

## Senate Education Committee

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024 14:00 – 17:00Hybrid meeting: Liberton Tower Room, Murchison House, King's Buildings  
and via Microsoft Teams**1. Attendance**

<b>Present</b>	<b>Position</b>
<i>Colm Harmon</i>	<i>Vice Principal, Students (Convener)</i>
<i>Tina Harrison</i>	<i>Deputy Vice Principal, Students (Enhancement) (Vice-Convener)</i>
<i>Sian Bayne</i>	<i>Assistant Principal Digital Education</i>
<i>Laura Bradley</i>	<i>Representative of CAHSS (Postgraduate Research)</i>
<i>Mary Brennan</i>	<i>Representative of CAHSS (Learning and Teaching)</i>
<i>Marianne Brown</i>	<i>Head of Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling</i>
<i>Shane Collins</i>	<i>Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions</i>
<i>Jamie Davies</i>	<i>Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, UG)</i>
<i>Lucy Evans</i>	<i>Deputy Secretary, Students</i>
<i>Shelagh Green</i>	<i>Director for Careers &amp; Employability</i>
<i>Carl Harper</i>	<i>Vice- President Education, Edinburgh University Students' Association</i>
<i>Sarah Henderson</i>	<i>Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, PGT)</i>
<i>Melissa Highton</i>	<i>Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Division of Information Services; Assistant Principal (Online and Open Learning)</i>
<i>James Hopgood</i>	<i>Senate Representative</i>
<i>Lisa Kendall</i>	<i>Representative of CAHSS (Learning and Teaching)</i>
<i>Nichola Kett</i>	<i>Director of Academic Services</i>
<i>Jason Love</i>	<i>Head of School, CSE</i>
<i>Antony Maciocia</i>	<i>Representative of CSE (Postgraduate Research)</i>
<i>Velda McCune</i>	<i>Representing Director of Institute for Academic Development</i>
<i>Callum Paterson</i>	<i>EUSA Academic Engagement and Policy Coordinator</i>
<i>Jo Shaw</i>	<i>Head of School, CAHSS</i>
<i>Tim Stratford</i>	<i>Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)</i>
<i>Tamara Trodd</i>	<i>Senate Representative</i>
<i>Patrick Walsh</i>	<i>Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)</i>
<i>Sinéad Docherty</i>	<i>Committee Secretary, Academic Services</i>
<b><i>In Attendance</i></b>	
<i>Jon Turner</i>	<i>Curriculum Transformation Project Lead, Institute for Academic Development</i>
<b><i>Apologies</i></b>	
<i>Nikos Avramidis</i>	<i>PGR Student Representative</i>
<i>Paddy Hadoke</i>	<i>Representative of CMVM (Postgraduate Research)</i>
<i>Susan Morrow</i>	<i>Senate Representative</i>
<i>Mike Shipston</i>	<i>Head of Deanery, CMVM</i>

## 2. Minutes of Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

## 3. Convener's Communications and Matters Arising

- **Learning & Teaching Strategy**

The Deputy Vice Principal, Students (Enhancement) provided a verbal update on the development of the Learning & Teaching Strategy. Dates have been arranged with the Colleges to present the draft and discuss with colleagues. The Directors of Teaching Network will also be involved in further consultation.

- **Tutors & Demonstrators**

Following discussion of committee priorities at the previous meeting, the Convener took the action to consult with colleagues in HR around minimum training standards for T&Ds. It has been confirmed that the Guaranteed Minimum Hours Agreement is one of the matters that rest solely with UCU and has been discussed in meetings held this academic year.

A proposal is pending from UCU on their considered minimum training standards for Tutors and Demonstrators. The next meeting is 13 March 2024, after which an update on actions will be provided to this Committee.

- **Lost Learning**

Following the discussion of lost learning at the previous Committee meeting, in the context of setting priorities for the Committee to focus on in 2024/25, the Convener consulted with HR to understand the impact of industrial action.

It was reported that the impact varies across Schools and Colleges. The Committee would recommend that affected Schools consider the additional support and financial resource available to bridge gaps in learning. Schools are also encouraged to focus on where additional support is best applied, which may be towards new incoming students who are embarking on University level education.

## 4. Substantive Items

### 4.1 Curriculum Transformation – PGT Framework

This item was presented by the Curriculum Transformation Project Lead, with several key questions asked of SEC members in relation to the proposed framework. Discussion included progression points, the importance of flexible routes into study and models within the framework that best support international students who are new to the UK University experience. The Committee highlighted the additional requirements of accreditation that will be relevant to some programmes.

It was recognised that the PGT market is changing and there is a need for all programmes to be developed with an elongated option in mind. The block teaching model already in use within the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) was highlighted as a template which may work well for Mode 3 stackable archetype. It was noted that this archetype may be of particular interest to candidates in industry or working towards continuous professional development (CPD).

In response to a question about the timeframe for the proposed framework, the Committee were informed that the intended validation window would be academic year 2024/25 and the roll-out period in 2026/27. A proposal for the validation process is in development, and will include guidance and illustrated examples. Workshops and consultation will continue in order to test out the proposals and archetypes in accordance with different requirements. The Committee did note their interest in further clarity on the curriculum design principles and how these will be shaped in the next 5 years.

The views of the Committee were noted by the CTP Lead and will feed into the revised framework proposal, which will be presented to Senate during its May 2024 meeting.

#### 4.2 Committee Priorities 2024/25

The Committee discussed the proposed priorities for academic year 2024/25. These had been informed by previous discussion held by the Committee and feedback from members and the Convener. It is intended that priorities will be deliverable pieces of work within the remit of the Committee.

The Committee discussed assessment & feedback and turnaround times for feedback. Members highlighted that nuanced discussion is needed around student expectations of timely feedback and student concern around the quality of feedback provided. It was felt that data would help to understand assessment & feedback performance across the University, as well as the relationship between performance and student survey results.

It was noted that the recommendation following the Quality Enhancements & Standards Review (QESR) provides a sector perspective, and work in the area of assessment & feedback area is not solely responding to student survey results. External requirements inform the need to prioritise assessment & feedback turnaround time, and the role of this Committee is to be assured that work is happening across the institution to respond to external recommendations.

During discussion, Committee members identified several additional areas of focus, including the Widening Participation Strategy, Estates & Space, awarding gaps, staff development, the changing student profile and employability. Whilst these areas are not all within the remit of the Committee, these will be added to the forward agenda to inform further work.

**Action:** Committee Secretary to share revised draft of priorities on the Committee SharePoint page for any further comments.

### 4.3 Student Support Framework Revisions

The Deputy Secretary, Students presented the updated framework to the Committee. The Committee advised that more emphasis on some cohorts of students, such as joint-degree students and study-abroad students, would be helpful in ensuring that the support required for these students is explicitly captured.

There was discussion of the role of Cohort Leads and the importance of academic events included as a timetabled activity. Cohort Leads are responsible for academic guidance and community building, and members were reminded that Schools are expected to define the Cohort Lead role in the best way for their students. It was acknowledged that ongoing work is needed to ensure the role is supporting the student experience as intended.

It was noted that the framework will be influenced by the logic model review which is to evaluate the Student Support Model. The Committee welcomed the review taking place in 2025, and were supportive of the work to streamline activity and documentation around Student Support, to ensure that documentation is concise and work is appropriately focused and effective.

The Committee approved the revisions to the Student Support Framework ahead of academic year 2024/25.

### 4.4 School Accessibility Reviews

The Committee were presented with an annual update on the accessibility results via the Learn Ultra project. This reviews accessibility across documents, course pages, URLs and audio/video content and is also shared with all Heads of Schools. The Committee were informed that the sample size reviewed is increasing each year, which does present a challenge when comparing progress year-on-year.

There was discussion of the current level of captioned materials, with 65% of files and videos having subtitles. The Committee were advised that captioning technology has improved in recent years and the technology can indicate its level of confidence in the generated subtitles. There was discussion of how to assist Schools to improve their accessibility rate with the aim of all material being fully accessible, and it was noted that training and additional support is available to Schools.

The Committee were supportive of the expectation that all Schools should participate in accessibility activity with the aim of increasing the rate of compliance. There was recognition of the resource implications for Schools, although it is expected that the improved captioning technology now available will alleviate some of the workload.

**Action:** Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Division of Information Services; Assistant Principal (Online and Open Learning) to continue to provide updates on the performance of automatic captioning.

## **5. For information/noting**

### **5.1 Learn Ultra Evaluation**

The Committee noted the update in relation to the Learn Ultra Evaluation project.

### **5.2 Assessment & Feedback Groups**

The Committee noted the revised Terms of Reference for the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group.

### **5.3 Quality Enhancement & Standards Review (QESR) Oversight Group**

The Committee noted the Terms of Reference for the QESR Oversight Group, set up following the report of the review. This group will report in to both SEC and Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC).

## **6. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 9th May, 2-5pm. This will be a hybrid meeting, taking place in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House and via Microsoft Teams.