postgraduate, and postgraduate research students, as well as for part-time online master's students - which are linked to the ambitions of the University's Strategy 2030 and underpinned by the Strategic Performance Framework; the initial focus being on the undergraduate and postgraduate taught student populations. The University Executive agreed the Strategic Recruitment Enrolment Plan which incorporates a set of key performance indicators including specific consideration of widening participation and international student recruitment. The planning also includes provision of additional resources to support teaching in previously over-recruited areas.

18 The ELIR 4 team recommended that the University provided institutional oversight and ensured clarity for staff on the strategic approach to the enhancement of learning and teaching, in particular during the transitional period between the previous Learning and Teaching Strategy, which ended in 2019, and the development of a new one. In response, the University has built on key strategic projects, including: the Curriculum Transformation Programme; the Continuous Service Improvement Programme (CSIP) assessment; and feedback, training and support for PGR tutors and academic staff development; some of these being addressed as specific responsive actions set out below. Work is focused on developing approaches to institutional consistency and establishment of methods for monitoring across schools.

19 It was reported that a task group of the Senate Education Committee (SEC) would take forward the work of developing a new Learning and Teaching Strategy in the first half of AY 2022-23. Subsequently SEC, in September 2023, 'discussed a proposal for the development of a Learning and Teaching Strategy', agreeing that 'an initial draft will be developed for further discussion. In a meeting with staff, the QESR team was told that, in the absence of an institutional strategy, schools had developed their own approaches. At the meeting with senior staff, the team was informed that a draft strategy had recently been formulated and undergone an initial review by SEC. The team was provided with a copy of the draft following the QESR visit. Given the delays in developing the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the associated direction for schools, the QESR team **recommends** that the University expedites the final drafting, approval and implementation of the Learning and Teaching Strategy to help staff and students understand how major strategic projects work together and provide clarity on the strategic approach to enhancing learning and teaching.

20 More effective management of the pace of change was recommended by the ELIR 4 team. This was taken on board as a series of recommendations by the Senior Leadership Team in September 2022, intended to take the form of the series of identified strategic change projects which are linked to Strategy 2030, and which provide clarity regarding the intended outcomes. There is recognition that the University still needs to develop effective ways of managing strategic projects and the QESR team was informed that a University Initiatives Portfolio Board has been established to maintain oversight of these projects and manage prioritisation along with an oversight group, chaired by the Provost, with the Heads of Colleges to ensure effective line management of project implementation. The QESR team **recommends** that the University makes progress on and accelerates its actions in response to the recommendations from the previous ELIR - ensuring effective and consistent implementation by all schools - and monitors the outcomes, in order to evidence significant progress within the next academic year.

21 The ELIR 4 team recommended that the University should ensure effective implementation of its policy for the training and support for postgraduate students who teach. At its meeting in March 2023, the ELIR Oversight Group recognised that there was still progress needed to implement the policy for Tutors and Demonstrators, including postgraduate (PGR) students who teach. This issue is being addressed by a Training Working Group, overseen by the Institute for Academic Development, which has resulted in guidance being developed for the implementation of the policy to ensure consistency across schools. The QESR team was informed that the supplementary guidance to support the policy had been approved by Senate Education Committee the week preceding the QESR visit. PGR students who met the QESR team reported that they had engaged with university-level training, though there was some confusion as to whether that training was mandatory. They also observed that programme-specific training was provided within schools, although this appeared variable and dependent on school provision. Likewise, there was variation in the perceived quality of school-level support provided for PGRs. Staff who met the QESR team reported that a PGR network was planned to further support PGRs who teach, but that there was still variability regarding policy implementation and governance within the schools. The team noted that the proposals for PGR training were appropriate but that more work needed to be done to embed them within the schools. The University should prioritise and complete the recommendation on training for PGR students who teach from ELIR 4, expediting progress to ensure that the work being undertaken is effective. In addition, the QESR team **recommends** that the University should take prompt action, within the current academic year, to consistently implement its updated policy and to ensure that training for PGRs who teach is required at university and school-level, and that this action is monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that all PGRs are fully supported in undertaking their teaching duties.

22 At the time of the 2021 ELIR, the timeline for the implementation of the new Student

Support Model was planned for academic year AY 2023-24. The ELIR team noted that the University had been developing its approach to personal tutoring over an extended time period and recommended that there should be significant progress in implementing its plans, and asked the University to reflect on whether the timescale for implementation (AY 2023-24) was sufficiently ambitious. In response, the University established a new Student Wellbeing Service in September 2022 with an accelerated rollout of the new Student Support Model. Phase 1 was introduced for all new students in AY 2022-23 with Phase 2 being implemented for all students in AY 2023-24. Initial indications are that the system has been well received by staff and students, with greater consistency of support provision. The University reports progress as being 'excellent' and that adoption of the new Student Adviser, Wellbeing Adviser and Academic Cohort Lead roles has already begun to fulfil the strategic initiative aim of ensuring all students have access to appropriate academic guidance and wellbeing support during their studies. This was endorsed by staff who explained that the distinct support roles had provided a more accessible and consistent student support offering. Students that met with the QESR team generally reported optimistically on their experience of the new support arrangements; however, they expressed concern over lack of student awareness regarding which staff held roles in their school, flagging that online students as a group were particularly affected, and that there was the need for clarity on role responsibilities and communication channels between staff when referring students on to other support services. The QESR team recognises that the University is currently developing an evaluation model to provide ongoing quality assurance for the new Student Support Model arrangements; however, the team considers in the interim period that there would be benefit in strengthening communication with students regarding role responsibilities of staff and opportunities for students to provide feedback on the new model.

23 Assessment and feedback was identified as an area for development in both the 2015 and 2021 ELIR reports. The University was therefore asked to make demonstrable progress within the academic year following the 2021 ELIR. As a result, the University's Assessment and Feedback Task Group was established to develop a set of Principles and Priorities. These were approved in May 2022 by the Senate Education Committee alongside the establishment of the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group and the Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group.

24 Schools have been required to report on their engagement with the Principles and Priorities as part of their annual monitoring procedure with evaluation via quality reports overseen by the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group. The reports considered by the School Annual Quality Reports Sub-Group indicate variable progress in implementation of the Principles and Priorities. The ELIR 4 Action Plan - Progress Update 2023 states that the progress and impact of these Principles and Priorities have been impacted by the industrial action and the marking and assessment boycott - which is reflected in the National Student Survey (NSS) scores for assessment and feedback - with the largest impact being on feedback turnaround times. The University acknowledges in its annual report to the Scottish Funding Council that there are inconsistencies in meeting feedback return dates, and this was further confirmed during the QESR review meetings. In this context, the QESR team noted that the University was 11.9 percentage points below benchmark for assessment and feedback in the 2023 NSS and that both the quality and timing of feedback were identified as specific issues in the free-text comments. Students also commented on the variable quality of the feedback received. Senior staff recognise that this must be a priority for the University and informed the team that meetings have taken place with College Heads to ensure they monitor turnaround times and report upwards regarding any instances of these not being met. They also informed the team that assessment and feedback will be a focus for programme redesign as part of the Curriculum Transformation Programme.

25 The ELIR 4 recommendation on assessment and feedback also asked the University

to progress with proposals for a common marking scheme. The team heard that work is progressing with the identification of a preferred approach and that high-level principles have been established but that local tailoring of assessment schemes and marking criteria at school-level was proving challenging in some areas. The University should prioritise and complete the recommendation on assessment and feedback from ELIR 4, expediting progress to ensure that the work being undertaken is effective. In addition, the QESR team **recommends** that the University should take immediate action, within the current academic year, to ensure that the new Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities (developed in response to ELIR 4) are fully implemented in all schools, that feedback turnaround times and quality are monitored effectively, and that prompt action is taken to address any shortcomings.

26 The ELIR 4 team asked the University to progress with work to improve the recognition of teaching excellence across all aspects of the University. To aid recognition and support for academic staff development, and the promotion of academic staff based on teaching, the University is developing approaches to enhance support for professional development in teaching which is underpinned by a range of programmes delivered by the Institute for Academic Development. The University has also developed its HR policies to put greater emphasis on 'Contribution to Teaching' and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations for implementation in AY 2024-25 with the aim of ensuring parity of teaching alongside research with associated promotion pathways. The team was informed that staff recognised that there had been improvements in the recognition of teaching but that there was still more to be done, particularly at school-level. The University provided the team with data on promotions but was unable to disaggregate them in terms of the different promotion routes. As such, it was not possible to determine the scale of improvement in recognition for leadership in teaching. The University should prioritise and complete the recommendation on promotion of academic staff based on teaching from ELIR 4, expediting progress to ensure that the work being undertaken is effective. In addition, the QESR team **recommends** that the University should clearly and accurately record data on promotion routes based on teaching excellence so it can effectively evidence the implementation of its goal to achieve parity between teaching and research, and take action to ensure this aim is met.

27 The University had a recommendation from ELIR 4 to consider how to address attainment gaps in student performance through the oversight, coordination and monitoring at an institutional level of school-level actions. Work has been undertaken through SQAC and the use of Thematic Reviews to identify awarding gaps. It is noted that schools have engaged but 'have struggled to understand the underlying causes or what good practice should be encouraged'. The University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) has been engaged with trying to determine the underlying causes for sharing with schools. The associated baselines are planned to be incorporated into the annual monitoring cycle. The QESR team was informed that work is ongoing to support transition and progression, and that this is linked into the Curriculum Transformation Programme. The University should prioritise and complete the recommendation on attainment gap oversight, coordination and monitoring from ELIR 4, expediting progress to ensure that the work being undertaken is effective. In addition, the QESR team **recommends** that the University should pay particular attention to sharing good practice and supporting staff in understanding the causes of attainment gaps and taking effective action.

Sector-wide enhancement topic

28 The QESR team is confident that the University has effective arrangements in place to monitor and review its approach to defining and delivering an effective and inclusive digital/blended offering. The team considered Enhancement Topic related Project updates, Digital Strategy updates, uptake of relevant staff development opportunities, the SFC Report, Annual Outcome Agreement, minutes from key institutional committees, and met with staff and students.

29 The University's engagement with the sector-wide enhancement theme - 'The future of learning and teaching: Defining and delivering an effective and inclusive digital/blended offering' - is embedded in its Digital Strategy and through key strategic projects including the development of the new Learning and Teaching Strategy and digital education strand of the Curriculum Transformation Programme. It is underpinned by prior research and projects led by the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) which, in 2022, launched a major suite of postgraduate taught hybrid programmes delivered through what the University calls 'fusion' teaching, which allows students to combine on-campus with online study, and teaches on-campus and online students together as a single cohort. Post-pandemic, the University has continued to invest in its digital infrastructure, reporting that 5,000 modules have been migrated to the new virtual learning environment (VLE) and it has invested in equipping 400 classrooms with audio visual equipment to support hybrid delivery. Realisation of the Digital Strategy has been enhanced through the formation of the new Digital Estate Prioritisation Group short-life working group (DEP) which will oversee the development and effective management and prioritisation of major digital estate investments.

30 Senior staff confirmed that student-facing professional services are required to reflect on how well they meet the needs of 'online and digital learners' and that thematic analysis of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) has been used to support institutional understanding of differences in student satisfaction between student groups. Students that met with the QESR team expressed the view that sense of community can be negatively impacted by primary mode of study, and the University is aware that satisfaction for fully online students is lower on the theme of community than for other postgraduate taught students. Students reported an appetite for greater engagement with their academic peers through course or subject-level social events, and for staff support when trying to self-initiate opportunities to network with peers. Staff recognised the challenge of integrating different student cohorts and providing opportunities to collaborate when students are studying across different time zones.

Academic standards and quality processes

Key features of the institution's approach to managing quality and setting, maintaining, reviewing and assessing academic standards

31 The QESR team is confident that the University has effective arrangements in place for the monitoring and review of its approach to managing quality and to setting, maintaining, reviewing and assessing academic standards. The team considered the institution-led review reports, the University's approach to annual monitoring, papers and minutes from institutional committees, and met with staff and students.

32 The QESR team found that the University's arrangements for managing quality and setting standards meet the Expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) and align with the guidance on quality issued by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). Institutional policies relating to programme and course development are aligned to sector expectations set out in the Quality Code, taking account of relevant Subject

Benchmark Statements, the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and relevant qualification frameworks.

33 The University has in place an overarching framework for the annual monitoring of programmes which is undertaken for all credit-bearing provision and non-credit bearing massive open online courses (MOOCs). Internal Periodic Review (IPR) allows for an in-depth investigation of the quality of academic provision over a six-year cycle. The reports are published on the website, followed by a 14-week response and a year-on response. Student Support Service Annual Review and periodic, cross-service Thematic Review are also in place for Student Services and reports are considered by the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC). Clear and concise supporting documentation for staff and students include the IPR Handbook, IPR Guidance for Staff, ILR Guidance for Students and Thematic Review Guidance. Areas of good practice identified in the IPR reports are published annually on the university website, along with areas for further development with the University identifying where the proposed responsibility for action lies. The IPR Schedule, up to and including AY 2028-29, is published on the university website covering undergraduate, postgraduate and research provision.

34 At individual school-level, programme or programme cluster reports are provided to the School Director of Quality to inform the preparation of school annual quality reports. College quality committees (or equivalent) consider the annual reports, identifying themes and areas of good practice, and areas for further development. The annual monitoring templates are designed so that updates on key institutional issues are required to be included in the report - specifically, reflections on the Student Voice Policy, the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities, and the industrial action. The University considers digital and blended learning as part of its broader approach to quality review - for example, via annual monitoring and IPR, some of these focusing specifically on online digital programmes.

35 Assessment and feedback have been identified as areas for development in the ELIR 2015 and ELIR 2021 reports and, in 2021, the University was asked to make demonstrable progress within the next academic year (detailed in paragraphs 23-25).

36 The responsibility for programme approval and programme modification is devolved to the University's schools and colleges and these are considered by Boards of Studies, which include student representation, that meet at least once a year. The Boards of Studies are required to confirm that all new programmes align with institutional strategy, are academically rigorous, align with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and take account of Subject Benchmark Statements and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements.

37 The University has clearly mapped the arrangements for partnerships to the Quality Code and has an Academic Collaboration Advisory Group as the key contact for staff advice and guidance. A range of policies and a set of guidance documents set out the approval processes for the various collaborative agreements and provide a suite of templates to support schools in developing partnerships. The policies make clear the requirement for all academic collaborations to go through academic due diligence before collaborative proposals can be approved. Memorandum of Agreement templates include statements on the requirements for quality assurance, and the School Annual Quality Report template guidance on scope states that the report covers all taught, research and credit-bearing provision including collaborative provision and non-credit-bearing MOOCs. MOOCs are delivered in collaboration with a number of learning platforms and all courses associated with this are subject to the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy. The University's remit for Internal Periodic Reviews states that the scope of these reviews includes provision delivered in collaboration with others.

Use of external reference points in quality processes

38 The QESR team is confident that the University has effective arrangements in place to monitor and review its approach to the use of external reference points in quality processes. In coming to this conclusion, the team considered the mapping of the quality processes against the Quality Code, minutes from the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) and the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC), analysis of external examiner reports, and the annual report to the Scottish Funding Council.

39 The University has recently updated its mapping to the Quality Code and the mapping documentation for each element of the Code is linked through to the associated policies which are published on the University's website. The University makes use of external reference points and expertise in the development of new programmes and in respect of major revisions. Approval of new programmes requires that the programme is aligned with the relevant Subject Benchmark Statement and the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). There is also a requirement for the involvement of external expertise as well as consideration by PSRBs and employers, where relevant.

40 Internal Periodic Review (IPR) is the main process for assuring the ongoing maintenance of academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience. As such, there is a requirement that there is alignment with the external reference points as identified in the University Remit. In support of this function, IPR panels are required to include two external panel members. Exemplar reports of recent IPRs viewed by the QESR team confirmed the engagement of external members with relevant expertise and the rigour of the review process. Progress on university-level actions arising from the Annual Quality Reports and the IPRs is monitored by SQAC.

41 In their annual reports, external examiners are required to comment on the academic standards of the awards made by the University as well as the academic content. There is a requirement for the course/programme leads to respond to the feedback from the external examiners and the University also draws together thematic analyses of the external examiner reports for the dissemination of good practice which is considered by SQAC.

Use of data and evidence to inform self-evaluation and decision-making

42 The QESR team is confident that the University has effective arrangements in place to monitor and review its approach to the use of data and evidence to inform self-evaluation and decision-making. The team considered the SFC Report, institutional analysis of data on retention and progression, degree outcomes, complaints and appeals, use of data in annual monitoring processes, feedback from external examiners, and met with staff and students.

43 Institutional committees overseeing management of quality and standards - primarily Senate and its standing committees, the Education Committee (SEC) and Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) - receive detailed reporting containing comprehensive analysis, where appropriate including sector-wide benchmarking, to inform reflection and development of strategy and policy relating to learning, teaching and the curriculum; and to monitor the quality of the student experience. SEC uses detailed analysis of National Student Survey (NSS) responses to identify issues affecting the student journey and inform any subsequent school, college or institutional-level actions in response. SQAC considers comprehensive analysis of degree outcome data, containing consideration of student attainment gaps; thematic analysis reports of complaints, appeals and student discipline cases; outcomes of institution-led review; and external examiner and annual monitoring activities - to monitor the quality and standards of student experience and reflect upon the effectiveness of quality assurance processes.

44 The QESR team heard that the University had progressed pre-pandemic plans to enhance its ability to engage with data through the creation of a Data Task Group (DTG). The new group will align with ongoing projects led by the University's Academic Policy and Regulations Committee, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Governance and Strategic Planning department, and Digital Estate Prioritisation group. Each of these groups had previously been reflecting independently on how existing data could be better used to understand the student body; what data is currently captured and at what point in the student journey; what additional data requirements might be needed; and their capacity to record, manage and share data meaningfully across the institution. The Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling (SAIM) team is currently strengthening data management processes by enhancing existing dashboard provision where entry requirement, widening participation and equality, diversity and inclusion data requests will be pulled together and made accessible for staff across the institution. The QESR team considered that this bringing together of activity, through the Data Task Group, would allow the University to make progress towards enhancing school-level understanding of student attainment gaps, given the increased range of data accessible during annual monitoring activities, and institutional-level understanding through the increased ability to identify and explore trends across subjects, disciplines and student groups (see also paragraph 27).

45 The Annual Report on Complaints Handling for AY 2021-22, considered by SQAC, reports over 1,000 complaint contacts received during AY 2021-23, with nine of these being reported as being progressed to Stage 2 investigation. The University cites a variety of reasons for the proportionately low level considered at Stage 2, including effective frontline management of complaints at Stage 1, complaints being resolved by way of an explanation, complaints being dealt with under another procedure, and complaints not being considered - for example, for being time-barred. The report to SQAC recommends that resource is made available for a data management system to manage complaints.

46 The QESR team considered reports provided to SQAC which used data from recent and historic complaints cases to identify common themes, factors driving the increase in case load and resource implications of the continuing trend. Consideration of this report by SQAC prompted the University to initiate an internal audit into the complaints handling process, recognising the need to have a better mechanism for recording complaints and managing cases, as 'limitations on data collection' had hampered the effectiveness of institutional analysis. Senior staff confirmed that an action plan has recently been approved and will be monitored through the Audit and Risk Committee. Academic Services confirmed that they have already recruited staff and are currently putting in place interim improvements. Staff that met with the QESR team confirmed that staff resource had been increased to manage the rise in complaints, and that consideration was being given to better reporting systems, and that there were no particular thematic areas of concern. Students confirmed that they are aware that there is a formal process in place for dealing with complaints.

47 The annual report on academic appeals for AY 2021-22, considered by SQAC, reports a year-on-year increase in academic appeals with an 8% increase on AY 2020-21, bringing the total number of appeals for AY 2021-22 to 386. The report also notes continued challenges with 'appeal turnaround times', a 'significant' case backlog and confusion among students around what constitutes a valid appeal. In response to the rise in appeals, Academic Services have recruited additional 'bank' staff that can be deployed during peak times to maintain appropriate staffing levels, with the aim of ensuring that all appeals are resolved in as timely a way as possible. Recognising that the number of upheld appeals has remained static, the University plans to complete 'pre-emptive' work with schools to strengthen staff communication with potential appellants, particularly around student understanding of a valid basis for appeals under the Student Appeal Regulations, and to empower staff to act to address student concerns under research and assessment

regulations which may provide an alternative to students submitting an appeal.

48 The University confirmed its plans to reflect upon the success of actions taken to resolve ongoing challenges with Complaints and Appeals processes, including completing sector benchmarking on complaints at the end of AY 2023-24 to establish whether trends diverge from sector expectations; learning from individual cases and reflecting on how expectations are being managed in terms of appeals. The QESR team acknowledges that the University is undertaking work to improve complaints management and would encourage the next external review team to follow up on progress made on this and in the internal monitoring of appeals trends.

QAA2811 - R13450 - Jan 2024

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Senate

7 February 2024

Research Strategy Group Report

Description of paper

1. This paper provides a summary of issues discussed at meetings of RSG. RSG's responsibility for research policy and strategy are directly relevant to the achievement of the following outcomes set out in Strategy 2030:

- i. We will see our research having a greater impact as a result of partnership, international research and investment in emergent disciplines.
- ii. We will be a global leader in artificial intelligence and the use of data with integrity.
- iii. We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours, and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and amplify our impacts.
- iv. Edinburgh will become the Data Capital of Europe. We will deliver inclusive growth, provide data skills to at least 100,000 individuals, and create new companies and solutions for global challenges.

Action requested / Recommendation

2. To note

Background and context

3. Since the last Senate meeting in October 2023, RSG met on 30th November. During the rest of 2023/24 it will meet on 6th March, 1st May and 11th July.

4. This report outlines:

- Research and Innovation Strategy
- Research Excellence Framework 2029 - update
- Research Culture, Good Research Practice Week 2023
- Update on Funding, Key Grants and Research and Impact Recognition

5. Research Strategy Group will monitor delivery of the University's new Research and innovation Strategy and its Research Cultures action plan

Discussion

Research and Innovation Strategy

6. The R&I Strategy will be officially launched on 29th January 2024. Working with Vice-Principal Research and Enterprise (VP R&E), colleagues in Communications and Marketing have produced a set of key messages which will inform the planning and delivery of communications surrounding the launch. VP Research and Enterprise will announce the launch of the strategy to all staff through an email communication. This will be supported by staff and student news stories and social media posts about the launch. We will also be sharing a briefing on what the strategy means to our staff and Postgraduate Researchers. Ahead of the launch the University research webpage content will be updated to reflect the structure of the Strategy, and to ensure key messages are embedded throughout.

Research Excellence Framework 2029 (REF2029)

7. On December 5th UKREF team (based in Research England that work on behalf of the four national research funding bodies) announced that the next REF will be conducted in 2029, rather than 2028. This means that the deadline for submission for universities will fall in late 2028 instead of late 2027, with results published in December 2029. We will be publishing a revised timetable for REF planning and submission in Spring 2024

8. The decision to extend the current REF cycle has been welcomed by the sector as it allows more time for UKREF team to adapt to the significant changes to be introduced in REF2029.

9. The December publication on the REF also provided some new information on who can contribute outputs that are submitted for assessment. No outputs can be submitted that are solely authored by PhD students or those in Teaching only roles. It was confirmed that non academics can contribute outputs, with those in technical roles mentioned specifically. The majority of outputs are expected to be from academics whose roles involve Significant Responsibility for Research. Apart from this change, the essential features of the REF that already announced in June 2023 remain as they were. The features include: an increase to the weighting for the People, Culture and Environment element (from 15 to 25% of the overall score); and the 'decoupling' of staff from outputs, which means there is no minimum or maximum number of outputs that an individual staff member can submit. This latter provision means that not every member of eligible staff will be required to submit an output.

10. During the Autumn UK REF sought views from the sector on the assessment of People, Culture and Environment (PCE) in the next REF. There is considerable concern from many universities that this newly configured section has not been sufficiently developed. For this reason, the sector welcomed the delay to REF2029, which will allow more time to develop and pilot the PCE.

11. The University is currently finalising a REF2029 submission preparation plan and timetable, which will be shared in the Spring. Edinburgh Research Office (ERO) has a REF2029 SharePoint site¹ that is open to staff and students. It holds contains a short briefing on the key announcements REF2029 and other material that Senate members may find interesting. This page will be updated as new material is released.

Research Culture and Good Research Practice Week 2023

Wellcome Institutional Funding for Research Culture

12. The University has been awarded £1m in funding from the Wellcome Trust to support the development and testing of a new model which enhances positive research cultures for people and projects. Working in partnership with the Universities of Glasgow and St. Andrews (with an overall budget of £2.9M), we will gather best practice from across the three institutions, amplifying and learning from communities where positive research culture flourishes. The project will develop a framework for collegial research leadership, funding new research leaders to accelerate change through an ambitious programme. Under the plan, funding opportunities will be specifically aimed at diversifying and supporting new research leaders to build collegiate approaches. A new Community Knowledge Hub will support and develop research leaders at all levels to identify and address common issues.

Research Culture lead

¹ [Research Excellence Framework 2028 and Future Research Assessment Programme \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com)

13. As part of the University's investment in Research Culture, the University has created a new, senior professional role to enhance research culture across the University. After a competitive recruitment process, Alex Peden has been appointed to this exciting new role. Alex has extensive experience of leading on research and research culture, including as Head of Regional Engagement Scotland for the EPSRC, and in her recent role as Senior Research Strategy Manager at the Usher Institute. Alex will take up the role in March 2024. Alex will be working with colleagues across the University to provide strategic direction and develop initiatives to improve our research culture, and to lead on delivery of the University's [Research Cultures Action Plan](#). The role will be based within the Institute for Academic Development, and will work closely with our Research Cultures Forum.

Good Research Practice Week

14. The second Good Research Practice week took place from 20 to 24th November 2023 . The week showcased the University's commitment to supporting good research practice, a healthy research culture and best practice in research and researcher evaluation and was open to researchers, postgraduate research students, technicians, and research support professional services colleagues. The events workshops and co-creation sessions were well attended. The last event of the week featured a panel discussion with Professor James Wilsdon UCL on measuring 'research culture' in the REF; Prof Wilsdon chaired the highly influential independent review on the role of metrics in research assessment.

15. The Edinburgh Good Research Practice Awards were announced. The categories were: Good Research Citizenship; Responsible Research; Open Research and Positive disruptor².

Update on Funding, Key Grants, and Research and Impact Recognition (October to December)

Raising the profile of Edinburgh Research Impact

16. At its meeting on 30th November the RSG discussed the plans of the newly established Research Engagement and Impact team. Based in ERO, the team includes the Head of Research Impact, three College-facing Research Impact Managers, a Policy engagement with Research Manager, and a Research and Engagement administrator.

17. The team is responsible for priorities on Public and Policy engagement in the Research and Innovation Strategy. The team will build and strengthen a vibrant and inclusive engagement and impact culture. This includes celebrating the difference that our research already makes, and enabling more colleagues to engage effectively with relevant stakeholders and generate impact from their research. The team will also lead on the Engagement and Impact part of the REF2029 submission, working closely with Colleges and Units of Assessments.

18. One new initiative developed by the team will be to host an impact festival. Working with Edinburgh Innovations (EI) and Communication and Marketing (CAM), the team are planning the festival for the end of May 2024 to celebrate, learn and inspire colleagues to engage for impact. This will comprise a series of events at UoE, College and School/Institute levels. At the festival the winners of the first Research Impact Prizes in the University will be announced. These will recognize and celebrate individuals and teams who have contributed to our vibrant and inclusive culture; enabling our research to make a difference through diverse engagement and partnerships. There are five categories: Team Culture; Sustained Partnership; Responsible Engagement and Innovation;

² [Good Research Practice Awards 2023 | The University of Edinburgh](#)

and Engagement Newcomer and Impact Enabler. Applications are welcome from any member of University of Edinburgh staff. Self-nominations are welcome. More information and an application form are available from: <https://edinburgh.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/2024-impact-prize>. The deadline is 8th March 2024.

Research funding - 2023-24 Year to date

19. The award total for the year to date is £91.73M, more than 30% higher than both previous years' total, and the three-year-historic average. Part of this total comes from the University of Edinburgh being awarded a grant of £13.8M by the Medical Research Council for the CMVM Cardiovascular Sciences – the Scottish full body positron emission tomography facility (see below for more information). The total value of research awards in 2022/23 was £463.3. This represents a 45% increase relative to the three-year average figure, particularly driven by major awards in CMVM.

A selection of recent awards: UK Funders is below

20. Roslin/IRR was awarded an MRC Human Functional Genomics Initiative cluster entitled The Edinburgh Molecular Mechanisms Cluster.

21. £2.6m was awarded to the School of Physics & Astronomy from STFC for Particle Theory at the Higgs Centre.

22. BBSRC Rapid Response funding (£835k) was awarded to Roslin for Flu Trailmap (Transmission and risk of avian influenza: learning more to advance preparedness).

23. Social and Political Sciences with colleagues from University of the Witwatersrand, Kwame Nkrumah University and African Population and Health Research Centre, was awarded a £3.1 NIHR Global Health grant for the project 'Addressing the Commercial Determinants of Health in Sub-Saharan Africa.

24. UoE will host Scotland's first total-body scanner (Professor David Newby, Co-Director) in a boost to clinical research that aims to improve the detection, diagnosis and treatment of complex, multi-organ diseases. The Total-Body Positron Emission Tomography (PET) facility, due to be operational in April 2024, will be based at the Royal Infirmary in Edinburgh and will be jointly managed by the universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow.

25. UKRI have announced funding for three new UoE CDTs in artificial intelligence (maximising our submission quota of two). The investment (£20m to UoE) will continue to ensure that the UK has the skills needed to seize the potential of the AI era and nurture the next generation of scientists. All of the CDTs involve Informatics; and the Schools of Engineering, Usher Institute, Edinburgh College of Art, School of Law, School Mathematics and PPLS are all involved in at least one.

Recognition through Fellowships, Honours and Prizes

26. Together with the University of Glasgow, our University is proud to be launching a major new initiative called Scotland beyond Net Zero. The initiative will mobilise our research and innovation to help Scotland to meet – and go beyond – its ambition of achieving net zero by 2045. It will address key challenges linked with the climate emergency, including clean energy, storage, decarbonisation, green transport, community empowerment and climate justice. SBNZ will bring together all Scottish higher education institutions with cutting-edge research, innovation and expertise in climate science and sustainability – including our partner universities Aberdeen, Dundee, Heriot Watt, St Andrews, Stirling and Strathclyde. It is intended that the venture will also facilitate public and third sector engagement, as well as collaborations with industry partners to unlock innovations that help tackle the climate emergency. It was launched on 23rd January at an event involving the Principals of

Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities, and the Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero.

27. IAD and the CAHSS College Research and Engagement Office have been awarded the ESRC Research Leadership Network: piloting approaches to develop research leadership capability.

28. Rob Dunbar (LLC) has been appointed by the Scottish Government to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for a four-year term.

29. Jane Hillston has won the British Computer Society's Lovelace Medal – one of the top computing awards in the UK. She becomes the first person to receive the three top awards from the Society, also known as The Chartered Institute for IT – the Needham Award, the Distinguished Dissertation Award and now the Lovelace Research Medal. The Medal is presented annually by the Institute for outstanding contributions to the advancement of computing.

Resource implications

30. None. This report is for information only

Risk Management

31. None. This report is for information only. However, as per the Discussion section, RSG applies horizon scanning and due diligence to ensure that changes in policy and funding areas relevant to research are highlighted early. This ensures that we are best positioned to manage any risks that come about due to Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal and Environmental factors.

Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

32. The University's research contributes to the nine UN SDGs listed which relate to the activities of Higher Education Institutions that educate and carry out research, innovation and development. RSG is a platform for strategic discussions about the University's research and at its next meeting will be considering not only how Edinburgh's R&D activities can support global efforts to counter climate change but also the need to reduce the carbon footprint of R&D.

33. At its meeting on 30th November Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability informed Research Strategy Group of work being undertaken by the Department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability to produce a successor strategy to the University's 2016 Climate Change strategy and to update on progress and next steps for the UKRI Environmental Sustainability of Research Concordat.

Equality and Diversity

34. This paper is for information and is not proposing new or revised policies. EDI is one of the cornerstones of the Research Cultures Action Plan, which seeks to advance inclusion and equity across all aspects of research support and research-related careers. The newly established Research Cultures Forum, which reports to RSG, has the specific objectives of supporting the development of policies and mechanisms to promote a positive research culture at the University of Edinburgh across all career stages and research and research-enabling roles, and addressing barriers to equity related to under-represented groups.

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

35. RSG membership includes representation from Communications and Marketing. The RSG papers for discussion explicitly ask for information about communication plans. RSG works with its subgroups, the College Research Committees as well as other University committees to evaluate the impact of action agreed and to determine best approach to dissemination.

Consultation

36. The report itself has not been the subject of consultation but is composed of material that was the subject of discussion at the meeting of RSG on 30th November and subsequent relevant developments.

Further information

Author
Professor Christina Boswell Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise)
Dr Susan Cooper Strategic Research Executive (Research Policy) and secretary to RSG Edinburgh Research Office

24th January 2023

Freedom of information

Open

Senate**7 February 2024****A Member-Led Approach to Senate Effectiveness****Description of paper**

1. This paper summarizes ideas from discussions among at-large members of Senate that took place before and concurrent to the AdvanceHE External Effectiveness Review, offering a member-led approach to Senate Effectiveness that operationalizes the most relevant insights of the external review in the context of what members of Senate have learned and envisioned in the past year.

Action requested / Recommendation

2. Members are asked to note this paper as a resource in Senate discussions of improved approaches to academic governance.

Background and context

3. This paper was initially submitted for the 13 September 2023 e-Senate and suppressed by the Principal based on the erroneous assumption that it represented the views of just one member. As stated clearly in the paper, this is one member's effort to synthesize views and ideas from a large number of Senate members. No attempt was made by or on behalf of the Principal to ask or clarify to what extent the paper represents members' views. For avoidance of doubt, this is not a formal joint statement and views described will not necessarily be established consensus ones. However, there are no grounds to say on that basis that this way of assembling views cannot contribute to Senate's discussions.
4. The Principal also expressed the concern that the paper "was felt to circumvent the invitation to members to respond after the report was circulated." As with the previous point, no attempt was made by or on behalf of the Principal to ask or clarify the relationship between this paper and that invitation. This paper was felt necessary and appropriate independent of that invitation for the following reasons: no information was provided upon request regarding how submissions to the Academic Services led response process were going to be used; that process was structured around the report itself, limiting opportunities to comment on contextual and other factors and ideas; independent of this, it was felt important that members not be reliant on Academic Services to channel Senate reform processes in view of the original stated aims of the accelerated review and the limitations (noted by the AdvanceHE reviewers, members of Academic Services, and elsewhere) on workload capacity from Academic Services (this should not, of course, be construed as a criticism of the quality and value of the work performed). Members are perfectly capable of weighing (or ignoring) this paper as one source of perspectives among many, and do not need to be protected by the Principal from the analyses and ideas of our colleagues.

5. The new Senate membership that took effect in 2020 following the adoption of Ordinance 212 has proven a watershed opportunity to rethink the purposes and methods of Academic Senate as a vital part of the University of Edinburgh.
6. During 2020-2023, members have tested the possibilities and limitations of inherited models of Senate operation and have shown interest in reconsidering aspects of decision-making, agenda-setting, authority delegation, communication, and other dimensions of Senate activity.
7. Senate has adopted a number of interim reforms in response to this interest, including changes to e-Senate procedure, elections, the disclosure of committee business, and membership on Standing Committees and the Exception Committee.
8. Senate's regularly recurring External Effectiveness Review, last previously conducted in 2018/19 before the changes of Ordinance 212, was brought forward to 2022/23 in order to facilitate more timely and comprehensive consideration of further reforms to Senate operations (see paper S 22/23 1E).
9. While draft terms of reference were shared with Senate, the final terms of reference, bids, and tendering process for the external review were not formally considered or approved by Senate, nor disclosed upon Senate member requests. At-large members have found valuable insights in the resulting report, but feel as well that there are necessary perspectives and priorities that it does not represent.
10. Legal Services have recently drawn Senate's attention to the significance of terms such as "control" and "governance" in the context of the law in Scotland, especially as regards the regulation of corporations and public charities. This paper uses such terms in their common academic meanings, for example "academic governance" refers to the process of making decisions about the academic strategy and operation of the university, irrespective of questions that have occasioned some disagreement over what the law technically compels or allows here. See papers S 22/23 5G and 5H.

Discussion

Guiding Principles

11. A comprehensive approach to Senate effectiveness requires a robust understanding of what Senate is meant to achieve and on what terms it is positioned to achieve it.
12. The AdvanceHE review identifies a number of important goals and principles:
 - 12.1. *Senate and its members aim to promote the best interest of the university.* This unifying goal guides what we do and how we do it.
 - 12.2. *Senate serves as a forum for discussion and debate.* Deliberation is central to how Senate achieves understanding of the issues and contexts that matter to the university and seeks to promote the university's interests. An effective Senate supports meaningful and well-informed deliberation.
 - 12.3. *Trust is essential as a foundation for governance, and good governance can support trust.* Trust must be established across Senate deliberations and decisionmaking, as well as demonstrated in how those who carry out Senate decisions respect the work that Senate does.

- 12.4. *Senate can and should elevate student voices.* Students are fundamental to the academic mission of the institution and student perspectives should be visible and influential in Senate.
- 12.5. *Good governance is important to the public image and role of the university.* The university values and depends upon its reputation and strong relationships with the public in Scotland and with many international stakeholders, who wish to see the university run responsibly.
13. Some further principles benefit from being made explicit:
 - 13.1. *Senate represents the academic judgment of the university.* It is not one interest group among many, but rather the body that by law and custom establishes the university's positions and priorities on academic matters.
 - 13.2. *Effective governance requires an effective distinction between governance and management.* The university has a large number of staff appointed to roles responsible for the management of the university's academic operations. Many of these role-holders serve in Senate and bring their expertise and perspectives to Senate operations. But it is essential to distinguish between what academic managers do in their executive or management roles and what all members of Senate do to guide and take responsibility for the university's academic mission.
 - 13.3. *Accordingly, all members of Senate, whether ex officio or elected and including student members, participate on equal footing in Senate as senators, not as managers.*
 - 13.4. *Senate committees are part of Senate.* The whole of Senate is responsible for what Senate does, even as the volume and complexity of Senate's remit necessarily requires judicious use of committees. To the extent Senate tasks or decisions are entrusted to committees, this must respect and preserve the responsibility all members share.
 - 13.5. *Good governance is a skill that members build and learn together.* Effective work in Senate requires a combination of expertise, critical acuity, collaboration and planning, and other skills and qualities that can be learned and improved. As students, educators, and scholars, we are capable of cultivating these and of committing to the learning processes that will make us able to fulfil the remit of Senate.
 - 13.6. To quote the Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2016, *Senate is "responsible for the overall planning, co-ordination, development and supervision of the academic work of the institution."* This is about as clear an indication as the law provides for what Senate is meant to be doing, even as essential questions (such as what it means to be "responsible" and what constitutes "academic work") are not directly answered. Answering these questions and forming individual and collective understandings of the purpose of Senate articulated in law is part of the role and responsibility of Senate members. Our answers are not just about the legal status of Senate but about what it means morally and institutionally to be responsible for academic work.

Observations and recommendations

14. The AdvanceHE review correctly identifies major central change projects including People and Money and the Sustainable Travel Policy as costly and

disruptive undertakings with academic consequences, subject to frustration and dissent in Senate (p. 8). It is important to recognise the nature of the frustration and dissent, which has focused precisely on the extent to which Senate was not a part of the planning, approval, implementation, or evaluation of these change projects. Indeed, even Senate decisions in the form of formal motions have been ignored, compounding a sense that Senate's right of interest in the academic dimensions of these change projects is not being taken seriously by university leadership.

15. The AdvanceHE review notes low levels of confidence in Senate's role overseeing teaching, learning, and academic strategy (p. 15). The wording of these questions is important to how one understands their implications. One could understand the responses as dissatisfaction with Senate processes or capacity for oversight, but it seems just as likely that the negative responses come from the observation that, owing to circumvention and delegation, Senate members who are not on Standing Committees rarely have occasion to engage substantively with the matters in question.
16. These two observations underscore the need for clear expectations and commitments from the university executive to respect the essential role of Senate in university policy and strategy. **Recommendation: *Senate should have an expectation of approval as well as oversight and evaluation of all major university policies and strategies insofar as they have academic ramifications.*** In many (perhaps most) cases, these activities will be shared with executive committees and role-holders and will be subject to corporate oversight of the University Court. To the extent the activities are well formulated and well executed, Senate's role may amount to a minimum of due diligence. To the extent they fall short of these goals or otherwise benefit from more intensive Senate involvement, Senate may provide essential perspectives and correctives to enable the activities to serve the university's interests.
17. To many members of Senate, a worrying recent development has been a pattern of approved motions not being implemented. It should not need to be stated as a recommendation that such motions, being the considered decisions of the university's academic body, ought to be respected. Demonstrating that this is the case will be valuable to the legitimacy and confidence that Senate requires. **Recommendation: *Senate's annual reporting should include a review of decisions and their implementation, demonstrating that decisions have been carried out and identifying forthcoming actions where implementation is ongoing.***
18. Connected with this, Senate's decisionmaking can and should be much more visible to the university at large. We have a good foundation for this in the consistent publication of papers and minutes as well as contextual information on Senate and Committee websites maintained by Academic Services. These enable members to refer colleagues to official and accurate documentation. Academic Services should be provided sufficient resourcing to maintain these sites as well as to produce timely minutes of meetings and decisions, which has sometimes been more of a struggle. Publishing initial records of decisions followed by more detailed minutes of discussion could help fill the need for official documentation that supports members' efforts to share decisions of Senate and its committees as they occur. There were multiple times in 2022-23 where members were impeded from communicating about Senate

discussions and decisions (as recommended by AdvanceHE) due to lack of an official posted record of recent decisions taken. More use could be made of university communications to inform the wider community about Senate decisions, as a digest of decisions following each meeting of full Senate or as a note in the *Bulletin* newsletter that is already used to communicate other non-Senate governance matters (see AHE S2). **Recommendation: *maintain and improve the timely communication of Senate records and decisions on official websites and in internal university-wide communications.*** The reintroduction of Senate-hosted forums (AHE S6) separate from formal Senate meetings would also help foster wider engagement around important Senate topics.

19. Composing a viable agenda for Senate meetings is an important and sometimes delicate task, but the AdvanceHE review perhaps misunderstands the problem by suggesting that the Exception Committee's role be significantly changed to include agenda-setting (R6). In 2022-23, Senate experienced two major problems with agendas. First, duly proposed motions and papers from members were being excluded entirely from the agenda, arguably (indeed a very much argued point) contrary to Senate's Standing Orders. The problem was not *who* was excluding papers but the fact that papers were being screened in the first place, and the solution is simply **Recommendation: *to recognise that all members have the right to bring motions and papers.*** It is clear from experience that Senate's problems with time and agenda management have little to do with any overabundance of member-contributed papers, and Senate members are perfectly capable of prioritising the business that comes before Senate and focusing time on issues that matter most.
20. The second problem, which was present even with the chair's practice of summarily excluding some papers, was determining a viable sequence and timing for discussion to allow the most urgent and important business to be discussed and decided in a timely manner. The existing practice has been for Senate Support to estimate the time required for papers and to inform the chair and the papers' presenters. There does not seem to be any reason why the Exception Committee should be more equipped to perform these estimates than Senate Support, and the one small improvement would be for papers' authors to have more of an expectation of advising on likely time needs. With this as a starting point, the missing ingredient is shared commitment and ownership of agenda timings (cf. AHE R6, R8). **Recommendation: *estimated agenda timings should be published with the Billet and departures from this timing (and ordering) should be by explicit consensus or (if required) vote.*** This is an ordinary practice for large deliberative bodies and in the hands of a skilled chair can be managed highly efficiently. It is usually clear during meetings when the most decisive interventions have been raised and when there is appetite to proceed to a vote or to the next motion. The Principal has expressed a feeling that he would be criticised either for cutting discussion short or for allowing it to continue uninterrupted, and the simple solution is to make it clear that this is rather a decision for the whole of Senate (facilitated by the Principal).
21. As for the time committed to each paper, Senate's recent experience is that some uses of this time are more effective at promoting deliberation and decisionmaking than others. Members have observed on several occasions that there is little added value to formal presentations to Senate where the

presentation can be equally conveyed in a written paper or in a pre-circulated recording. Where there are nuanced or complex points of argument or alternative proposals to be considered, Senate would benefit from a norm of allowing discussion documents to be circulated in advance of the meeting. Attempts to anticipate this need and circulate such documents have been effective in the past when permitted, but have sometimes been barred. A clear expectation regarding advance written (or audio-visual) discussion contributions will help normalize this practice in situations where it would be helpful. **Recommendation: to the greatest extent possible, lengthy or nuanced presentations, points of discussion, or amendments to motions should be circulated in writing (or recording if appropriate) ahead of live meetings of Senate so that members may consider and engage them asynchronously in advance.** This may also make the interventions more accessible, allowing use of accessibility technologies for members to digest materials according to their needs and preferences.

22. There has been considerable interest in Senate of making more effective use of electronic business to facilitate different forms of Senate activity, an interest somewhat misrepresented by the AdvanceHE review's characterisation of e-Senate as covering "technical issues" (p. 20). Following concerns that dissenting views on e-Senate papers were being ignored, Senate resolved in 2021-22 to limit the use of e-Senate to record formal approval for papers. At the time (see S 21/22 2 C), Senate considered how to use e-business not just allow more time to consider and offer feedback to lengthy papers that required noting or comments (but not approval), but also how to use e-business to expedite consideration of uncontroversial formal matters requiring approval (by the introduction of consent agendas) and to allow preparatory discussion on complex or controversial papers beyond what live meetings allow. **Recommendation: revisit the ideas of 2021-22 for consent agendas and discussion papers to help e-Senate further contribute to efficient and effective live meetings.**
23. The AdvanceHE review is right to recognise that a more measured use of meeting chats could facilitate rather than hamper accessibility (though the review could have acknowledged the circumstances giving rise to the chaotic use of chat the consultants observed, which invariably appeared to derive from chaotic chairing of the meeting). Appropriate uses could include to share text for clarity (e.g. when proposing amendments) and raising clarification or procedural questions (cf. AHE R11).
24. The AdvanceHE review asserts the importance of facilitating student participation in Senate (p. 18). A simple practical suggestion, commonly used in academic seminars, is to use the chair's discretion in recognising speakers to establish an expectation that student contributions are prioritised at the start of discussions, with student comments explicitly invited before opening the discussion further. **Recommendation: use the chair's discretion to establish a norm of prioritising student contributions.** It will help make space for student voices if the chair correspondingly retreats from the practice of allowing lengthy presentations from senior staff to dominate.
25. It should be obvious that meeting formats should be decided to maximise accessibility, including accommodating different workplaces and patterns of work and obligations in our large and multi-faceted university (cf. AHE R9 R10 S4 S5). **Recommendation: the timing and format of Ordinary Meetings of**

Senate should ordinarily be decided by Senate prior to the start of the year. In situations where this is not feasible, other forms of consultation and consensus should be used.

26. Some degree of alignment between Senate committee organisation and the managerial organisation of teaching (not to mention research, see AHE section 3.8) strategy, policy, and compliance is beneficial for facilitating oversight and making efficient use of support capacity in Academic Services. However, the AdvanceHE review confirms the widely recognised view that too close an embedding of Senate committees in the structures of teaching management has allowed for a chronic deficit of attention to other matters of Senate interest, especially concerning research strategy and student researchers.
27. Committees' membership and delegated powers have been the subject of extensive discussion in Senate and motivated the accelerated timing of the AdvanceHE review. As the review documents, role-holders who have customarily served on committees tend to have a high estimation of committees' expertise and effectiveness, while those on the outside have struggled to gain access to and engage with committee activities. Like the previous external review, this one defines whether committees are working by their ability to make informed decisions, not by how well they uphold the values of governance reflected in the overall organization of Senate. Unlike the previous review, this review documents the strong feelings of disconnect and dissatisfaction with the deficit of governance.
28. The review's conceptualisation of committee conflicts as reflecting "both sides" that need to "compromise" is symptomatic of a problematic understanding of committees' role in Senate. If properly constructed, committees and their convenors should not constitute a "side" in opposition to "Senate" as a whole.
Recommendation (of principle): Rather, **committees should be constituted and powers delegated precisely insofar as they facilitate Senate's taking responsibility for academic matters of the university.** The default delegation of powers to committees should be the power to collect and analyse information and to formulate policies, strategies, and associated decisions in a way that supports understanding and decisionmaking in Senate.
29. In practice, a large number of managerial and compliance activities have become entangled with governance and oversight through the operation of Senate committees. Disentangling these will be necessary to the efficient and effective operation of Senate and its committees. Where AHE R17 S9 S10 suggest a review of delegated responsibility is required, the root of the issues instead seems to need **Recommendation: a review of committee activities with a view to separating high-level governance appropriate to full Senate (supported by Senate committees) from executive and managerial activities appropriate to non-Senate management.** There will necessarily be areas of intercalated activity and coordination, for instance: assembling and supporting evaluation of programme reviews for quality assurance compliance is a managerial activity that supports review and validation by Senate; interpreting and applying exceptions to academic regulations is a managerial activity that implements principles and policies adopted by Senate, with managerial implementation also expected to have an appropriate level of accounting and review after the fact.

30. It will probably be necessary to continue the existing standing committees under suitably modified terms of reference on a transitional basis while this review and disentangling takes place. However, the result will be the possibility of reformulating Senate committees around Senate's core purposes governing teaching, research, and discipline. **Recommendation: *transitional committee arrangements should enable a reordering of committees around Senate governance areas.*** Such reformulated committees should continue to involve members with managerial and leadership responsibilities, but freed from managerial roles would have more space for participation from at-large staff and student members of Senate who undertake to study and frame important issues for full Senate's decisionmaking.
31. A clearer separation between governance and management would also obviate AHE R18 and related questions about delegating and referring decisions. **Recommendation: *decisions of Senate are best made by Senate with support, framing, and (where appropriate) endorsements of committees,*** not made by committees in avoidance of full Senate taking responsibility. This would not, as is sometimes claimed, represent an explosion of work or a proliferation of needless details where inappropriate to the full Senate setting. When committees are working well, the detailed parts are sorted at a committee level and full Senate receives a well thought-through basis for understanding the central issues and, where applicable, deciding among well-considered alternatives established by committees. This is vastly preferable to what the AHE review clearly shows to be an ineffective system of feeding views into committees from full Senate and elsewhere while not having clear lines of engagement and accountability for representing Senate-level considerations in decisionmaking. Full Senate currently spends a lot of time making granular comments and giving ineffective feedback on matters delegated to committees, when it should rather be spending that time seeking high-level understanding of issues that committees have investigated and are capable of following up and reverting where needed.
32. As the AdvanceHE review argues (S1, p. 16), Senate membership makes a positive contribution to the university and should be recognized in workload modeling. As workload models are implemented by Schools, it is perhaps best for Senate to communicate this expectation as a guideline. **Recommendation: *Schools should be advised to include a minimum of 60 hours in the annual workload models of staff for at-large service in Senate, and at least an additional 60 hours for members who serve on committees of Senate.***
33. The AdvanceHE review notes the potential to enrich Senate by creating more space for students (including postgraduates) and early career researchers (one might add early career teaching-focused roles), as well as professional services staff (p. 16). Ordinance 212 places limitations on how these changes to membership might be implemented. In view of the consensus identified by AdvanceHE that ex-officio role holders are overrepresented, the University Court may identify under section 2 of the Ordinance a number of posts representing these constituencies falling under the 80 positions reserved in that section. Senate may request this with a motion in time for the positions to be filled for 2024-25, if not sooner. **Recommendation: *request that the University Court implement AHE R1 and R2 using their discretion under section 2 of Ordinance 212.*** This would also be the most straightforward

approach for R15, to compensate for the lack of some critical dimensions of diversity among current ex-officio role holders.

34. Diversity in Senate's membership is a more fundamental problem (recognised in the AdvanceHE review), and the evidence is mixed regarding the potential of "knowledge of EDI" and more consistent EDI assessments (AHE R12 R13) to compensate for this. We must also recognise how service roles such as Senate can place disproportionate burdens on minoritized members, who are often expected to do more and who receive less in recognition and career benefit from doing so. A commitment to a more diverse and equitable Senate must start with a commitment to making the conditions (including the labour and career conditions) of Senate service more viable and worthwhile, so that Senate service is a beneficial opportunity and not another inequitable burden.
35. The AdvanceHE review's recommendations around induction (R3) are worthwhile and appear already to be under implementation this year. To these one should add (as several members shared with the consultants but which does not appear in the report) that for many members the unofficial support provided to each other with self-organised meetings and resources has been a notable success in building member confidence and capacity over the last two years. Recognising that Senate membership draws from the university's scholars and educators is, in turn, an invitation to celebrate and support the scholarly and pedagogical values we bring to collaborating with colleagues in Senate.

Resource implications

36. This paper has focused on principles and recommendations as starting points for discussion. As with any proposals arising from the process of review and reform of Senate, consideration of resource implications will be essential before approval and implementation.

Risk Management

37. Not applicable at this stage, but a necessary consideration as discussions move toward taking actions.

Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

38. N/a.

Equality and Diversity

39. Several points of the paper bear indirectly and directly on equality and diversity. These will merit further explicit engagement to the extent discussions inform actions taken.

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

40. This paper contributes to discussions that will be conducted and supported by members of Senate and Academic Services following the external review's completion. No actions arise from this paper alone.

Consultation

41. Informal and ongoing among elected academic staff members of Senate.

Further information

Author(s)

Michael Barany

Freedom of information

OPEN

Senate

7 February 2024

Corrections and Qualifications to the External Senate Review Report

Description of paper

1. This paper records a number of corrections and qualifications to the AdvanceHE external review report circulated in August to members of Senate, noted by Senate members in the course of discussing the report. It is important when considering next steps that Senate have a starting point based as much as possible on an accurate understanding of our situation.

Action requested / Recommendation

2. Members are asked to note this paper as a resource in Senate discussions of improved approaches to academic governance.

Corrections and Qualifications

3. *Size of Senate.* The review refers to Senate as having grown in 2020 (p. 6). The elected cohort grew to comply with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, but the overall size of Senate fell by more than half. The relevant change is thus not the size of Senate but the new majority share of elected members.
4. *Past Role of Senate.* The review describes the pre-2020 Senate as “rather acquiescent” (p. 6). Aspects of both pre- and post-2020 Senates could be described in these terms and aspects of both could contradict them. Members recalled times pre-2020 when Senate members confronted controversial issues and engaged in serious scrutiny of university priorities and management.
5. *Lack of Trust.* The review identifies a lack of trust between elected and ex-officio members of Senate (p. 6), whereas the preponderance of evidence points more specifically to a lack of trust between elected (joined by some ex-officio) members and a subset of ex-officio members from the Senior Leadership Team of the university. It is important to recognise that there has broadly been a great deal of consensus and cooperation among elected and ex-officio members as a whole, evidenced in votes and elsewhere. The review goes on to identify the distrust accurately as based in “the senior management not taking Senate seriously enough” and the concomitant perception of “bad faith on the part of management” (p. 6).
6. *Importance of NSS.* The review claims “a good NSS rankings [sic] is a key strategic priority for the institution” (p. 6-7). In fact, the phrase “National Student Survey” or acronym “NSS” return no results in a [web search](#) of the university’s “Strategy 2030” collection of webpages. University quality assurance discussions in Senate and elsewhere have tended to separate NSS scores from other indicators of teaching quality. This matters to the characterisation of the Curriculum Transformation (p. 7), a matter of some disagreement in Senate.
7. *Design of review.* The review refers to “the University decision not to establish a Senate Review Steering Group” (p. 13). In fact, at-large Senate members

repeatedly asked to have a more active role in the design, commissioning, and steering of the review. The referenced decision was not by “the University” but by role-holders acting without formal Senate approval. The review notes the consequent need to expand the number of focus groups and interviews; some members felt their interest in informing the review was not met with commensurate opportunities to do so.

8. *Response rate.* The standing committee survey had 29 respondents, far short of the claimed “40% of [relevant] members” (p. 14) when one considers all members of Senate to have an interest in committee operation and effectiveness, not just those currently in privileged committee roles. There was also concern among at-large members that meetings with 16 individual Senate members was not a proportionate sample compared to the larger share of student, SLT, and other ex-officio members sampled.
9. *Causes of division.* The review correctly notes that a subset of elected members have recently used Senate procedures to challenge the Principal and SLT. The review errs in saying “The *consequence of this* [emphasis added] is that Senate is becoming more divided and fractious” (p. 14). Such challenges have made existing divisions and disagreements clearer and more visible, but there is not evidence that challenges have caused their increase. To the contrary, evidence from votes and motions (among other sources) indicates that the clarifying effect of these challenges has helped to identify previously unrecognized areas of consensus and unity among large segments of Senate.
10. *Composition.* The review claims “There are equal numbers of elected professoriate and elected staff members” (p. 15) but this is only true of the number of positions available, not the number of members serving at any time since the current structure has been in place.
11. *Student preparation.* The review claims “Student members are understandably likely to be less experienced in all aspects of academic governance and due to the relatively short-term nature of their representative positions (1 or 2 years), there is less continuity when compared to staff members.” Elements of this may be true in broad terms, but it should be recognised that many student members come to Senate from (or alongside) extensive involvement in EUSA or other activities involving practice in governance, and in many cases have more familiarity and comfort with aspects of governance than many staff in Senate. Staff turnover (including *de facto* turnover from passive nonparticipation) means there is in practice perhaps less of a disparity in continuity than might be supposed. The experience of 2022-23 indicated that students struggle with many of the same obstacles to participating effectively in Senate as at-large staff face. When at-large staff facilitated the same kinds of unofficial support for students that staff had been providing to each other (cf. suggestion S3 which the consultants may have been unaware has already been happening to some extent informally), student participation and effectiveness in meetings improved notably.
12. *Agenda setting.* The review claims “The Principal ultimately decides the agenda as laid out in the statutes” (p. 18). As discussed in papers S 22/23 5G and 5H, the Principal is the President of Senate (by statute) and customarily sets the agenda, but statutes do not give a definite instruction regarding how the agenda is decided and no statute gives the Principal the explicit authority to decide the agenda in the sense of ruling what items are included or

excluded when the Billet is composed. As the review notes, the fact that the Principal has nevertheless asserted this power has been deeply controversial. Senate Standing Orders give all members (and certain non-members, under certain conditions) the right of presenting motions on the Billet.

13. *Exception Committee*. The review claims there are 4 elected academic staff members (p. 19), when in fact in October 2022 the number was increased from 2 to 6. The review also omits the student member of the committee and appears to be quoting outdated terms of reference and refers to “the Exemption [sic] Committee.”
14. *Senate Function*. The quotation at the start of section 3.8 (p.22) is from the university website and briefing materials, not the Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2016. It is a paraphrase of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1889 as amended in 1966.
15. *Elected Members on Committees*. Contra p. 23, elected members were added to committees in 2022-2023 (not 2021-22) as an interim measure while a full reconsideration of committees and their membership awaited the external review. The initial allocation aimed for representation of elected members across Colleges (not “the voice of schools”; Colleges are separately represented by College role-holders).
16. *Delegation*. It is unclear what “guidelines” (terms of reference?) are considered the index of the proper delegation of committee authority here (p. 24), but in any case it is germane that the fact and extent of delegation (rather than whether delegation, once decided, is being followed) is the main source of challenges and concerns in Senate.

Resource implications

17. N/A.

Risk Management

18. Accuracy in starting points is typically understood to contribute to risk management in change processes.

Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

19. N/a.

Equality and Diversity

20. Several points bear upon observations and recommendations related to equality and diversity in Senate and its mandate.

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

21. This paper contributes to discussions that will be conducted and supported by members of Senate and Academic Services following the external review’s completion. No actions arise from this paper alone.

Consultation

22. Informal and ongoing among elected academic staff members of Senate.

Further information

Author(s)

Michael Barany

Freedom of information

OPEN

Senate**7 February 2024****Revision to the May 2024 paper deadlines.****Description of paper**

1. The paper outlines the revised paper deadlines for the 22 May 2024 meeting.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Senate is invited to note this paper.
-

Background

3. In 2023/24 the paper deadline for Senate meetings has routinely been set for two weeks prior to the meeting date, with the agenda and papers circulated to Senate 7 days prior to the meeting.
4. At the 11 October 2023 meeting, an action was agreed for the Convener and Senate Clerk to review the process for handling amendments. It is anticipated that this action will be confirmed when the minutes are approved by Senate at its 7 February 2024 meeting.

Discussion

5. Following the 11 October 2023 meeting, the Convener and Senate Clerk considered means to address the action.
6. To ensure members have sufficient time to read Senate papers and engage with the amendments process, the deadlines for the 24 May 2024 meeting have been revised.
7. This is intended to be on a trial basis for the May 2024 meeting only, with the Convener and Senate Clerk to undertake a further review of dates and deadlines following the May 2024 meeting and in setting deadlines for 2024/25 meeting dates.
8. The revised dates and deadlines for the May meeting are as follows:

Paper deadline	Monday 29 April 2024
Papers to be circulated	Wednesday 8 May 2024
Senate billet finalised in line with Standing Order 7	Wednesday 15 May 2024
Deadline for amendments	Wednesday 15 May 2024
Amendments circulated to Senate	By Monday 20 May 2024
Senate meeting	Wednesday, 24 May 2024

9. The Standing Orders allow for amendments arising from business on the billet to be dealt with without being previously notified (Standing Order 10). Members are strongly encouraged to submit amendments ahead of time and in line with the deadlines above to allow amendments to be circulated to members of Senate

prior to the meeting. This is intended to facilitate greater transparency of Senate business and robust consideration and decision making of amendments put forward.

10. In line with the Standing Orders the Convener has discretion to allow amendments to be put forward during the meeting and without being previously notified.

Resource implications

11. None.

Risk management

12. Not applicable.

Equality & diversity

13. Not applicable.

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

14. Senate meeting dates and the associated paper deadlines are published on the Senate website: [Conduct of Senate Business](#)

Author

Olivia Hayes
Academic Policy Officer & Clerk to Senate
January 2024

Freedom of Information

Open paper