The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

**Meeting to be held on Thursday 8 February 2018 at 2pm
in the Raeburn Room, Old College**

A G E N D A

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 30 November 2017**   SQAC 17/18 3A

2. **Matters Arising**

2.1 Notes of the electronic Senate Quality Assurance Committee conducted   SQAC 17/18 3B
from Wednesday 20 December 2017 to Friday 12 January 2018

For Discussion

3. College Annual Quality Reports 2016-17   SQAC 17/18 3C

4. Enhancement-led Institutional Review: Theme Lead Reports   SQAC 17/18 3D

5. External Examiners: SQAC 17/18 3E
Postgraduate Taught Reports - Thematic Analysis 2016/17

6. Mid-year update on progress against SQAC priorities   SQAC 17/18 3F

For Information and Formal Business

7. Service Excellence Programme   SQAC 17/18 3G

8. Knowledge Strategy Committee   SQAC 17/18 3H

9. Internal Review Reports and Responses   SQAC 17/18 3I

10. **Any Other Business**

11. **Date of Next Meeting:**
Thursday 26 April 2018 at 2pm in the Raeburn Room, Old College

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

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 30 November 2017 at 2pm
in the Hodgson Room, Weir Building, King's Buildings**

Present:

Professor Tina Harrison (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Dr Shereen Benjamin	Associate Dean (Quality Assurance) College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science
Megan Brown	Schools Engagement Officer, Edinburgh University Students' Association
Brian Connolly	Secretary to Senatus Quality Assurance Committee
Nichola Kett	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team, Academic Services
Dr Sheila Lodge	CMVM Head of Academic Administration (Co-opted Member)
Dr Gordon McDougall	Dean (Quality Assurance), College of Science and Engineering
Dr Inger Seiferheld	School Representative (Business School), College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science
Dr Jon Turner	Director, Institute for Academic Development

In Attendance:

Patrick Kilduff	President, Students' Association

Apologies:

Bobi Archer	Vice President (Education), Students' Association
Professor Jeremy Bradshaw	Director of Quality Assurance, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, and Assistant Principal, Researcher Development
Brian Green	Deputy Associate Principal (Learning & Teaching), University of Strathclyde
Dr Claire Phillips	School Representative (Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Barry Neilson	Director, Student Systems (Co-opted Member)
Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 September 2017**

   The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

2. **Matters Arising**

   a) **Membership**
   The Convenor noted that the Vice Convenor, Professor Bradshaw, would demit his role as Director of Quality Assurance (College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine) at the end of January 2018 to take up a position at Bath University. His replacement on the Committee would be appointed in due course. A new co-opted member with expertise in Student Systems was also being sought after Barry Neilson stepped down due to his new role in the Service Excellence Programme. Finally, it was noted that Sarah McAllister would replace John Turner as representative for the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) when she joins the IAD in January. This would require the College of Science and Engineering to identify a new school representative for the Committee.

   b) **Review of School Annual Quality Reports**
   The Convenor reported that in order to formally close the loop on this year's Review of School Annual Quality Reports, the review sub-group had considered the final report from Moray House School of Education (which had been submitted too late to be considered at our September meeting). It was noted the report covered all the key areas in line with other School reports that were reviewed. It was agreed that next year's report should contain a reflection on the Personal Tutor (PT) system and assessment and feedback as these are two areas of further improvement identified in the data analysis section of the report that do not have specific actions.

   The Convenor noted that at the previous meeting the Committee had agreed a number of additional actions arising from the annual review of school quality assurance reports and the internal review process during 2016-17. The Convenor confirmed that all the required responses had now been received and could be viewed at the following link:
   https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SQAC/Thursday+30+November+2017

   For Discussion

3. **UK Quality Code for Higher Education – Consultation**

   The Committee discussed the joint University and Students' Association draft response to the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA) consultation on a new approach to the Expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. The Committee welcomed the proposals for simplification, which would help students and staff engage with the Quality Code. However, the Committee expressed disappointed that the proposals did not cover the same breadth of the student lifecycle as the current Quality Code, which was highly regarded internationally, and did not reflect the enhancement-focussed Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework. Ultimately, the changes seemed to be driven by developments and priorities in other parts of the United Kingdom. Members also expressed concerns in regard to the consumerist undertone of the document and the lack of content in relation to student engagement and support.

The Committee noted that the draft response had also been submitted to University Court for comment (at the meeting to be held on 4 December 2017). Comments from the Committee and University Court would contribute to the final response to the consultation which would be complied by Professor Tina Harrison, Assistant Principal Academic Standards & Quality Assurance. It was noted that the UKSCQA deadline for responses was 13 December 2017.

4.   **Annual Monitoring, Reporting and Review – Minor Changes**

The Committee approved minor changes to the Annual Monitoring, Reporting and Review Policy and associated templates. It was noted that the changes had been made in response to an evaluation of the first cycle of the new process and in order to place greater emphasis on ensuring that courses and programmes remain sustainable. The changes had previously been outlined at the School Directors of Quality meeting held on 25 October and key stakeholders would be informed when the updated Policy and templates were available on the Academic Services website. The Committee noted that work to support Schools with the annual monitoring, review and reporting processes would continue across the academic year.

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

The Committee considered an analysis of data from the External Examiner Reporting System (EERS) covering undergraduate programmes for the academic year 2015/16. The report noted a high number of commendations across the University and a low number of issues that required attention.

Of the commendations, it was noted that the main theme commended across all three Colleges was the Assessment Process with the sub-theme of Student Feedback most commented on.

> **Action: Academic Services to analyse feedback comments as a theme and forward findings to the Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback and discuss at Director of Teaching Network.**

Of the issues highlighted by External Examiners was in relation to internal moderation (that it was sometimes difficult to identify evidence of moderation and that it was not always clear which samples of work had been moderated) and induction of External Examiners (a varied experience of induction with a minority stating that they had received no or minimal induction).

> **Action: Director of the Institute for Academic Development to liaise with the Higher Education Academy to discuss External Examiner training options.**

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

The Committee noted that two suggestions were escalated to University-level. These were considered and it was agreed that no further action was required.

> **Action: Academic Services to ask the relevant School Academic Response Coordinators to inform their External Examiners that their suggestions had been noted by the Committee which had considered them and agreed that no further action was required.**

The Committee commended the author of the report.

6. **Annual Reports on Academic Appeals, Student Discipline, and Complaint Handling**

The Committee considered the annual reports on Academic Appeals, Student Discipline and Complaint Handling. It noted some early signs of a plateauing in the volume of academic appears, following an upward trend in recent years, and also an increasing number of student conduct cases related to allegations of sexual violence. As a result, a number of significant steps had been taken over the course of 2016/17 including a campaign called "No-one Asks For It" (http://no-oneasksforit.com/), which was jointly conceived and delivered by the University, the Edinburgh University Students' Association and the Edinburgh University Sports Union in early 2016/17. Academic Services continues to work with the Director of Student Wellbeing to ensure that students and staff are supported. Clear guidelines have been developed and published for students who have experienced sexual violence (and wish to understand the options open to them, including reporting the incident to the University or to the Police) and training and guidance for staff has been developed (including Conduct Investigators) to help with these cases.

The Committee welcomed the decision by Accommodation, Catering and Events to discontinue the practice of recording multiple matriculation numbers against single misconduct offences so that fines were no longer shared between groups of students. It was noted that overall breaches had not increase significantly as a result, as the change in approach appeared to have encouraged students to take individual responsibility for offences.

The Committee noted that there were no discernible trends in the complaint handling cases. The Committee discussed the frontline resolution process and the importance of signposting and transparency in order to maintain student confidence in the complaint handling process.

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

The Committee asked for clarification of:
- The percentage of academic appeals in relation to the total student population (for next year's report);
- The status of the read, write, site campaign (for the next meeting); and
- If the student discipline statistics for subcategories with high numbers (6, 9 and 12) be broken down into sub categories (for next year's report).

> **Action: Academic Services to progress the above actions.**

The Committee commended the authors of the reports.

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

The Committee discussed the report from the light touch review of Student Support Service annual reports, including an outline update on progress with recommendations from 2015/16. The Committee noted that all services has considered and responded to the recommendations made in the previous year's report. The Committee agreed that the revised reporting template for 2017-18 should be circulated as soon as possible so that review areas could gather information and evidence as they go.

8. **Student Voice Policy and Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance**

    The Committee approved a new Student Voice Policy which consolidates existing policies and formalises mid-course feedback as a policy requirement for undergraduate courses, subject to one minor change. The Committee also approved the Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) Operational Guidance, created by separating the policy content (moved to the new Student Voice Policy) from the Principles and Operational Notes for Student Staff Liaison Committees. It was noted that the Policy and guidance would be made available on the Academic Services and Student Voice webpages and key stakeholders would be informed via email.

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

    The Committee approved revised versions of the University Remit and Reflective Report template and guidance to ensure compliance with the Scottish Funding Council guidance to higher education institutions on quality from August 2017-2022. It was noted that the Schools/subject areas to be reviewed in 2018/19 and other relevant stakeholders would be advised of the revised remit and reflective report guidance and template. The documents would also be made available on the Academic Services webpage.

10. **Personal Tutor System Oversight Group**

    The Committee received and discussed an update from the PT System Oversight Group in relation to ongoing activities to mainstream the PT system within School QA processes. The Committee noted that the oversight group had agreed actions to examine ways to improve the communication of School Personal Tutoring Statements and to devise an easy reference guide for PTs akin to the 'Here to Help' guide currently available to students.

    For Information and Formal Business

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

    The Committee noted the annual report from the College of Science and Engineering Accreditation Committee for Scotland's Rural College (SRUC).

12. **Enhancement Themes Institutional Plan**

    The Committee noted the University's institutional plan for the Enhancement Theme: Evidence for Enhancement, Improving the Student Experience.

13. **Quality Matrix**

    The Committee noted a matrix of responsibilities across key quality assurance and enhancement processes. It was noted that the document, created by Academic Services, had been well-received by College Quality Officers.

14. **Internal Periodic Review Responses**

The Committee confirmed that it was content with progress in relation to the Taught Programme Reviews for Asian Studies, Design, and Ecological and Environmental Sciences.

15. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

16. Date of Next Meeting:

Thursday 8 February 2018 at 2pm in the Raeburn Room, Old College

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

Electronic Meeting

**Notes of the electronic meeting of Senate Quality Assurance Committee conducted
from Wednesday 20 December 2017 to Friday 12 January 2018**

NOTES

1.   Formal Business

1.1   The electronic meeting was conducted to enable the Committee to approve items which did not
require substantial discussion and provide feedback to schools in a timeous manner.

2.   For Approval

2.1   **Internal Review Reports and Responses**

The Committee received the following Reports and Responses:

- **Teaching Programme Review of Linguistics and English Language 2016-17 - Year on
  response**
- **Postgraduate Programme Review of Chemistry 2017-18 – Final Report**
- **Postgraduate Programme Review of Clinical Sciences 2017-18 – Final Report**
- **Postgraduate Programme Review of Engineering 2017-18 – Final Report**
- **Teaching Programme Review of Social Anthropology 2017-18 – Final Report**

Members noted the following recommendation in the PPR of Chemistry:

- "The Review Team recommends that a wider and group of clearly identifiable Postgraduate
  Advisers be made available to students for pastoral support throughout the academic year and
  that diversity be considered during this process."

It was noted that the last PPR of Business also included a recommendation to establish a position of
Postgraduate Advisor to be a first point of contact for PhD students to discuss any problems they
would not wish to raise with their supervisor. It was suggested that this issue should be explored by
the University.

> **Action: Academic Services to refer comments to the Researcher Experience Committee for
> further consideration.**

Members noted that the reports and responses contained an appropriate balance of commendations
and recommendation which recognise the clear strengths within the respective subject areas whilst
also identifying areas for further development and enhancement with a suggested direction of travel to
facilitate progress. It was also noted that reports helpfully identify recommendations for key
stakeholders at subject, School and College levels and that the commendations and
recommendations appeared to be broad, useful to the subject areas and, importantly, achievable. It
was noted that there may be existing Institute for Academic Development (IAD) training and resources
to support some of the recommendations.

The Committee approved the final reports.

Action: Academic Services to publish the final reports on the Academic Services website.

3.	**For Information**

3.1   Service Excellence Programme

The Committee received and noted a brief update of the work being undertaken by the Student Administration & Support strand of the Service Excellence Programme, as part of a commitment to ensure that the Senate Committees are appraised of progress across each of these projects.

4.	**Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 8 February 2018 at 2pm in the Raeburn Room, Old College

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

8 February 2018

Annual College Quality Reports
2016-2017

Executive Summary
This paper presents the College annual quality reports for 2016-17.

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

Action requested
The Committee is asked to discuss the reports, especially items noted in 'Themes for SQAC forward planning' (section 3).

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

Resource / Risk / Compliance

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

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

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

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open

Key words
College, annual, quality, report

Originators of the paper
Dr Shereen Benjamin, Associate Dean Quality Assurance and Enhancement, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; **Dr Sheila Lodge**, Head of Academic Administration, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine; **Dr Gordon McDougall**, Dean of Quality Assurance, College of Science and Engineering.

College Annual Quality Report

College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Academic Year: 2017-18

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

1. Reflection on progress with actions from the previous year

- **Annual Programme Monitoring:** The College successfully moved to the new University Quality Framework in 2016-17. Programme monitoring was aided by a new School Programme Quality System (SPQS); developed by the College in partnership with IS Applications. SPQS supports Programme Directors and School Directors of Quality in CAHSS in the writing, collating and submission of reports.
- **Curricular Reform:** Programme Pathways Project recommendations were successfully implemented in three Schools - History, Classics and Archaeology (HCA), Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) and the Business School. Further curriculum changes will be rolled out for the 2018/19 session and will be reviewed in due course. The broader goals of the Pathways Project are embedded in the College plan, that of the new Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the work of the Service Excellence Programme.
- **Improving the Student Experience**
  - **Estates and Space:** Limited availability of high quality teaching space and social space remains a major obstacle for all Schools; particularly for those in older parts of the estate and for students with learning adjustments or accessibility needs.
  - **Personal Tutor System:** The Dean of Students is undertaking an assessment of the Personal Tutor System and has arranged a series of meetings with Heads of School, Senior Tutors and Student Support Teams to identify opportunities for enhancement in our College.
  - **Student Support:** The College continues to organise the twice-yearly Student Support Forum, with new information and training events now being organised for support staff around topical themes including support for victims of sexual violence.
  - **Student Experience Forum:** This new College forum aims to bring professional services and academic staff together to share good practice in enhancing the student experience and building academic communities. Working in partnership with the Students' Association, the forum will be used to discuss student survey results (NSS, PTES and PRES), on programme support and programme and course enhancement data.
- **Widening Access:** The College continues to monitor Widening Access with particular attention to SIMD20 entry figures, retention rates and on programme support for progression.
- **Collaboration:** A successful joint meeting between the College Quality Assurance (CQAC) and Postgraduate Studies committees (CPGSC) was held in May 2017 to discuss the timeline for annual quality reporting and training and support for staff in programme design. Collaboration between the Vice-President Education Sabbatical Officer and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies on joint-honours programmes is progressing well and a successful Meet the Deans event was held in March 2017, with another being jointly planned with EUSA for this year.
- **Employability:** A College-wide Employability Workshop was held in February 2017, organised jointly with the Careers Service. The event was attended by staff from all Schools and focused on sharing good practice in employability and community outreach initiatives. The College committees and College Deans are using the findings in forward planning. Schools continue to organise local events in collaboration with their dedicated Careers contact.

- **PG Research Experience:** The Dean of Postgraduate Studies is undertaking a thematic review of Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research. The [PGR Action Plan](#) was completed in 2016-17 and became operational in September 2017. The Dean of Postgraduate Studies is currently leading a short life working group to establish a PGT Action Plan. Both plans will inform College Postgraduate Studies Committee and College planning in the future.

2. Overview of performance data across the college

Undergraduate
- **Degree Classifications (UG):** In comparison to the University average (29.1%), a large increase in the number of first-class degrees awarded is visible in the Business School (21.8% in 2014/15 to 33.3% in 2015/16 – an increase from 39 to 70 students) and Health in Social Science (12.1% in 2014/15 to 44.4% in 2015/16 – an increase from 4 to 12 students). The figures also suggest that LLC, Law, and parts of ECA are awarding a relatively high percentage of firsts in comparison to Russell Group competitors. This is in contrast to Education, which awarded only 24 first-class degrees in a cohort of 268 students (9%) in comparison to the 20% Russell Group average. The College will continue to monitor these trends.
- **Course results:** The overall undergraduate (UG) fail rate has risen from a College average of 1.8% in 2015/16 to 2.1% for 2016/17, with slight increases visible at both pre-honours (+0.4% to 2.5%) and honours (0.9% +1.6%) levels. UG fail rates have increased slightly in most Schools, with Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences (3.5%), Moray House School of Education (3.3%), Law (3.1%) and Literatures, Languages and Cultures (2.2%) all above the College average. In Divinity, fail rates have risen slightly from 3.5% to 4.1% (6.4% at pre-honours) and will require ongoing monitoring by the School. Fail rates in Economics decreased from 2.8% to 2.1% bringing it back into line with the College average.
- **Withdrawal rates:** For the 2013/14 entry cohort, full-time UG student withdrawals increased from 5% to 8%. An increase of between 1-3% is recorded in most Schools, except for Economics (-2% to 3%), PPLS (remained at 7%) and Health in Social Science (0%). Increases in withdrawal percentages were found in Education (+5% to 10% - 17 to 33 students), HCA (+5% to 11% - 21 to 37 students), and Law (+12% to 17% - 11 to 34 students). UG withdrawals in Divinity also rose to 16%, but this amounts to an increase from 3 to 10 students. For part-time students, withdrawals have reduced from 13% to 5% overall.

Postgraduate Taught
- **Postgraduate degree classifications:** The percentage of students achieving MSc awards at pass, merit and distinction has remained level this year at 22%, 57% and 21% respectively. There is a general movement towards a lower number of pass awards, with merit and distinction used more frequently. The number of MSc students awarded a distinction continues to rise in the Business School and is now up 4% to 24% for the 2016/17 cohort (a total of 123 students from an overall cohort of 523).
- **Postgraduate fail rates:** The overall average fail rate for postgraduate taught courses has risen slightly to 1.35% (a 0.3% increase from 2015/16), but remains low. Instances of postgraduate course fails have increased year-on-year in the Business School, ECA, HCA, and in Law. Although the fail rate percentage in Economics has dropped from 5.8% in 2015/16 to 5.7% in 2016/17, this represents a real increase from 40 to 67 fail instances.

Postgraduate Research
- **PhD Submissions:** Available data suggests that 33% of the September 2013/14 entry cohort of full-time PhD students were yet to submit by the end of their 4th year. This remains broadly consistent with the 31.5% recorded for the 2012/13 entry cohort. It is not clear if these figures take into account entrants beginning later in the academic year, but the College Postgraduate Studies Committee (CPGSC) will continue to work with individual Schools to monitor this.

- **PhD Withdrawals**: The number of full- and part-time student withdrawals, by entry cohort, has declined year-on-year since 2013/14. Many withdrawals continue to cite personal or financial reasons for their decision, but specific reasons cannot be ascertained from this data. The Research Experience Committee is exploring this further.
- **MScR Awards:** There is a marked increase in the number of MScR students gaining distinction. Since 2015/16 the percentage of students exiting with distinction has risen by 10% year-on year. In 2016/17, 7% of students were awarded with a pass and 47% with a distinction. It is possible that a recent change in regulations may account for this increase, but the College will continue to monitor this trend using the data available.

Student Satisfaction – Surveys

- **National Student Survey (NSS):** In 2017, overall satisfaction rose from 81% to 85%. Progress can be seen in 'course specific resources' (+8% to 86%) with smaller improvements visible in the Teaching (+1%) and Academic Support (+2%) categories. Assessment and Feedback scored poorly in 2016 with mixed results for 2017. 'Clear marking criteria' dropped by 8% to 62%, however 'feedback timely' and 'received helpful comments' scored 63% (+9%) and 65% (+7%) respectively showing marked improvements. Reductions in scores for Teaching 'challenged me' (-7% to 78%) and IT Resources (-6% to 83%). 'Clear marking criteria' needs significant work, with the following Schools showing large percentage reductions: Economics (-20%), Law (-18%), Health (-16%) and Business (-11%). HCA and Economics also saw large decreases in course organisation and management with free text comments citing poor communication about course changes.
- **Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES):** Overall satisfaction dropped by 1% from 83% to 82%. The largest percentage drop occurred for the Personal Tutor question, which saw a 6% decrease to 72% satisfaction. The largest overall percentage drop by school was for PPLS, which decreased by 10% to 79% satisfaction.
- **Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES):** The College reached 81% satisfaction for 2017, which is in line with the University average. The largest decrease in overall satisfaction was recorded in Divinity (-6% to 87%), but this is still above the College average.

External Examiner Themes

- **Undergraduate**: The College received a high number of commendations from our external examiners. Issues and suggestions that were raised centred on the timing of boards and the timely provision of information about the date boards would be held, supporting documentation and assessed work examples. External examiners also raised concerns about access to the Turnitin system, which some found difficult to navigate.
- **Postgraduate**: At Postgraduate level, external examiners commended the schools for the smooth running of the assessment process and the timely provision of documentation and other information. Issues with access to Turnitin and EASE were noted and one specific issue about guidance and policy on borderline marks will be further investigated by the College.

3.	Themes for SQAC forward planning

- **Estates and Space:** All schools raised concerns about the lack of high quality teaching space and social space for students and staff. Specific concerns have been raised about the impact this has on students with learning adjustments and accessibility requirements, particularly for students in Schools based in older parts of our estate.
- **Quality Assurance Data:** Feedback on the accessibility of the Data Dashboards is very positive, although some schools have noted discrepancies between centrally held and local data in our systems (EUCLID, Dashboards and BI Suite). Further data support, training and guidance for Schools would help them to monitor trends effectively and fully engage with the new enhancement theme – Evidence for Enhancement.

- **Extended Common Marking Scheme:** Individual Schools and External Examiners requested greater clarity and guidance on definitions within the Extended Common Marking Scheme. The College will continue to work with the central University to identify opportunities for enhancement and the sharing of good practice.
- **EvaSys and Course Enhancement:** Further information about the timeline for distribution of Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQs) and guidance about how to use the results with staff and students would enhance course evaluation. Some schools also requested that the emphasis of CEQ staff questions is placed on innovation in and enhancement of teaching from course teams rather than the performance of individual staff.
- **Bespoke essays:** Further guidance and a possible update in policy has been requested on how to tackle the problem of essay mills and contract cheating. Technological solutions to help identify contract cheating are also welcomed.

4. College action plan

- **Annual Quality Monitoring:** The Associate Dean (Quality Assurance and Enhancement) will continue to work with the College Quality Assurance Committee to ensure the Quality timeline is working well for all Schools. SPQS will be reviewed over the coming months in partnership with Information Services.
- **Course results and withdrawals:** The increase in withdrawal rates will require further investigation. In smaller Schools, the percentage figures often reflect small increases in numerical terms. The College will continue to monitor any trends in course results and withdrawal rates that deviate substantially from the College average.
- **Student Support:** The Dean of Students is currently undertaking a review of the Personal Tutor System and pastoral support arrangements in the Schools. The College has introduced new initiatives to the supplement the successful Student Support Forum and continues to work with the central University to enhance support for students more generally.
- **Joint Degree Programmes:** The Dean of Undergraduate Studies is assessing the operation of our joint honours programmes and continues to build on the work of the Pathways Project.
- **Student Experience Forum:** The College plans to establish a new Student Experience Forum (see section 1) for sharing good practise on CEQ and survey data. This will help to identify common themes and promote the sharing of good practise among professional services staff, academic staff and students.
- **Widening Access:** The College will continue to monitor and enhance widening participation and access, including analysis of statistical data especially in relation to entrance and progression of SIMD 20 students, promoting diversity in the curriculum, and promoting inter-connected curricula. Further reliable data will help to inform forward planning at College level.
- **Extended Common Marking Scheme:** The College's NSS results and External Examiner comments suggest that our marking scheme requires further consideration. The College will liaise with the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) to identify opportunities for training and sharing of good practice across Schools.
- **Online Assessment and Feedback:** The Associate Dean (Quality Assurance and Enhancement) will continue to review the impact of electronic submission to ensure it does not have a detrimental effect on student interaction with professional staff or on the quality of feedback.

January 2018

College Annual Quality Report

College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

Academic Year 2016-17
(Report submitted January 2018)

1.	Reflection on progress with actions from the previous year

- New post of College Quality Officer proposed, and approved 16.1.17, for a 2-year fixed-term contract.
Victoria Bennett was appointed in June 2017, and has already made a substantial contribution to many aspects of QA and QE work.

- The College will continue to encourage sharing of good practice through its annual Good Practice Conference, extending this from PGT to include UG programmes in 2017-18, and through the continuing work of the PG Administrators' and PGT Programme Directors' monthly fora.
The 2017 Good Practise Showcase event was held on 23rd May 2017, featuring nine presentations ranging from effective conversion activities to enhancing dissertation supervision. It was attended by 40 colleagues from across the College (up from 27 in 2016). The 2018 Showcase is scheduled for 6th March.
The Graduate School Fora continue to meet monthly, and are extremely useful for bringing shared issues to the surface for resolution and sharing good practise.

- Initiatives to develop and enhance the sense of belonging to a community will be actively fostered by the College, especially for UG students in the Edinburgh Medical School.
For MBChB students, in the last year the Medical Teaching Organisation (MTO) has organised year-specific events to bring together staff and students. The feedback has been very positive and we plan to continue organising gatherings to help develop our sense of community.
There is still a barrier to staff/student interaction on a more informal basis. Recent moves such as the MTO social media campaign 'Who's who?' and the Dr Pechey facebook page are steps in the right direction but making the teaching and support staff more accessible is a high priority that still needs to be addressed.
Work to enhance the sense of community continues with great success in the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (R(D)SVS) and the Deanery of Biomedical Sciences (BMS).

- University timetabling system to be introduced in the R(D)SVS from 2017-18, and scoping work for using the system for the MBChB to be carried forward.
R(D)SVS is now included in central timetabling, and a project to scope the best ways of moving the MBChB into the system is due to report in January 2018, with implementation for 2019-20.

- The College will oversee the development of better communication with NHS staff who are involved in delivery of our UG and PGT programmes eg developing better relationships with module co-ordinators and leaders, providing better guidance on timely marking and feedback, ensuring information about postponed classes is transmitted timeously.
The Medical School is working with the NHS Directorates on resource allocation and accountability of teaching and administration. We have improved our ability to understand resource allocation; however, there is still progress to be made on the allocation of teaching time within NHS job plans particularly when appointing Module Organisers, administrative support and addressing staff shortages.
Initiatives driven by the University to increase engagement of staff include high-level professionalism, promotion criteria and workload allocation models for academic staff. This has been highlighted by presentations to academic and NHS staff at "town hall" meetings and Grand Rounds. CMVM has improved data on clinical academics from the NHS Lothian eJob planning system. Despite the improvements, there remains work to be done to ensure that adequate consultant and academic time is prioritised and allocated to undergraduate teaching.

- Further work to be done on PGT marketing, fees and admissions to improve conversion from 'unconditional firm' offer holders to fully matriculated students; proposals to be taken to Fee Strategy Group in 2016-17.
  Unfortunately, our proposals on monthly payment by direct debit, fixed fees from the point of joining a programme and reduced fees for students from low-income countries were rejected by FSG.
  In terms of marketing, we:
  - produced research into conversion patterns in terms of geodemographic variables;
  - delivered advertising campaigns that focused on segments with high conversion potential;
  - delivered a small-scale campaign to target current UG students;
  - delivered a year-long programme of email communications with applicants and offer holders;
  - managed social media presence in Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Facebook;
  - participated in a University-wide pilot to coordinate conversion communications sent to applicants and offer holders.

- PGT programmes with bespoke VLEs now in actively managed transition to LEARN: to be completed for 2017-18; and PGT programmes to be delivered in line with University calendar from 2017-18.
  VLE migration has been completed for Clinical Sciences, Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry and MBChB. The effect of this is significant both financially and in terms of the student experience: for example, after many years of negative feedback the Medical School has moved from EEMeC to LEARN. This has addressed the need of consistency between the different modules on the programme and finding the content/information that students required, so improving the student experience.
  Work is ongoing for the three remaining programmes: MSc Surgical Sciences, ChMs and Ophthalmology (MSc and ChM,) with the aim of having all bespoke VLEs migrated to LEARN by September 2018.

- A decision on fees for OLDL PhDs is eagerly awaited to let our two pilot programmes begin.
  Our proposed fee was approved by Fee Strategy Group at its meeting on 18th October 2017, and the pilot programmes in R(D)SVS and Clinical Education aim to admit their first students in September 2018.

- At its meeting on 9 February 2017, SQAC asked that the College report here on progress of work to develop better communication with NHS staff who are involved in the delivery of UG and PGT programmes.
  This is a difficult area, but we continue to make progress in a number of fronts, such as the MBChB as above. Another example would be the MSc Clinical Education, whose Director notes:
  We have several NHS staff contribute to the running of the programme (e.g. delivering sessions/ supervision). We are currently in discussion with Med Ed Directorate in NHS Lothian to develop a new course: they will provide the clinical expertise we will provide the pedagogy. We mentor staff new to teaching and supervision as required, and provide support in developing online resources. Finally, we have local clinicians involved in our steering group to ensure the currency of our programme.

2.	Overview of performance data across the college

- In 2016-17, we received 6500 applications for admission to Undergraduate programmes in 2017-18. This was a marginal increase of 23 over the previous year but a welcome reversal of the small downward trend seen for 2016 entry.

- Applications for entry to our postgraduate taught (PGT) programmes grew from 3668 for 2016 entry to 5775 for 2017 entry. Unfortunately, this resulted in only a small increase of 106 in the number admitted (1241 compared to 1135 in 2016), since most applicants failed to secure funding.

- Course results in MVM show a marginally higher proportion of grades A2, A3 and B are awarded than the University (UoE) average (A2: 6.2% in MVM, 5.5% in UoE; A3: 26.4% in MVM, 19.4% in UoE; B: 43.7% in MVM, 39.7% in UoE), with fewer grades C, D and F being given in MVM than elsewhere. This is consistent with the grade profiles noted last year.

- 86.5% of students on our 4-year programmes successfully completed 2016-17, up from 83% in 2015-16 and returning to a more typical level for the College. (In 2014-15, this figure was 86.9 %.)

- 51.8% of students on our 5-year programmes completed successfully in 2017, with 42.7% continuing study due to the intercalated year (which is replaced in MBChB from the 2016-17 intake with a mandatory BSc year): this accounts for 94.5% of the year cohort, compared to 78.8% for the University overall.

- National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction scores were:
  - Deanery of Biomedical Sciences (BMS)
    BMS scored 81% in Overall Satisfaction, a reduction of 3% since 2016. This is -2% compared to the UoE average of 83%. Scores in primary themes that permit comparison with previous years have all reduced. Assessment and Feedback, Learning Resources have reduced slightly (-2% and -1% respectively), Teaching on my Course and Organisation and Management have reduced moderately (-5% and -4% respectively) and there has been a significant reduction in satisfaction with Academic Support (-13%). While scores have reduced across the previous five years in the category Organisation and Management, the Deanery compares well overall with UoE (+3%) in this theme. While scores in Assessment and Feedback are only slightly reduced in comparison with 2016, the score of 52% is low in this category and -11% compared to the average UoE score.

    No year-by-year comparison data is available for the themes Learning Opportunities, Learning Community, Student Voice, Student's Union and Personal Tutor and scores are presented against the University average scores below:

Primary Theme	UoE	DBMS
Learning Opportunities	78%	76%
Learning Community	74%	77%
Student Voice	61%	60%
Student's Union	30%	43%
Personal Tutor	68%	72%

    The Deanery scores slightly lower than the wider University in Learning Opportunities (-2%) and the Student Voice (-1%) but performs well in comparison with Learning Community (+3%), the Student's Union (+13%) and satisfaction with Personal Tutors (+4%).
    BMS achieved a response rate of 71% (144 responses out of a total population of 202)

  - Edinburgh Medical School (EMS, comprising MBChB and Oral Health Sciences (OHS))
    The EMS score for Overall Satisfaction has improved by 5% since 2016 and matches the (UoE) score of 83%. Scores for Teaching on my Course (+5%), Assessment and Feedback (+12%), Academic Support (+7%) and Organisation and Management (+8%) all made improvements on 2016 scores. Teaching on my Couse and Academic Support compare favourably against UoE scores (+6% and +1% respectively) but Assessment and Feedback and Organisation and Management are low compared with UoE scores (-6% and -18% respectively). Satisfaction with Learning Resources is down by 2%. It will be interesting to observe any change to this score in the 2018 NSS subsequent to the move to the LEARN Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) being rolled out in 2017/18.
    Scores are presented against the University average below:

Primary Theme	UoE	EMS
Learning Opportunities	78%	89%
Learning Community	74%	84%
Student Voice	61%	62%
Student's Union	30%	24%
Personal Tutor	68%	66%

EMS performs well against UoE scores in Learning Opportunities (+11) and Learning Community (+10%). The score for satisfaction with the Student union is low at 24% for EMS and 30% for UoE. An institutional priority was to achieve a benchmark of 80% satisfaction with Personal Tutors. EMS scored 66%, which is -2% compared with the University average score. EMS achieved a 66% response rate in 2017 with 144 responses out of a population of 217.

In comparison to the sector, the overall satisfaction score of 83% for MBChB is 10.9% lower than that for the UK upper quartile (94%) an 10.7% lower than that for the Russell Group upper quartile (also 94%).

○ R(D)SVS
The R(D)SVS score for Overall Satisfaction is slightly lower than in 2016 (-3%) but at 93% remains high compared with the overall UoE score of 83% (+10). Student satisfaction with teaching remains high at 95% and improvements have been made in scores related to the themes Academic Support (+3%), and Organisation and Management (+10%). Of particular note, Assessment and Feedback has improved by 20% compared to 2016 and is 15% higher than the UoE score of 63%.
The Scores for the theme Learning Resources has gone down by 2% compared with 2016 with a general downward trajectory across the past five years. It should be noted that the score of 84% is slightly lower than the average UoE score (86%).
Scores are presented against the UoE average scores below:

Primary Theme	UoE	R(D)SVS
Learning Opportunities	78%	88%
Learning Community	74%	89%
Student Voice	61%	77%
Student's Union	30%	29%
Personal Tutor	68%	80%

The School performs well against University scores with the exception of the Student's Union which scores slightly less (-1%). Satisfaction with Personal Tutor achieves the institutional priority benchmark of 80%. Learning Opportunities and Learning Community perform particularly well in comparison with the University +10% and +15 respectively.
R(D)SVS achieved a response rate of 87% (126 responses out of a population of 145).
In comparison to the sector, the overall satisfaction score of 93% is 1.8% lower than that for the UK upper quartile (95%) and 0.5% lower than that for the Russell Group upper quartile (93%).
Scores for the 4 and 5 year programmes are slightly different:

Category	5 year programme	4 year programme
Overall satisfaction	95	88
The teaching on my course	96	91

Learning opportunities	90	81	
Assessment and feedback	80	74	
Academic support	86	82	
Organisation and management	76	76	
Learning resources	83	88	
Learning community	92	79	
Student voice	77	75	
Student's union	32	20	
Personal Tutor	77	87	

- Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey overall satisfaction for the College remained stable at 89% (down 1% from 90% in 2016), 6% higher than the University average.
  - BMS 94% (+7%)
  - Deanery of Clinical Sciences (CS) 89% (-4%)
  - EMS 92% (-3%)
  - Deanery of Molecular, Genetic & Population Health Sciences (MolGenPop) 82% (-8%)
  - R(D)SVS 89% (-1%)

- PGR completion data continues to be monitored across the College. For example:
  - The Deanery of Clinical Sciences had 58 new full-time PhD students (46 female and 27 male), 11 new part-time PhD students and 4 new MSc by Research or MPhil students. Note that the gender breakdown is no longer available for full and part-time; only an overall count is provided, but the figures for full-time students this year are a close match to those for 2015-16 (47 female and 26 male).
  - Of 2013/14 entrants who were due to complete in 2016-17, 39/53 full-time PhD students submitted their thesis for examination in 2016/17. One student withdrew and the rest are continuing.
  - The average number of months taken to submit was 43, which is down from 49 last year. However, the report calculates the "average months to submit" and includes months of Interruption of Studies.
  - Completion data for part-time students is not easily accessible. This may be as the BI/MI suite report has changed slightly in recent years.

- Course Enhancement Questionnaires
  The first CEQ report showed the College performance was overall broadly in keeping with that of the University in terms of the core questions:

Question	University (+ve)	College (+ve)
Q1 The course was well organised	81%	77%
Q2 The learning aims of the course were clear	77%	74%
Q3 Feedback so far has been helpful and informative	73%	70%
Q4 This course has been intellectually challenging	84%	84%
Q5 The course has developed my skills and abilities	80%	83%
Q6 Overall I am satisfied with the quality of the course	77%	78%

On the staff questions, College performance was almost identical to that of the University overall:

Question	University (+ve)	College (+ve)
Q1 was organised and well prepared	89%	89%
Q2 was good at explaining the subject	85%	85%
Q3 was approachable and willing to help	88%	87%
Q4 stimulated my interest in the subject	80%	80%

There were no significant variations in performance across the Schools and Deaneries in the CEQ results.

3. Themes for SQAC forward planning

- CEQ results are encouraging, however some poor response rates indicate that there needs to be a better way of delivering the surveys and communicating reminders to students. The language and tone of reminder emails should make it clear which surveys need a response.
- The External Examiners Reporting System is still problematic. In particular, the form needs to accommodate better Examiners who report on many courses.
- Room booking continues to generate problems: rooms can be inappropriate, and students respond badly when class locations chop and change throughout semester. Noise caused by redevelopment work has been a major issue.
- Lack of space for staff to meet privately with students. This can cause some staff to use 'free' teaching rooms when faced with a distressed student.
- Staff report dealing with increasing numbers of student welfare issues. Such work can be emotionally demanding yet minimal support provision is given to such staff.
- The timing of School / Deanery QAE report is problematic. It has been very difficult to convene meetings due to annual leave (and students are not available). It has been difficult getting data from the public systems (data dashboard). Resit results are not available, and PGR and PGT reviews have not been completed. Mid October would be better, and as long as both College and SQAC can provide feedback by the end of semester 1, there would be ample time for planning.
- Annual review identified issues with some University regulations within ODL programmes. An exemplar is the rigidity of Course-work Extensions and Special Circumstance regulations. These do not currently recognise the demands faced by changing workloads of full-time health professionals working at distance.
- Fees and External Competition: Several PGT programmes noted the recent development of competitor programmes from both leading UK and international universities and commercial providers. Their fees are lower than UoE, representing significant risk to future sustainability. Creating more scholarships should be prioritised, particularly to enhance recruitment in key markets/emerging economies.
- Review the question bank for CEQs to allow for greater flexibility reflecting the requirements of specific courses. Review consistency and timeliness of release to students and return to Course Organiser.
- The poor mobile signal coverage at Eater Bush continues to have a negative impact on the student experience, and we would welcome help at University level in addressing this.
- PGR: Amendments to EUCLID to allow admin staff to upload reports would be very helpful and speed up the online reporting system.
- Consider resources required for provision of transcripts of ODL sessions – staff/time/budget.
- The University should consider document management as part of the service excellence programme.

4. College action plan

- MBChB: Further activities will be undertaken to make teaching and admin staff more accessible to students, and we will continue to work towards improving communications with NHS staff.
- The Edinburgh Medical School is piloting an Academic Workload Allocation Model in BMS in 2017-18, with a view to rolling it out in the other Deaneries for 2018-19.
- Work will continue to improve NSS scores in all areas of the College, and in particular will focus on the development of a sense of community. Plans for a new Medical School building are particularly important in this regard.
- The College will seek to institute a single Concessions Committee and will engage with the Service Excellence Programme, especially in the areas of extensions, special circumstances and studying away, in the first instance.
- New opportunities for disseminating best practice will continue to be sought.

January 2018

College Annual Quality Report
College of Science and Engineering
Academic Year 2016/17

1.	Reflection on progress with actions from the previous year

Teaching Estate and Teaching Offices

- The College has continued to focus on Teaching as part of the 2017 planning round.
- A great deal of work is taking place to ensure the re-development of Murchison House, which should create additional teaching space and study areas. This will allow opportunities to enhance the delivery of teaching across the College and significantly improve the Student Experience.
- The KB Nucleus is also advancing well and the 'feasibility study' has presented a range of exciting possibilities including flexible teaching spaces to accommodate new and future pedagogical changes in teaching.

Student Representation

- The College has worked closely with EUSA to improve representation on College Committees.
- As well as the new Vice-President of Education being a member on a significant number of committees, student representation from across the Schools has been identified and priority given to essential College Committees.

Library Resources

- The College organised the 'Student Access to Study Resources' workshop, held in February 2017 to help identify the different ways students use resources across the varying disciplines.
- Roll out of Resource List service.
- Creation of a brochure containing CSE collections specific to each School is being produced to further engage Schools and create greater exposure.

Support for development of SharePoint

- The system used in The School of Engineering for draft examination papers has been presented across the College and wider University.
- Schools are being encouraged to use this system, or similar.

2.	Overview of performance data across the college

Taught Provision

Withdrawals

Undergraduate

- Undergraduate Programme withdrawal rates have remained fairly consistent over the last 4 years at approximately 9%. For 2013/14 that figure was 9.7%. The majority of Schools saw a decrease in withdrawal rates from 2012/13 with the School of Biological Sciences showing the most substantial decrease going from 11% to 8% for 2013/14.

Postgraduate Taught

- PGT Programme withdrawal rates, similarly to Undergraduate, have remained fairly constant, +/- 0.5% over the last 4 years. The majority of Schools saw some small movement in both directions with the School of Chemistry an exception with a 7.5% increase. The School of Geosciences had no withdrawals during session 2016/17.

Degree Classification

Undergraduate

- The percentage of First Class degrees awarded across all Undergraduate programmes remains steady at 27%. A greater number of female students are now being awarded the top classification; 14% Female, 13% Male
- In the majority of Schools, there has been minimal movement in the % of firsts awarded from 2012/13, +/-5%. However the School of Informatics has shown a significant drop from 41% (2012/13) to 29% (2013/14). Both the School of Chemistry and Mathematics contribute significantly to the overall % of First Class degree's with 44% of Exit Awards in the School of Chemistry being First Class, and the School of Mathematics with a figure of 39%.
- The percentage of all Female students achieving a First Class degree has risen to 28% for 2013/14 entry, a gradual increase of 5% since 2009/10.
- The percentage share of First Class degrees awarded to BAME students has increased from 15% (2009/10) to 34% (2013/14). This coincides with an increase in the overall % of exit awards for BAME students, rising from 17% (2009/10) to 33% (2013/14).
- 28% of BAME students achieved a First Award compared to 27% of White students.
- In the majority of Schools there has been a significant increase in % of first degree's awarded to BAME students since 2009/10. For example the School of Chemistry awarded 13% of BAME students with a First Class degree (2009/10), compared to 50% (2013/14) an increase of 37%. The School of Biology awarded 9% (2009/10) followed by 18% (2013/14) and the School of Informatics awarded 8% (2009/10) followed by 18% (2013/14).

Widening Participation (WP)

- Applications have decreased by 1.84%. This is in line with the University as a whole, experiencing a 1.75% drop in applications.
- The percentage of withdrawals that were WP decreased from 25% to 18%. Conversely there was an increase in the number of premature exit awards, rising from 9% to 13%. Between 2010 and 2013 there was an overall increase in the percentage of withdrawals rising from 13% (2010/11) to 18% (2013/14). The percentage of premature exit awards has decreased from 16% (2010/11) to 13% (2013/14). It should be noted that the number of WP students has more than doubled since 2010 with 267 enrolled in 2013/14 compared to 119 in 2010/11.

External Examiner Comment Themes

- The majority of External Examiners comments are 'Commendations' with the greatest proportion being for 'Assessment Process'.
- The 'Issues' accounted for only 6% of the overall number of comments and again 'Assessment Process' was the most noted theme. However, no issues were escalated to College. College are satisfied with the School responses.

Student Satisfaction

Undergraduate – NSS

- The Overall satisfaction score has risen to 82% from 78% in 2016. The College percentage is in line with the University +/- 1%. The School of Chemistry achieves 88% in Overall Satisfaction with the School of Biological Sciences, Geosciences and Mathematics all equalling or exceeding the University average.
- Personal Tutor satisfaction was noted as 78%, 10% above the UoE average and 2% below the 80% benchmark. The School of Chemistry shows particular success in this area with 93%.

Undergraduate – Course Enhancement Questionnaire (CEQ)

The response rate for the CEQ was generally very low across both the University (37%) and the College (32%). Within the College, the School of Mathematics had the largest response rate of 48%. The results therefore represent a minority view point which should be taken into consideration when analysing the data.

- Overall the College is very much in line with University averages.
- The School of Mathematics is the top performing School doing particularly well for; *My course is well organised, 88%.*
- The School of Biological Sciences does equally well for; *The course has been intellectually challenging, 88%.*

Postgraduate – PTES

- Overall satisfaction is down 1% to 81%, following a similar trend across the University, down 1% to 83%. The School of Chemistry has 100% for Overall Satisfaction with the School of Mathematics achieving 90%.
- Personal Tutor satisfaction has decreased by 4% to 76% again following a similar trend across the University, down 5% to 74%. The School of Chemistry achieved 92% and the School of Mathematics 85%.

Postgraduate - Course Enhancement Questionnaire (CEQ)

The response rate for the CEQ was similar across the University (47%) and College (42%). Within the College, the School Of Engineering had the largest response rate with 62%. The School of Informatics and The School of Physics and Astronomy had particularly low response rates in comparison to the College average, 15% and 28% respectively.

- The College average is very much in-line with the overall University average.
- The School of Engineering is the top performing School doing particularly well for; *The course has been intellectually stimulating, 91%*
- The School of Chemistry stands out for; *The course has developed my skills and abilities, 95%*

Research Provision

Withdrawals

- The number of PGR withdrawals has dropped for the second consecutive year down to 24 for 2013/14 entry from 47 in 2011/12. A significant contribution to this is the drop in withdrawals from the School of Chemistry, down from 15 to 4 from 2011 to 2013, and the School of Geosciences, down from 12 to 2 for the same period. Both Schools have implemented a range of support mechanisms and changes that may have contributed to the drop in withdrawals. For example, the School of Geosciences have implemented changes to the Tutoring and Demonstrator processes, proving very popular with students. The School of Chemistry have improved the responsiveness and individual support available from the Graduate School during times of stress and created a very positive atmosphere in the School.
- As percentage figures, 7% of the 2013/14 entry population withdrew compared to 11% of the 2012/13 population and 15% of the 2011/12 population.

Completion

- The average submission in 3+1 models for 2013/14 was 43 months down from 45 months the previous year.

- The 4 year degree models has an average submission of 47 months down from 48 months.

Annual Progression Review

- 61% of Annual progression reviews have been completed for 2016/17 compared to 82% for the same period in 2015/16. The School of Informatics has the highest completion rate at 82% and the School of Engineering has the lowest (41%).
- The School of Physics and Astronomy has the lowest figure for Stage 1 – Student (0%) and the School of Engineering has the highest at 27%.

External Examiner Comment Themes

- Similar to Taught provision, the greater majority of External Examiner comments are 'Commendations' with the greatest proportion being for 'Provision of Information'.
- 'Issues' account for only 9% of the overall number of comments with 'Assessment Process' noted as the most common theme, this reflects only 2 out of the 5 comments made.

Student Satisfaction

Postgraduate Research Experience Survey

- The Overall student satisfaction score has remained steady since the last survey at 80%, 1% below the University average. The School of Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Geosciences, Mathematics and Physics all achieve greater or equal to the University average.
- Teaching Experience has risen from 57% to 61% (+4%) with The School of Mathematics achieving 80%
- Library has risen from 79% to 83% (+4%)
- Research Skills has increased by 2% from 83% to 85% with The School of Chemistry and Mathematics both achieving 89%.
- Research Culture has decreased from 72% to 69% (-3%)

3.	Themes for SQAC forward planning

Estates

- Issues remain around the quality and availability of teaching spaces.
- The lack of time in quality spaces is preventing further development of innovative learning and teaching strategies.
- Providing student social space remains challenging and continues to impact the Student Experience. This is clearly reflected in all Student Surveys.

Systems and Data

- The Student Data Dashboard has been widely received as positive, supporting monitoring and review processes.
- Additional support for staff would be beneficial as would greater familiarity amongst a wider group of staff.
- The availability of PGT has been a further development, however PGR data is now essential for effective analysis and QA purposes.
- The Annual Review System continues to have minor glitches that are preventing Schools truly benefiting from its implementation. For example, access for Administrators would greatly improve the efficiency of the system.

- Although the data gathered in the Course Evaluation Questionnaire has value, the response rate does not instil confidence in the accuracy of the results. Many Schools are finding greater response rates, and therefore benefit, in mid-semester feedback.

Recruitment and Admissions

- There is concern that there is disconnect between the growth in student numbers and Schools ability to support this. Since 2013/14 there has been a 19% increase in Undergraduate student numbers in CSE. The School of Informatics in particular has under gone a colossal increase of 81% rising from 150 students in 2013/14 to 271 in 2017/18. The percentage of EU enrolments has also risen, since 2013, by 14%. Again, the School of Informatics has contributed most to this with a 71% increase. With on-going negotiations still taking place over the UKs exit from the EU the risk to this area of recruitment remains of great concern.
- As numbers grow some Schools are finding it challenging to find suitable tutors and supervisors for projects. This has led to a greater number of Peer Learning Groups being created to fill the gap; a solution which is not suitable as a long term strategy.
- Student Support is fundamental to Student Satisfaction and, as numbers grow, greater consideration needs to be given to how this is managed and how Schools are supported.

4. College action plan

Curriculum Approval Review and Enhancement

- Curriculum Approval will be a significant area of development and progress for the College during session 2017/18.
- As part of ensuring thorough quality processes the College Curriculum Approval Board has been established to consider Programme Approval.
- The board will bring consistency to new programme consideration across both research and taught provision and will ensure due consideration is given to all aspects of our growing collaborative programmes and research with integrated study.
- The College will develop guidance and documentation to support both the Board in its duties and Staff proposing new programmes or major changes to current programmes.

Student Experience and Engagement

- The College has stated in its plans for 2017/18 that it will undertake a Student Experience Project with the aim of establishing both long and short-term solutions to areas that may negatively affect the student experience.
- The first task of establishing a Student Experience Task Group has been completed. Work will now continue on analysis of current themes and recommendations will be made to the Task Group.
- As part of the wider University Strategy of improving Student Representation the College has been working with EUSA to improve Student involvement in all committees and this will continue through 2017/18.

Data Analytics

- Further development will continue with Student Systems to ensure the data returns provided by central Analytics software can provide the quantitative and qualitative information required for monitoring and review of progress, enhancing the student experience and fulfilling the current QAA Enhancement theme.

Technology Enhanced Learning

- The College will hold further Technology Enhanced Leaning Forums throughout 2017/18 after successfully piloting two towards the end of 2016/17 session.
- These were conceived in response to a growing awareness that Schools were developing learning and teaching software solutions and enhancements in isolation.
- College will continue to provide a platform to showcase these developments and establish whether there may be merit in developing for use across the College. To this end, the forums will be aimed at academic, teaching organisation and IS staff.

Flexible Learning

- Increase in distance learning programmes.
- Lecture capture media has been installed within most College theatre teaching spaces and further work is planned throughout 2017/18.

Best Practice

- Best practice is identified and discussed at varying committees across the College.
- There is potential to provide a platform for this to be shared more widely across the College. The College will investigate a range of options, including an annual Best Practice event and the use of SharePoint to disseminate information.

Industrial Partnerships

- The College intends to continue growing links with industry and foster relations with industrial partners through postgraduate placements and CDTs.
- This will improve graduate prospects and complement the University's aim to promote our collaborative opportunities.

January 2018

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

8 February 2018

Enhancement-led Institutional Review
Theme Lead Reports

Executive Summary
The paper presents reports from the theme leads responsible for taking forward the areas for development from the University's Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) in 2015/16.

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

Action requested
For discussion. The Committee is also asked to agree to reduce the theme update reporting frequency to annually to recognise the fact that activities are being progressed and reported on through other mechanisms such as the Learning and Teaching Strategy and Student Partnership Agreement implementation plans.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
Theme leads will implement and communicate actions within their area.

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

Key words
Enhancement

Originator of the paper
Vice Principal Jane Norman, Assistant Principal Susan Rhind, Assistant Principal Alan Murray, Assistant Principal Jeremy Bradshaw, Megan Brown, Lisa Dawson

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) Theme Lead Report

Theme: Assessment and Feedback

Theme lead: Professor Susan Rhind

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

Progress since September 2017

Further Analysis of NSS Free Text Answers at School Level
Student Systems and Administration commissioned an external company to perform analysis on the qualitative data gathered by the 2017 National Student Survey (NSS). The Student Surveys Unit used this analysis to produce School specific reports. These were made available to School management teams via a SharePoint site in early September 2017. The reports highlighted areas students who responded to the NSS in 2017 had placed particular emphasis on, providing clarity to Schools about the issues that required focus for students coming into their final year in the 2017/18 academic year. These data together with the previous year's more detailed analysis and course enhancement questionnaire (CEQ) data are helpful in informing action plans and individual meetings being held between the Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback and Schools.

Working with Students in the Schools Concerned to Address Matters Raised
This continues to be undertaken at School-level, using both local information and information provided through University-level initiatives. Mid-course feedback (which has been extended to non-honours courses from 2017/18) and CEQs allow Schools to work with students to address matters in a timely manner.

The Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback wrote to Schools/Deaneries asking for them to report back on planned actions in relation to assessment and feedback from NSS data (including free text comments), Postgraduate Teaching Experience Survey (PTES) data, and also the CEQ data from session 2016/17. Schools were asked to include a commentary on how they are working with students to address the matters raised. The Assistant Principal is considering the responses that have been received, and using the responses to identify good practice examples for sharing (one such example was shared at the January 2018 Directors of Teaching Network meeting). The Assistant Principal is also considering how reporting on assessment and feedback action plans in response to student feedback can be mainstreamed in future.

Evaluation of impact

Impact of actions can be evaluated through NSS, PTES, CEQs and external examiners reports. Additionally, Schools consider and respond to these sources of data as part of annual monitoring, review and reporting process.

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

Progress since September 2017

Implement Feedback Policy and Practice in a Clear and Consistent Manner across the University
The 'engagedED in feedback and assessment' guidance (replacing the Feedback Standards and Guiding Principles) was launched in semester 1 and shared across relevant networks.

Monitoring of feedback turnaround times is now devolved to Schools. Following a recommendation from the Learning and Teaching Committee, in November 2017 the Quality Assurance Committee agreed to include monitoring of feedback turnaround times in the annual monitoring, review and reporting process as follows in the annual programme monitoring template:
- *Reflect on the feedback turnaround times for the programme/s. Is feedback being provided to students within 15 working days or in time to be of use in subsequent assessments within the course (whichever is sooner)?*

A pilot training session for Board of Studies convenors and secretaries is being organised by the Institute for Academic Services with input from Academic Services. This session will cover:
- Roles, responsibilities and key reference points
- Current issues regarding curriculum development
- Pedagogy – good practice in programme and course design

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

workshops and events. Work to develop an aligned suite of course and programme development options will also consider the provision of formative feedback as part of the overall emphasis on assessment and feedback from the earliest stages of course and programme design. Meetings are planned to ensure optimal communication and alignment of options between the Institute of Academic Development (IAD) and Information Services. Good practice examples of formative feedback will be discussed at a School Director of Teaching Network meeting.

Working Closely with Schools to Understand Specific Issues and Needs (Contextualising Approaches)
Four programmes in the School of Education underwent LEAF audits in semester 1 2017/18 using a new jointly-run model where the Schools carry out the desk based research elements and IAD continue to support the student feedback and reporting elements. Work is underway to help Law enhance their second year courses. This is likely to involve elements of the LEAF process (e.g. desk-based assessment mapping).

Reflecting on the Positive Experience of Assessment and Feedback reported by Online Distance Learning Students (with a view to Replication)
The Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group continue to receive updates on the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences' electronic submission of assessment and return of feedback project. Online distance learning staff were invited to share good practice at the School Directors of Teaching Network meeting in January 2018 and supporting resources will be shared. Teaching Matters blogs on online distance learning and related aspects of online assessment and feedback will be solicited and published.

Evaluation of impact

Impact of actions can be evaluated through NSS, PTES, CEQs and external examiners reports. Additionally, Schools consider and respond to these sources of data as part of annual monitoring, review and reporting process.

A comprehensive evaluation of mid-course feedback will be carried out in semester 2 2017/18.

The pilot Board of Studies training session will be evaluated and the results will inform future developments.

Attendance at Directors of Teaching Network events will continue to be monitored and feedback will be sought on the impact and utility of the new 'engagEd in … feedback and assessment' guidance.

The provision of formative feedback opportunities will be monitored through requests for information to Schools.

Aspects of student feedback on LEAF programmes that have been audited and have made changes as a result of the audit will be monitored. Courses and programmes that have been through an ELDeR process will be monitored. Good practice will also be shared through the School Directors of Teaching Network.

Hits on online distance learning supporting resources and Teaching Matters blogs will be measured. Online assessment and feedback activity and patterns will be monitored and considered by the Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group.

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

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

Progress since September 2017

Reviewing information provided to students on marking schemes and grade descriptors

Schools continue to be supported in enhancing the information provided to students on marking schemes and grade descriptors at a local level. At present our approach is to recognise the importance of local context in making marking schemes and grade descriptors more transparent to students. Discussion on this aspect took place at the October 2017 School Directors of Teaching Network meeting where three Schools shared good practice. One further example was shared at the Directors of Teaching Network meeting in January 2018. If a proposed session for the Learning and Teaching Conference in June 2018 to share good practice identified through the annual monitoring, review and reporting process is successful, it is hoped to include an example of enhancing information provided to students on grade descriptors. A further discussion on marking schemes and grade descriptors will be taking place at a forthcoming Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group.

In addition the 'engagEd in…. feedback and assessment' guidance specifically emphasises the importance of this aspect as it relates to developing students assessment literacy. This guidance is being used in staff development activities.

Evaluation of impact

From the consideration of School annual quality reports: Student feedback highlights a need for clarification of marking schemes and grade descriptors so that student are clear on what is expected of them in assessment. There is evidence of Schools giving this careful consideration and that plans are underway to address this issue, both at School- and University-level.

The key evaluation tool in this regard is the NSS question 'the criteria used in marking have been clear in advance'. Even in some Schools where there has been an overall increase in score on the assessment and feedback domain, there are some instances of dramatic decline on this measure (with wide variation across schools from 80% to 42% satisfaction). This data will be used to target conversations with the lowest performing Schools (and Subject Areas) and data reviewed annually in August.

The thematic analysis of undergraduate external examiners reports for 2016/17 considered by Senate Quality Assurance Committee in November 2017 noted that, of the commendations, the main theme commended across all three Colleges was the Assessment Process with the sub-theme of Student Feedback most commented on. It is now planned to analyse feedback comments as a theme for discussion at a Directors of Teaching Network.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) Theme Lead Report

Theme: Personal Tutor System

Theme lead: Professor Alan Murray

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

Progress since September 2017

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

Enhancements for 2017/18
An update on the Personal Tutor (PT) "group practices" guidance being developed by the Institute for Academic Development is being sought.

Enhancements made to reward, recruitment and recognition
The figure for PT activities developed and recommended by the Senior Tutor Network last year is not in the University's Principles and Operational Guidance for the Development and Implementation of Academic Work Allocation Models. The Assistant Principal Academic Support is following this up with HR and the Vice-Principal People and Culture (action identified at the PT Oversight Group meeting in November 2017).

Training and support
The Student Mental Health training programme has continued into 2017/18. By the end of this academic year the programme "Student Mental Health – understanding and responding to students experiencing mental health problems" will have been offered to all schools across all three Colleges, and other staff e.g. Centre for Open Learning and Edinburgh University Students' Association have also benefitted from the training. To date 406 staff have been trained, 62% of the potential capacity. The frequency of the training events is being reviewed and online training modules have also been available during 2017/18. Through the review of School annual quality reports, the College of

Science and Engineering committed to promote the mental health training for Personal Tutors and Student Support Team members more effectively.

The internal audit of Student Support Teams (SSTs) recommended the development of a mandatory training plan and this is being progressed by the Director of Student Wellbeing who is currently seeking ideas from key stakeholders on important themes and areas for the training to focus on. The internal audit also recommended that each College should have a Student Support Forum or equivalent platform for the sharing of ideas, experience, information and best practice and that the University-wide network should be re-established to ensure key institutional messages/policy/objectives are communicated and discussed with relevant staff. These actions are being progressed by the Assistant Principal Academic Support and the Director of Student Wellbeing respectively.

Schools' implementation of the system
The Personal Tutor Oversight Group met on 6 November 2017 and considered the Schools' operation of the PT system using all available sources of evidence. Actions were identified for two of the Colleges in terms of working with Schools to address issues relating to the low levels of satisfaction with the PT system. Other actions identified not covered elsewhere in this update report were:
- Senior Tutors were asked to ensure that links to School Personal Tutoring Statements are placed in programme and course handbooks.
- College Deans of Students to examine the approaches to training of each School within their College and report findings to the next meeting of the Group.
- Examine the options for a leaflet guide for PTs, one side noting examples of good practice and the other providing guidance akin to the 'Here to Help' booklet. It has since been agreed that this leaflet should also be student-facing.
- College Deans of Students to continue to discuss with Schools the viability of providing a formal, alternative point of contact/support for students on joint degrees.

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

The Here to Help booklet was redeveloped and a Wellbeing map was developed for academic session 2017/18.

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

On 27 November 2017, the Learning and Teaching Policy Group discussed the PT system as a framework model, which is local and specific at the point of delivery to students. The Group felt that the system has the appropriate balance of standardisation and local flexibility at this time. A paper on 'what is academic support' was discussed at the Learning and Teaching Policy Group in January 2018 and will now go forward for discussion at Academic Strategy Group and College committees. This paper outlines how we are developing a model of the wider academic support needs of our students, aiming to understand what exists already and then build upon these exemplars to strengthen the

links between timetabled teaching, support provided by PTs and peer support. Thus far, we have identified three existing approaches that strive to bridge this gap:-
1) Student Leaders, Peer Support
2) Student Learning Advisers
3) Piazza – an online question-and-answer tool that links peer support to academic teaching and tutoring.

We will continue to explore processes, roles and approaches in all Schools, aiming to disseminate and promote this form of good practice, along with (1) – (3) above.

The PT Oversight Group recommended that ways to improve the communication of School Personal Tutoring Statements are examined.

The Student Partnership Agreement outlines a commitment to: Developing a shared understanding of the various support roles and expectations of support, ensuring students know what support is available and how to access it. An implementation plan is in development and will consider how the University and students can work in partnership to progress these actions.

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

Through the review of the School annual quality reports, the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences committed to support Schools to clarify (within the policy framework of the University) the roles and responsibilities of PTs and SSTs (and how these relate to other key roles) and communicate this to students within School Personal Tutoring statements and to hold a sharing good practice event for Personal Tutoring.

Confidential space
The SST internal audit recommended that each School considers options for confidential space that is available at short notice and that this be considered in space planning requirements going forward. The review of responses from Schools was completed on time and communications are now being sent to back to Schools to ensure that actions are undertaken and to inform further recommendations.

Service Excellence Programme
The following two recommendations from the SST internal audit will be taken forward as part of the Service Excellence Programme:
- Senior Management should consider the types of information the University requires for effective planning of student support services. This should include consideration of system and procedural enhancements (including potential development via the Service Excellence Programme).
- Each Head of School should make an assessment of current Student Support provision and whether it remains sufficient for students. This should cover all student categories. The key contact for each student category should be clarified.

Evaluation of impact

Feedback continues to be gathered through the Senior Tutor Network and the uptake and impact of the enhancements made for 2017/18 will be evaluated via the June 2018 Senior Tutor Network meeting.

There is now a question relating to Personal Tutors in the National Student Survey (NSS), the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey and the International Student Barometer. Additionally, from August 2017, in their annual quality reports, School are asked to report on the performance indicator of 80% student satisfaction with personal tutoring. All these sources of data (along with NSS free text comments relating to Personal Tutors and internal periodic review outcomes) were considered by the PT Oversight Group in November 2017.

A particular action identified at the November 2016 meeting of the PT Oversight Group was to monitor NSS free text comments for those relating to PT/tutee contact. An analysis of this year's free text comments relating to contact time indicated that this was no longer a major issue of concern for students.

The PT Oversight Group had previously concluded that more robust and granular internal survey data were required if meaningful conclusions were to be drawn and/or judgements made in regard to the relative performance of both Schools and individual PTs. Work is underway to introduce a student questionnaire regarding Personal Tutors.

Recommendation 45. It was evident to the team that the University's promotion of peer-assisted schemes represents positive practice (see paragraph 76). The team would **encourage the University to continue supporting staff and students in the embedding of peer-assisted learning and to continue working with EUSA to deliver appropriate training for peers.** (See further background information in paragraph 45)

Progress since September 2017

The Student Partnership Agreement outlines a commitment to: Facilitating the growth of peer support networks and co-creating a range of events for Mental Health Awareness Week and across the academic year. The developing implementation plan will consider how the University and students can work in partnership to progress these actions.

The Institute for Academic Development and the Students' Association will be making a joint appointment (~6 months) to work on a project to plan and support the development and roll-out of peer support systems for postgraduate research students across the University. This will include supporting, facilitating and evaluating a small number of focused pilots for student-led peer support activity across the University. It will also involve the development of a number of models for postgraduate peer support, which can be contextualised locally. This is linked to the Excellence in Doctoral Education and Career Development Programme.

Evaluation of impact

The research into the impact of peer learning and support activities, with a particular focus on exploring the relationship between participation in these activities and academic attainment, has been completed and is currently awaiting peer review. It is hoped that the outputs can be used to inform a broader discussion with Schools about future developments.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)
Theme Lead Report

Theme: Postgraduate Research Student (PGR) Experience

Theme lead: Professor Jeremy Bradshaw

Effective communication and consistent implementation of the Code of Practice
The Code is currently undergoing a review to ensure that its purpose is clear, that information is contained within the appropriate place and to minimise duplication of information, especially in light of the Programme and Course Handbook Policy. This includes cross-referencing to regulations where appropriate and redrafting some of the Code of Practice as policy. The Code of Practice review has included feedback from supervisors and postgraduate research students in determining its content. The draft outline has been approved by Senate Researcher Experience Committee and further input from key stakeholders, including PGR students, will be sought on the publication's design and presentation. Some content will be relocated into University regulations and policy. A draft of the revised publication will be submitted to the March Researcher Experience Committee meeting and a communication strategy will be confirmed

Review the effectiveness and regularity of research supervisor training
Work on the Excellence in Doctoral Research and Career Development programme has continued. Further information and a progress report from December 2017 can be found at: http://edin.ac/2pFy7zo One of the themes of this programme is Supervisor Training and Support, which aims to:
- Enhance the content of compulsory supervisor briefings by sharing practice across Colleges and ensuring updated database of resources.
- Identify, design and pilot optional training for supervisors, including facilitation guides for Schools to use.
- Consult with Schools and Colleges to design an online toolkit to support supervising at a distance.
- Explore ways in which to ensure accurate, central recording of supervision training.
- Identify ways to recognise and share practice of excellence in supervision.

Following on from work undertaken from February to May 2017, the later half of 2017 focused on enhancing the PGR supervisor network programme and communications for supervisors. A programme of events was set up, drawing from discussions at the PGR supervisor network launch event in June 2017. New webpages for supervisors were created on the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) webpages and a newsletter is now produced three times per year. The webpages will continue to be developed throughout 2018/19.

Through discussions and work undertaken it became clear that a more comprehensive approach to supervisor CPD should be taken and a proposal for a short-life task group to be convened to look at this was approved by the Researcher Experience Committee

(REC) in December 2017. A paper setting out the remit for this group was approved at the January meeting.

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

One of the strands of the Excellence in Doctoral Research and Career Development programme, Mentorship and Wellbeing, is working to:

- Explore the PGR mentor function across the University and identify a number of possible models. This involves benchmarking current practice, scoping and defining different models.
- Benchmark and carry out a gap analysis of support for PGR wellbeing across the University.

Two of the outcomes from this work stream are as follows:

1. A six month full time post has been approved to look at expanding peer mentoring to PGR students. This post will be jointly managed by IAD and the Student's Association and will start in Spring 2018. It will involve building models for peer mentoring and support and managing pilots.
2. A comprehensive report on 'strategies for PGR wellbeing' was commissioned by IAD and produced in June 2017. This report sets out a set of recommendations for the University, REC and the Excellence Programme. The Mental Health Strategy Group has discussed this and REC is currently agreeing on priorities for 2018/19.

Updates on progress to December 2017 can be found here:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/projects/excellence-in-doctoral-education

A pilot event for supervisors called Spotlight on…. mental health and wellbeing support for PGR students will be held in February 2018. This is a partnership between IAD, Student Counselling, Student Disability Service, the Student's Association and the Chaplaincy. The event will be evaluated.

Training and support of PGR students who teach (including on assessment and feedback and are aware of career development resources through IAD)

In response to the ELIR, institution-led reviews, and other feedback, the University reviewed its Code of Practice for Tutors and Demonstrators during 2016/17 and agreed to replace it with a new Policy. The new Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators, was implemented at the start of the 2017/18 session. It clarifies the arrangements for recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators. The Policy may be downloaded at:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/tutorsdemonstrators_policy.pdf The Policy will be after it has been running for one year.

PGR students who teach can consult the IAD webpages for Tutors and Demonstrators for information on workshops, routes to Higher Education Academy accreditation and relevant resources. http://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/learning-teaching/staff/tutors-demonstrators

University involvement in the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland's Focus On the PGR student experience: http://edin.ac/2vHKqkr

Recommendation 64. The majority of students who met the ELIR team had positive

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

Recommendation 66. The University should continue to analyse the needs and experience of postgraduate research students at school, college and institutional level to ensure that they are effectively supported, particularly in the context of the University's plans to increase the research student numbers. The University should review the effectiveness and regularity of supervisor training and ensure that the University's Code of Practice is communicated and implemented effectively. The University should also made certain that postgraduate research students who teach are properly trained and supported for the role (including in the provision of assessment and feedback) and are made aware of the career development resources available through the IAD. [Para. 65 has background information to the recommendation on training for postgraduate research students who teach: "The training and development for tutors and demonstrators has developed since the 2011 ELIR with better oversight of tutors through guaranteed contracts and the appointment of a staff member in the IAD who works specifically with this group. Nonetheless, during the current ELIR, undergraduate students expressed a level of dissatisfaction with teaching delivered by postgraduate research students; the research students who taught indicated to the ELIR team that they did not always feel sufficiently trained or prepared to do so."]

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

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)
Theme Lead Report

Theme: Staff engagement in Learning and Teaching (Workload Allocation Models)

Theme leads: Vice Principal Jane Norman

Recommendation 13. The ELIR team learned about plans the University has to develop existing staff **workload allocation models** to recognise in a consistent way contribution to priority areas such as personal tutoring, assessment and feedback, and contribution to other enhancement activity. This is likely to promote greater transparency, consistency and understanding of workload allocation among staff, as well as ensuring that academic staff are able to support the University's strategic priorities for learning and teaching. **The University is encouraged to progress this work.** (Further background information at ELIR Technical Report sections 1.2, 1.3)

Recommendation 14. Overall, the ELIR team formed the view that the University has a reflective and inclusive approach to developing strategy, and that communication and consultation with staff about strategic developments is effective. The University's approach to implementing strategies relating to learning and teaching is effective, with some challenges remaining around ensuring alignment between institutional priorities and operational structures, which the institution is open in recognising. In order to further support implementation of institutional strategies, **the University is encouraged to progress its plans to develop existing staff workload allocation models to recognise consistently staff contributions to key aspects of learning and teaching across the University.**   (Further background information at ELIR technical report sections 1.2, 1.3.)

Development of Workload Allocation Models

No further developments to report at this time.

Evaluation of impact

No further developments to report at this time.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) Theme Lead Report

Theme: Student Representation – College and School Level

Theme leads: Megan Brown and College Deans

36. The University recognises that student representation at the college level could be strengthened further, for example the time and volume of committee meetings in one college were identified by students as barriers to engagement; a flexible model designed to allow a group of representatives to share the load of committee attendance had, to date, achieved mixed success. The devolved structure gives considerable decision-making power to the colleges making it all the more important to have effective student representation at that level. The University is, therefore, encouraged to **progress with work to promote and implement more effective representation at the college level.** (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paras 36, 37, 39)

Progress since September 2017

The last ELIR update contained a commitment from the Students' Association to run a pilot in the 2017-18 academic year, in which the Vice President Education (VPE) would become a member of key College committees. This has now been in operation for one semester and has been an excellent opportunity for the VPE to gain an understanding of the College-level committees and consider the most effective ways for College representation to proceed.

The evaluation of this pilot model will be completed at the end of the second semester, but the VPE, Bobi Archer, has provided an interim update on progress to date. The initial review of this model suggest that it has been beneficial for the VPE to sit on each College's Learning and Teaching Committee, particularly to hear the perspective of academic and support staff on University policies and to be involved in more practical discussions about implementation of policy. It has also been very useful for the VPE to sit on Learning and Teaching Committees in order to better understand School-specific processes and to better advise School Representatives, as well as to build relationships with School and College-level staff. The VPE emphasised the importance of a student representative from the College also being in attendance at these Committees as often College-specific issues appeared which would benefit from the perspective of a student with more direct experience.

For the other College committees the VPE has attended (a full list of which can be seen in the last ELIR Theme Lead Report), the VPE would recommend that in the future, these are attended by alternative student representatives with knowledge of the College, but that the VPE is still given the opportunity to read papers and send comments. This option will be discussed with Colleges over the summer to see if this is a viable option.

The Students' Association will await a final list of recommendations from the VPE after the pilot model has been in use for a year, and use this to inform the model for 2018/19.

The Students' Association is also keen to continue previous work on the development of support for students on College Committees. An updated version of the College Committee Student Member Handbook is being created for 2018/19. The Students' Association is also considering the possibility of offering briefings for students on these committees, and is exploring best practice from other Universities and Student Unions.

Evaluation of impact

We continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot model and its suitability for both the Students' Association and the Colleges. The VPE has already benefitted from the opportunity to attend the College committees and to gain a greater understanding of how student representation should operate at this level, and has already identified some suggestions for the 2018/19 model. We will be discussing these with the Colleges later in the academic year.

39. The University is encouraged to continue building on the existing constructive relationship with the Students' Association to **ensure there is more effective student representation at college and school level.** The University should **review the processes for appointing students to school committees and provide more effective training and preparation for the roles, ensuring that staff in schools understand the student roles and are able to support students to contribute effectively**. There would also be benefit in the University considering the **best ways of providing feedback to the wider student body about the action that is taken** in response to matters raised through school and college-level committees. (Further background at ELIR Technical Report paragraphs 36, 37, 38)

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

Progress since September 2017

Following the last report, a great deal of activity has been ongoing around student representation systems in each School. The Vice President Education created a paper on the new system which was supported at Senate Learning and Teaching Committee. This paper outlines the rationale behind moving to a programme rep system and proposes some actions for the University and the Students' Association to work on together.

The paper has received positive feedback and the VPE, Bobi Archer, has been meeting with each School at the start of semester 2 to discuss their representation structures and to encourage Schools to move to the programme rep model. Thus far, 3 Schools already use this model and it is anticipated that 10 more will move to the model for 2018/19. The Business School chose to implement the model for 2017/18 and it has been very beneficial to see their experiences of implementing the new system and the challenges and benefits this has brought. We will be using the experiences of the Business School to assist other Schools in moving to the model.

For Schools that bring their rep numbers down to a manageable level, we will be aiming to bring back in-person training (the impact of which we note below). This is a large project and work has already begun on creating a 3 year plan to bring this in across the institution. Ongoing discussions are continuing between Schools and the Students' Association to collaborate on the design of School-specific training.

All this work aligns with the priorities identified in the Student Partnership Agreement.

As part of work on the Enhancement Theme, the University and the Students' Association are planning a workshop with student representatives which will explore, amongst other things, how student representatives can effectively feedback to the wider student body.

A new set of student-facing student voice webpages was published in December 2017 https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/academic-life/student-voice They cover how student feedback is gathered and used to enhance courses and the quality of degree programmes, the University Student Partnership Agreement, and student representation.

Evaluation of impact
- We believe that the streamlining of the representation system at the grassroots level will create a more transparent and effective representation system. In particular, students will more clearly be able to identify their programme reps and understand who to go to for representative issues. Similarly, School Reps will find it much easier to communicate with Programme Reps and to get a better sense of the whole School's perspective on issues, which will allow them to be as representative in their roles as possible.
- We are also confident that these changes will have an impact on both staff understanding of the Programme Rep roles, as the system becomes simpler and more consistent.
- By moving to a Programme Rep system and reducing the number of reps, the Students' Association will be able to explore the possibility of reintroducing in-person training. We hope that this will allow us to offer bespoke School-specific training alongside University colleagues, which we believe will lead to high quality student reps who are confident and effective in the role.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) Theme Lead Report

Theme: Student Data Dashboard

Theme leads: Lisa Dawson, Director of Student Systems

Recommendation 120. The ELIR team would encourage the University to progress with this work [Student Systems Roadmap], in particular developing the staff-facing 'Dashboard' project, which will be a key feature of the second phase of the Student Systems Road Map project to take place in the 2016-2021 period. (Further background information in ELIR Technical Report paragraph 119)
The first iteration of the live dashboard service was implemented in December 2016. The dashboard is available to all University staff and encompasses undergraduate admissions, programme outcomes and National Student Survey (NSS) results, and course outcomes and survey results. During 2017 a number of minor enhancements to the undergraduate dashboard have been delivered and a regular refresh schedule has been implemented, ensuring that new data is reflected in the dashboard as it becomes available. A new postgraduate taught dashboard was released in December 2017 providing content on application numbers, programme outcomes, course results and course enhancement questionnaires that is analogous to content in the undergraduate dashboard. Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) results are in place of the NSS. The dashboard features a filter for online distance learning programmes in place of the undergraduate dashboard's widening participation filter. As in the development phase, feedback continues to be gathered through an online form and discussions with key stakeholders. Student Systems is liaising with College Quality Officers to review and prioritise potential enhancements and new developments requested through feedback; this process will continue to inform development plans for future years.
Evaluation of impact Impact has been measured through analysis of website usage and feedback from stakeholders. Overall, feedback has been extremely positive. Improved data quality for widening participation and programme subject groupings has been received particularly well, along with the intuitive design and the depth of analysis available. The dashboard is now embedded in quality assurance and enhancement processes for annual monitoring and programme reviews across all three colleges, and is being incorporated into curriculum design activities.

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

8 February 2018

Postgraduate Taught External Examiner Reports: Thematic Analysis 2016/17

Executive Summary

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

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

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

Action requested

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee is invited to discuss the report and identify any University-level actions (assigning to specific areas as appropriate) to take as a result.

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

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

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

Resource / Risk / Compliance

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

Originator of the paper

Susan Hunter, Academic Services
30 January 2018

# Undergraduate External Examiner Reports:
Thematic Analysis 2016/17

1.   Introduction

1.1   This report provides a thematic analysis of External Examiner reports for postgraduate taught programmes. Analysis was conducted based on data available from the online reporting system on 29 January 2018.

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

2.   Analysis of major themes

2.1   Analysis continues to show a high number of commendations across the University and a low number of issues. The total reporting across all categories has decreased slightly in 2016/17 compared with the previous year, although the number of examiner reports submitted has increased slightly.

2.2   All Schools received commendations from their External Examiner reports. The average commendation rate across all Schools was 60%.

Figure 1
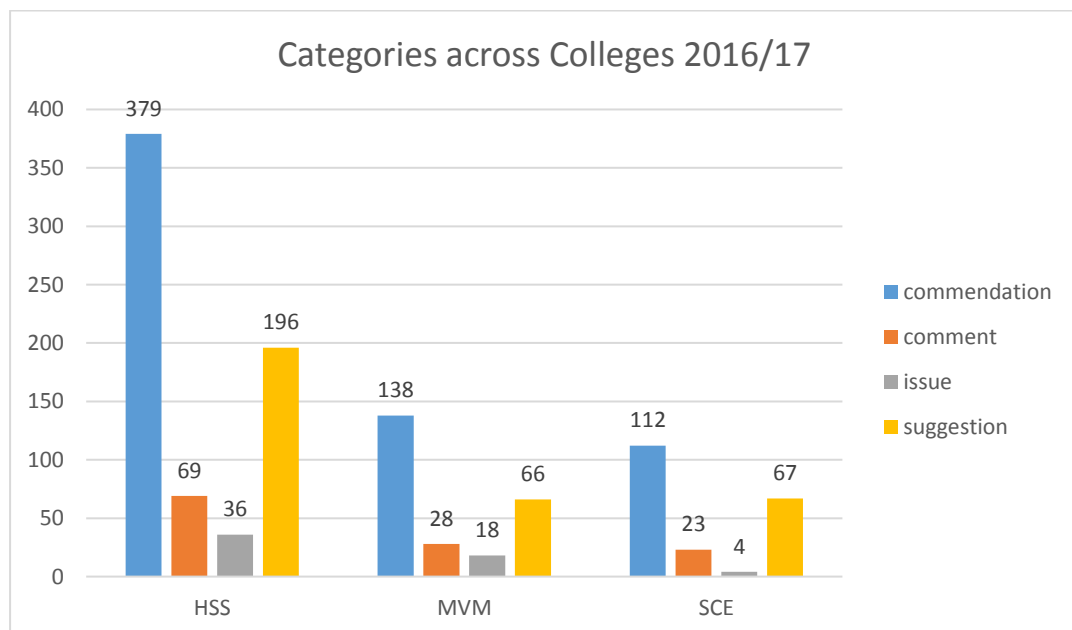
HSS (College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences), MVM (College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine), SCE (College of Science and Engineering)

Figure 2
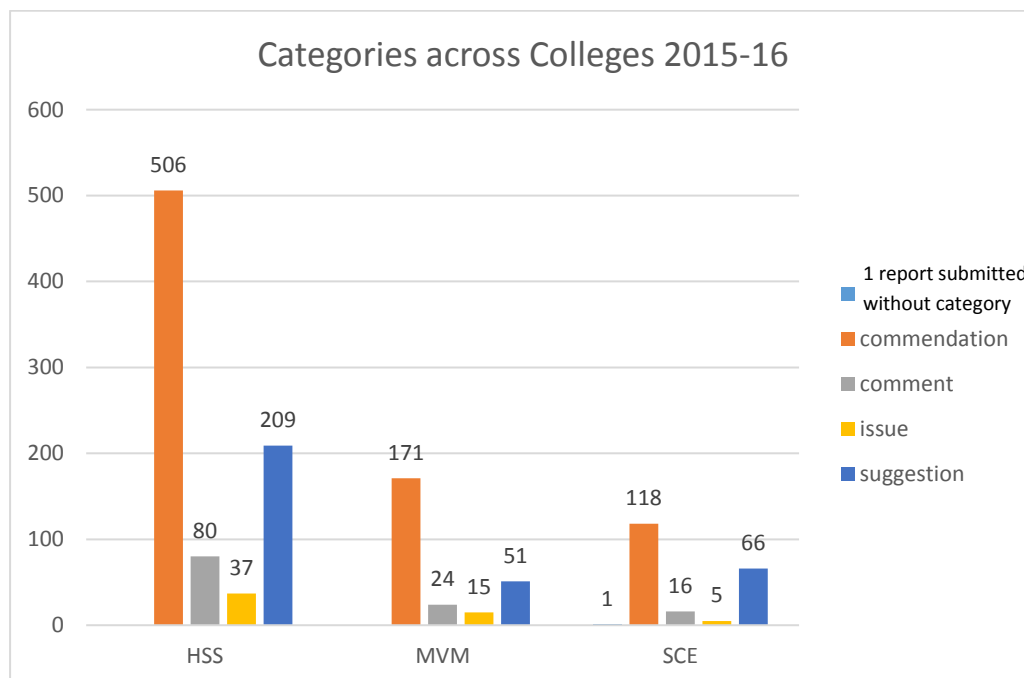
Categories across Colleges 2015-16

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

2.3   Commendations

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

"There was clear evidence of really excellent feedback - really clear and focused on how the work might be improved. The students I spoke to mentioned this and highlighted the fact that they had found it very useful. I was pleased to see that some of my comments on the quality and in some cases the brevity of feedback have been rectified and in all modules, students receive appropriately detailed feedback."

"The feedback especially on discussion boards and module assessments is exemplary showing considerable time commitment and concentrated effort from the examiners and supervisory academics. This may not be always appreciated by the students but if accessed and assimilated into their developing knowledge base will help them progress to a high academic achievement."

"The feedback has become more detailed in recent years and online marking also makes it easier for markers to highlight very specific issues in the paper."

2.4   Suggestions

The Programme Development and Enhancement theme attracted the highest number of suggestions. All suggestions were in the sub-theme of Enhancing Student Learning Experience. Comments were spread across the three Colleges. The majority of suggestions related to ensuring balance and breadth of subjects within programmes and using a range of alternative assessment methods.

2.5   Issues

Overall, 58 issues were raised. The main themes were Provision of Information with 18 comments and The Assessment Process with 14 comments made across all three Colleges. Comments were made across the sub-themes and no single sub-theme had a more significant number of comments than others. Schools have responded to the majority of comments raised.

3.   Additional analysis of issues, suggestions and comments

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

3.1   **Marking and moderation**

External Examiners recorded comments in relation to the consistency of marking, using the full range of marks and clarity of moderation procedures. Some comments related to clarity for examiners on marking schemes and may relate to the theme identified below.

3.2   **Provision of information to examiners**

Comments showed External Examiners had a varied experience of access to materials and online systems. Some examiners found it difficult to navigate systems and to find assessment examples and information held there. Other comments related to the timely provision of information and materials.

4.   Overview of the number of External Examiner Reports

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

	2016/17	2015/16
College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS)	179	167
College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM)	51	45
College of Science and Engineering (CSE)	36	33

Total number of reports	266	245

Table 1: Number of postgraduate taught reports by College

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

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

	Report Stage	2016/17	2015/16
AHSS	Response Submitted (complete)	70	120
	Draft Response (response outstanding)	53	21
	Draft Report (report outstanding)	32	15
	Cancelled	2	1
	Submitted Offline	0*	0
	Allocation (see below)	22	10
MVM	Response Submitted	28	34
	Draft Response	8	4
	Draft Report	11	3
	Cancelled	0	0
	Submitted Offline	1*	4
	Allocation	3	0
SCE	Response Submitted	20	19
	Draft Response	10	7
	Draft Report	5	5
	Cancelled	3	0
	Submitted Offline	3	2

∗   College reports number expected to increase

4.2 Reports at the allocation stage relate to reports that have not been allocated to an Academic Response Coordinator and therefore have not been circulated to the External Examiner. This can happen for a variety of reasons, for example, due to the External Examiner no longer being utilised. In 2016/17, the number of reports submitted offline is expected to rise from the previous academic year and Colleges have commented on this below.

4.3 CAHSS are continuing to contact Academic Response Co-ordinators to ensure any outstanding draft reports are received and that responses are completed as soon as possible. The College expects some additional reports to be submitted offline, but reports this is an isolated issue relating to staff absence.

5. CMVM continues to experience issues with external examiners not being able to access the system. This is particularly acute in the Deanery of Clinical Sciences where 14 of their 21 external examiners are no longer able to access the system. This is expected to result in an increase in the number of reports being submitted offline. The College continues to work with Student Systems to resolve this issue for 2017/18. Student

Systems are also investigating this issue with IS Apps and will review the system report generating process to ensure it is working as Schools expect.

6. Comments identified by Academic Response Coordinators as Institutional matters

6.1   Academic Response Coordinators can decide whether an issue, suggestion or commendation is a School, College or Institutional matter and escalate it accordingly. In 2016/17 six **suggestions** were flagged for escalation to institutional level. These included suggestions on meetings with students, co-location of student cohorts, accessing External Examiner information, teaching space and staff resources. Responses have been submitted by the Academic Response Coordinators for all these suggestions. The majority of institutional matters were identified in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS) and College is also responding to the Academic Response Co-ordinators on the suggestions raised.

Table 4: Institutional escalation themes 2016/17

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

Table 5: Institutional escalation themes 2015/16

Issues raised in a previous report (issue) (CAHSS)	1
The Assessment Process (suggestion) (CSE)	1

Susan Hunter
Academic Services
30 January 2017

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

8 February 2018

Mid-year update on progress against SQAC priorities

Executive Summary
The paper provides an update on progress towards SQAC's priorities agreed at Senate in May 2017.

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

Action requested
For Information.

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

Resource / Risk / Compliance

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

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

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

4. **Freedom of information**
   Yes.

Key words
ELIR, QA Framework, Personal Tutor, collaborative, Thematic Review

Originator of the paper
Brian Connolly, Academic Policy Officer

Mid-year update on progress against SQAC priorities

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

   Progress:
   The Committee continues to monitor progress of the agreed actions in six key areas identified by the ELIR. Work across these six themes is progressing well and the Committee will continue to monitor progress on a regular basis. The Committee will consider a reduced theme lead update reporting schedule to recognise the fact that activities are being progressed and reported on through other mechanisms such as the Learning and Teaching Strategy and Student Partnership Agreement implementation plans.

2. **Continued implementation and monitoring of the streamlining of the quality assurance framework (with a particular focus on periodic review processes)**

   Progress:
   The Committee has focused on streamlining processes while deriving maximum benefit from quality activity. New streamlined templates for School and College annual reports have been well received. Policy and supporting documentation have been clarified and simplified using feedback from staff. The internal review process has been streamlined with Academic Services now providing more of supporting documentation (including key reports).

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

   Progress:
   The Committee has received regular reports from the PT System Oversight Group in relation to ongoing activities to mainstream the PT system within School QA processes. The Group has overseen the annual School Personal Tutoring Statement approval process and agreed actions to improve the communication of the statements. The Group is also developing an easy reference guide for PTs and students akin to the 'Here to Help' guide currently available to students. The Assistant Principal Academic Support (Group Convenor) is currently exploring methods for gathering data relating to the perceived effectiveness of the support provided by individual PTs.

4. **Review of progress on collaborative undergraduate programmes with Zhejiang University**

   Progress:
   The Committee will receive an annual report in September 2018 on all Memoranda of Agreement (MoA) signed in 2017/18 plus the MoAs from January 2017 to the end of the 2016/17 academic year.

5. **Thematic review of support for Mature Students and Students with Children and Caring Responsibilities.**

   Progress:
   The Committee agreed that the 2017-18 Thematic Review would focus on support for Mature Students and Students with Children or Caring Responsibilities. The first meeting of the review panel will take place on Wednesday 7 February 2018. Depending on how the review progresses, the final report will be submitted to the Committee for approval at either the last meeting of this academic session or the first meeting of the next.

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

8 February 2018

Service Excellence Programme:
Student Administration & Support Update

Executive Summary
This paper provides a brief update of the work being undertaken by the Student Administration & Support strand of the Service Excellence Programme, as part of a commitment to ensure that the Senate Committees are appraised of progress across each of these projects.

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
The Service Excellence Programme has been identified as a strategic priority.

Action requested
To note (no requested action at this stage).

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?
Future Service Excellence Programme recommendations will be communicated by the Board through existing committee structures. Future SA&S project proposals will be routed through Researcher Experience Committee, Learning & Teaching Committee, Quality Assurance Committee or Curriculum & Student Progression Committee as necessary.

Resource / Risk / Compliance
1. **Resource implications (including staffing)**
   N/A at this stage.

2. **Risk assessment**
   SA&S aren't identifying risks for consideration at this stage.

3. **Equality and Diversity**
   N/A at this stage.

4. **Freedom of information**
   Open

Key words
Service Excellence Programme / Student Administration & Support

Originator of the paper
Neil McGillivray
Student Administration & Support Programme Lead
20th December 2017

DEC 2017: UPDATE ON SERVICE EXCELLENCE (STUDENT ADMINISTRAYION & SUPPORT)

The Student Administration & Support (SA&S) Programme's proposed programme of work (emerging from previous CSA and OBC phases) has been endorsed by the Service Excellence Board and the team are now working on a number of projects.

The Programme's vision encompasses a vision for professional services staff, academic staff, students and the University
- For students – from pre-arrival to graduation: Smooth. Seamless. Easy to navigate. "My way"
- For professional services staff: Fewer, better systems so less manual processing and fewer work arounds. Less duplicated effort. Better data. Clarity over who is responsible for what.
- For academic staff: Better admin support for you / your students. Less admin for you.
- For all staff and students: Clear, easy to understand policies
- For the University: Better Value for Money

The SA&S Board last met on 20th November 2017. That meeting endorsed the work of the following projects, asking them to return to the 15th February 2018 Board with fully developed business case and blueprint documentation:

- Special Circumstances, Extension and Concessions
- Working & Study Away
- Student Immigration Service

The SA&S team has subsequently committed to attending the January CPSC meeting to highlight emerging policy recommendations, although is aware that this meeting is scheduled to take place prior to the final 15th February presentation and discussion of these proposals.

Further blueprint recommendations in the following areas will be submitted to the 10th April SA&S Board:

- Student Finance
- Timetabling

SA&S testing of an Examination Timetabling solution will continue into the New Year, seeking a solution for implementation for all centrally arranged exams before the end of 2017/18.

The recruitment of additional seconded expertise into the SA&S team to support Timetabling and PGR is ongoing, with new colleagues expected to join the team in early February 2018, in support of Phase 3 of the programme:

- Creating systems, tools and processes to support the PGR lifecycle (including recording Annual Reviews and HEAR data)
- A major project to provide a single, golden-copy, data source for all Programme and course information, to clarify associated business processes for creation and update, and to provide tools by which the golden-copy data is used to publish key Programme and course information.

- Delivery of a transparent online matriculation process that guides a student through the steps they must complete (including a fee payment stage) in order to be fully matriculated.
- Create systems and tools to support the business processes involved in running Exam Boards.
- Redesign, simplify and standardise the processes for internal reporting through the creation of a single data warehouse and creating a user-centred interface to support day-to-day reporting requirements in Colleges and Schools.
- Completion of earlier work to support the Graduation process by introducing e-ticketing for Graduation (and eliminating inefficient manual processing).
- Various other investigations are planned, including into Online Course Selection, Course Assessment and Feedback tools, and the possibility of a digital document management system to support exam processes from setting questions to marking scripts.

More detail is available on the SA&S wiki, this will continue to be adapted and maintained throughout the coming months, and into the next phase of the programme as detailed proposals are developed for future projects:

https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=346121562

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

8 February 2018

Report from the Knowledge Strategy Committee

Executive Summary

To update Senate on certain matters considered by the Knowledge Strategy Committee at its meeting on 13 October 2017.

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

Not applicable.

Action requested

Senate is invited to note the report.

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Not applicable.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

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

   Where applicable, as covered in the report.

2. **Risk assessment**

   Where applicable, as covered in the report.

3. **Equality and Diversity**

   Where applicable, as covered in the report.

4. **Freedom of information**

   This paper is open.

Key words

Knowledge Strategy Committee

Originator of the paper

Dr Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services, January 2018

REPORT FROM THE KNOWLEDGE STRATEGY COMMITTEE

13 October 2017

1   Digital Transformation

The Deputy Chief Information Officer delivered a presentation on the University's digital transformation activities – the application of digital technology in all aspects of the University. Updates on underpinning digital transformation projects were noted and student focused projects and communications to Schools and Colleges discussed.

2   Distance Learning at Scale

The Senior Vice-Principal presented an update on the current status of the Distance Learning at Scale project, with 13 potential pilot courses identified and business cases in development. The following points were discussed:
- Courses will be research-led and distinctive to the University of Edinburgh;
- 'Unbundling' – opportunities for students to progress at varying rates according to their own preference without the constraint of the standard academic year model;
- Providing appropriate student support tailored to large-scale distance learning courses.

3   Bulk Email Investigation

The Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning presented a report on the investigation into a graduation email error in June 2017. Future actions and lessons learned were noted, including a review of email templates, the timing of potentially sensitive emails and considering which emails require human review before issuing. Members discussed avoiding issuing emails on Fridays and examples at other organisations such as secondary education exam boards.

4   Information Security Policy & Framework

A revised Information Security Policy and a proposed Information Security Framework with supporting standards and procedures were reviewed. Improving communication to staff and students, mandatory awareness training for all staff and replacing an existing code of practice were discussed. The revised Information Security Policy was endorsed, with approval of underlying standards for the Information Security Framework delegated to IT Committee.

5   Digital Research Services

The Director of IT Infrastructure presented the proposed 2017/18 Digital Research Services project programme. The programme's intention to develop and maintain a comprehensive and integrated suite of digital services for University researchers was noted and avoiding duplication of long term research data storage was

discussed. The programme of work and expenditure was approved as set out in the paper.

6   **Learning Analytics Update**

Linkages between the development of a new learning analytics policy with the new General Data Protection Regulation and distance learning at scale programme were considered. It was agreed to delay developing a detailed learning analytics policy until later in 2017-18 and to introduce interim governance arrangements as proposed in the paper with immediate effect. Developing case studies or examples to assist Schools with interpretation of a new policy was requested.

7   **Data Stewards**
The Committee endorsed the:
- Catalogue of golden copy data sources, including data steward appointments for the core golden copy data sources;
- Formal definition of the data steward role;
- Proposal that Heads of Colleges and Support Groups should be accountable for appointing Data Stewards in their locales, in line with their overall accountability for information security.

The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

8 February 2018

Internal Periodic Review Reports and Responses

Executive Summary

The following year on responses from Internal Periodic Reviews 2016/17 and final reports from Internal Reviews 2017/18:

Year on response 2016/17:
PPR Physics and Astronomy

Final reports 2017/18: the paper contains an extract of the commendations and recommendations from the following final reports:

Postgraduate Programme Review of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences
Teaching Programme Review of English Literature
Teaching Programme Review of Medicine
Teaching Programme Review of Physics and Astronomy

How does this align with the University / Committee's strategic plans and priorities?
The paper is relevant to the Committee's responsibility for the quality assurance framework.

Action requested

Reports: for approval. The Committee is asked to note the following commendations and recommendations. The full reports are published on the wiki:
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SQAC/Thursday+8+February+2018

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

PPR	Recommendation	Comment
Physics and Astronomy		We look forward to hearing about progress on the recommendations in the School Annual Programme Monitoring report

How will any action agreed be implemented and communicated?

Comments on the progress towards completion of recommendations will be reported back to the School/Subject Area. The responses will be published on the Academic Services website.

Resource / Risk / Compliance

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

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

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

4. **Freedom of information**
    Open.

Key words

Postgraduate Programme Review, Teaching Programme Review, PPR, TPR, year on response

Originator of the paper
Gillian Mackintosh
Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
01 February 2018

PPR/TPR	No	Commendations	Recommendations	Responsibility
PPR Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences	1	The Review Team identified that there was much to **commend** regarding the new infrastructure and the commitment and expertise of those supporting it	The Review Team **recommends** that if the Deanery wishes to grow its already high reputation teaching portfolio and student numbers, it further commits to teaching as core business, resources accrued from teaching are reinvested in teaching up front to allow forward planning, and teaching staff are rewarded and developed with teaching recognised as a visible and reputation-enhancing dimension of the Deanery's work.	Deanery
	2	The Review Team **commend** the work of Programme Directors in providing such rich VLEs and the evident expertise of staff supporting them. In addition this should be recognised as an example of **good practice** for wider dissemination across the institution	The Review Team **recommends** that the Deanery give consideration to the value of teaching in respect of the reputation and work of the Deanery and the University and to ensure its sustainability and visibility as part of the core business before embarking on further expansion of programmes and student numbers.	Deanery
	3	The Review Team **commend** the work that staff have been undertaking to develop their feedback; training, peer learning and use of pro-forma reports to standardise feedback, and would welcome its continuation	The Review Team **recommend** that a review of Personal Tutor provision takes place and all Personal Tutors receive appropriate training to ensure there is a consistent approach and understanding of the role and thus consistent student experience across all programmes, where possible	Deanery
	4	The introduction of a Peer Observation of Teaching scheme and the Director of Education's work with new and early career staff (specifically Chancellor's Fellows) to provide tailored teaching support for them are also **commended** by the Review Team as welcome developments established through the Deanery's new teaching infrastructure	The Review Team **recommend** that the Deanery consider the assessment literacy practices that the ODL MPH programme adopts with a view to providing the same across all courses.	Deanery
	5	Interesting work was being undertaken on supporting supervisors, particularly but not exclusively where they were early career researchers. This included online training being made available as well as mentoring where new supervisors could work alongside a more experienced colleague as part of the supervision process. The Review Team **commend** these practices as good examples of the Deanery thinking carefully about improving practice	The Review Team **recommend** that the Deanery act with confidence to implement alternative forms of Dissertations as they see appropriate.	Deanery
	6	The Review Team **commends** the Deanery in facilitating the ongoing professional development of administrative staff through training and accreditation programmes,	The Review Team **recommend** that consideration should be given to how on-campus provision could readily learn from ODL to enhance the student experience.	Deanery

		demonstrating that they are valued members of the Deanery staff community		
	7	The Review Team **commend** the practice of the use of ELDeR in programme development and attempts to align student research interests with live 'real world' projects through the Dissertation and the School's evident commitment to the research, policy and practice relevance of the programmes	The Review Team **recommends** that course selection processes be reviewed as part of a wider applicant-student communication review	Deanery
	8	Students **commended** the core courses of programmes that all students took, noting the ways that this aided the building of a sense of community	The Review Team **recommends** that the Deanery explore opportunities for specialised careers and professional development advice with the Careers Service.	Deanery in partnership with Careers Service
	9	In terms of ongoing work to develop students' graduate attributes, the Deanery is **commended** for the use of the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) and Information Services programmes for students	It is **recommended** that the Deanery discuss opportunities with Development and Alumni to engage with alumni to enhance the student experience	Deanery in partnership with Development and Alumni
	10	The Review Team were not made aware of any major concerns within the Deanery of accessibility, inclusivity and widening participation, and **commended** the diverse population that the Deanery attracts and the keen awareness of teaching staff that this requires sensitivity in the provision of teaching and Personal Tutoring etc	The Review Team **recommends** that the Deanery review their student communications and that the issue of coordinated University and Deanery student communication should be highlighted to the Service Excellence Project	Deanery in partnership with Service Excellence Project
	11	It was also noted that the MPH curriculum is currently being reviewed against requirements for accreditation by APHEA (the Agency for Public Health Education Accreditation, part of ASPHER (Associations of Schools of Public Health in the European Region). The Review Team **commend** this venture and note that it creates an opportunity to use ELDeR to review and revise the programme alongside the accreditation process		
	12	The Review Team noted that the Deanery were currently reviewing the processes within programmes for recording, reviewing and acting on student feedback and commend this as a constructive response to these issues		
TPR/PPR		**Commendations**	**Recommendations**	**Responsibility**
TPR Physics and Astronomy	1	The School is **commended** by the review team for its commitment to teaching excellence and enhancement of the student experience.	While mindful that the number of students seen was relatively small, the responses from the students seen were sufficient to concern the review team that they could not be confident that students would turn to their Personal Tutors in times of crisis. Moreover, at present, Personal Tutors are encouraged but not required to undertake any training associated with student	Student Mental Health Strategy Group and Professor Alan Murray, Assistant Principal Academic Support

			mental health. It is therefore **recommended** that the University reconsiders the role of the Personal Tutor in its Student Mental Health Strategy.	
	2	The School is to be **commended** on attracting and supporting women in Physics.	The review team notes that a number of other Schools have designated Student Support Officers (or otherwise similarly named) to advise on Special Circumstances and extension applications, direct students to appropriate sources of mental health support, and provide cover for absent Personal Tutors, for example. It is **recommended** that the School considers adopting alternative models of best practice in this area.	School
	3	Best practice and innovation in teaching is shared across the School via the Teaching Forum, which is convened by the Director of Teaching and meets twice per year. This is to be **commended**.	The School notes that it has the highest number of students in absolute and proportional terms in this University with learning profiles related to autistic spectrum disorder. Current School policy is that the student's Personal Tutor will usually also act as the student's Named Contact. However, some staff report feeling inadequately prepared to support these students and provide them with the best learning experience and would appreciate additional training to improve their skills in this area. While the Student Disability Service is on hand to provide guidance, there are no advisors at the Student Disability Service who provide expertise in physics in the School, and the view of the School is that these students may not be adequately supported. The review team **recommends** that the Student Disability Service review its provision and support in this area	Student Disability Service
	4	The commitment to student support from Personal Tutors and the effective leadership of the Senior Tutor is **commended**.	The review team heard evidence from students that many are going home to study, and since their University accommodation is in the central area and transport links to King's Buildings campus are not considered adequate, they are therefore choosing to study at home and are not returning to campus for lectures. It is **recommended** that the School and the Space Strategy Group considers what can be done to address this issue and provide additional study space.	School/ Space Strategy Group
	5	The Physics Peer Mentoring Scheme, in which Honours students provide peer advice and support to pre-Honours students, is **commended** by the review team.	It is also **recommended** that the University seeks to ensure that the integrity and cohesiveness of the School's learning and teaching environment is preserved as its future plans for further development of the King's Buildings estate are implemented.	Space Strategy Group

	6	The School is **commended** for the support provided for Direct Entry students by way of a designated curriculum in their first year.	It is noted that the School has set up a working group to consider [exam load in the May diet] in greater detail, the recommendations from which will be considered by the School Board of Studies in November. It is **recommended** that the findings and outcomes of this working group are reviewed and implemented as swiftly as possible once available.	School
	7	The availability of the Director of Teaching to meet with student representatives on a weekly drop-in basis is **commended** as an example of best practice.	The transition into third year is one that is recognised as challenging; students are aware of this but the review team saw evidence that students entering third year may still not feel adequately prepared for the year ahead. It is **recommended** that the School considers ways to support students in this transition period, such as providing preparatory reading over the summer before third year, or recordings of lectures on concepts of key concern in third year, for example.	School
	8	The School is **commended** for the introduction of the Physics with Year Abroad degree, and the support for these students is generally very good.	The Physics Peer Mentoring Scheme, in which Honours students provide peer advice and support to pre-Honours students, is commended by the review team. It is **recommended** that the School considers whether this scheme might be extended for Senior Honours students to provide support to students entering Junior Honours.	School
	9	The dedicated support provided by the Careers Consultant is valued by staff and students and is **commended** by the review team.	The review team **recommends** that robust processes are put in place to support Teaching Assistants, particularly in the moderation of assessment, uniformly across all courses to ensure that the Course Organiser takes appropriate responsibility for the marks awarded.	School
	10	The provision of the recently refurbished common rooms for Senior Honours and MSc students is **commended**.	The review team heard evidence that students are eager to follow their lecturers' current research, and would be keen to attend research seminars or other similar events if pitched at an appropriate level for undergraduate students. It is **recommended** that the School investigates other such opportunities to develop academic community.	School
	11	The development of applications and specialised software to support staff and enhance the student experience, and the sharing of this best practice wider than the School is **commended**, and IT staff are commended for writing this software.	The review team heard evidence that Personal Tutors and academic staff may not always notify students or administrative staff when travelling away from the University. While it is not suggested that approval mechanisms for leave need to be established, it is **recommended** that a robust system is established to ensure that students (particularly Personal Tutees) and Teaching Office staff are notified of any absence of	School

			more than one day from the University, particularly where contact with the Personal Tutor will not be possible during the period of absence	
	12	In response to student feedback around clashing in-course assessment deadlines, the School has developed a wiki-based hand-in calendar, which includes all in-course assessment deadlines in the School, is filterable by year of study and can be exported directly to student's Office365 calendars. Evidence from students suggests that this exercise has been largely successful since students report that deadlines for in-course assessments are generally well spread. The School is **commended** for their attention to this issue and an innovative practical solution.		
	13	The School is **commended** for the very high compliance with the University policy to return feedback to students within 15 working days of the submission of assessed work.		
	14	The innovative practice of allowing optional group submissions for in-course assessments in some pre-Honours courses is **commended**.		
	15	The excellent support provided by the Academic Administrator, the Teaching and Graduate School Office and other administrative staff is **commended** by the review team.		
	16	The training provided for postgraduate tutors and demonstrators is good, and the commitment and approachability of Teaching Assistants is **commended** by the review team.		
	17	The encouragement of Teaching Assistants to apply for Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy is also to be **commended**.		
PPR/TPR		**Commendations**	**Recommendations**	**Responsibility**
TPR English Literature	1	The Subject Area's commitment to undertaking an ambitious review of the English Literature curriculum	Review approach to recruitment, induction, support and remuneration of Guaranteed Hours tutors	Subject Area
	2	The Subject Area's commitment to responding to student feedback	Convene a group to develop a strategy for community-building within Subject Area	Subject Area
	3	The quality of feedback offered to students by the Subject Area	Consider breadth of EDI issues in developing a revised pre-Honours curriculum	Subject Area
	4	The engagement of Guaranteed Hours tutors in determining tutorial content	Examine the Personal Tutor system to address perceived inconsistencies	Subject Area

	5	The complementary working relationship between Personal Tutors and Student Support Officers	Consider ways to encourage greater in-person interaction between students and professional services staff	Subject Area
	6	The use of all permanent teaching staff in supporting pre-Honours tutorials	Consider making greater use of Personal Tutor group meetings	Subject Area
	7	The successful use of Autonomous Learning Groups in Honours teaching	Improve communication with Schools/Subject Areas with which joint degrees are offered	Subject Area/College UG Dean
	8	The considerable range of option courses offered at Honours level	Provide year abroad students with access to learning materials from Year 3	Subject Area
	9	The provision of small group teaching in Honours years		
	10	The commitment to offering tutoring experience to PhD students		
PPR/TPR		**Commendations**	**Recommendations**	**Responsibility**
TPR Medicine	1	Staff and students demonstrate high levels of confidence in the excellent leadership provided by the Director of Undergraduate Medical Teaching and senior team colleagues. Examples of excellent practice include support and encouragement for staff in developing new initiatives and introducing new events, and a strong focus within the programme on student engagement, student feedback, and the overall student experience. The review team **commends** the senior leadership team (including the senior administrative team) for their provision of robust leadership for the programme.	The review team **recommends** that the senior leadership team engage with NHS Education Scotland (NES), Regional ACT Groups and NHS Boards to ensure ACT funding is used appropriately to support academic and administrative delivery and co-ordination of placement based medical education. There is a need for a step change in the approach to resourcing administration of clinical modules to enhance the student experience.	Subject area
	2	The review area is **commended** for excellent administrative support in certain areas, with notable examples including the Year Co-ordinator system, and the support provided by the GP Course Administrator.	The review area expressed concerns to the review team about marginalisation of consultant time for undergraduate teaching. The review team **recommends** that the senior leadership team engage with NHS Education Scotland (NES) and NHS Boards to address this resource issue.	Subject area
	3	The review team **commends** the programme on the overall systems of student support in place; this includes support provided by the Clinical Teaching Associates, Personal Tutors and Year Directors, and the pragmatic system of funding for external Personal Tutors and Clinical Teaching Associates. The review team commented particularly on the value of a system which enables each student to retain the same Personal Tutor for the whole six years on programme.	The review team **recommends** that there is a need to strengthen the administrative resilience of programme organisation and delivery. This should include clarification of Human Resource, Information Technology and Finance support, and support to develop resilience in the Year Co-ordinator roles.	Subject area
	4	The review team **commends** the consistent use of student feedback from EvaSys and ACT to form the basis of quality	The review team **recommends** that the subject area strengthens academic (including clinical academic) capacity on	Subject area

		improvement processes; this is evidenced by a range of changes and resulting improvements that have been made to courses as a result.	the programme, to enable the effective delivery of the programme and maintain and enhance its quality.	
	5	The review team **commends** the strong culture of community building within the programme, which is evident through the use of the pod system, buddying, Peer-Assisted Learning Schemes (PALS), academic families and Problem-Based-Learning (PBL).	The review team **recommends** that the subject area continue with their plans for expansion of the use of clinical skills within the programme, and endorse their current plans to expand the physical resource in this area.	Subject area
	6	The review area is **commended** for their implementation of exemplar clinics which offer students a chance to get a more equitable clinical experience, and the review team would encourage wider rollout of this teaching approach.	The review team strongly endorses the plans that the review area have for re-considering how best to assess non-academic attributes at admission and selection stage, and **recommends** that the review area looks for evidence in support of the various different models before taking a decision on the way forward. This should encompass enhanced systems to genuinely widen participation on to the programme.	Subject area
	7	The review area is **commended** for their approach to the compulsory intercalated year, in relation to the breadth of opportunities provided to students.	Technology enhanced learning is expanding, and the review team **recommends** that there is a need to ensure that all tutors and Module Organisers and Year Co-ordinators have equal access to the Virtual Learning Environment LEARN (including appropriate editing rights), and that sufficient training is provided to enable this.	Subject area
	8	The review area is **commended** for the development of a strong relationship between the Student Disability Service and the Co-ordinator of Adjustments, which enables effective interpretation of University policy in this area. This has resulted in several pragmatic solutions that balance well the needs of disabled students with the needs of patients potentially under their care once they graduate as doctors.	The review team **recommend** that the review area enhance the quality assurance process with a particular focus on obtaining feedback from students in relation to the support they receive from Personal Tutors/Clinical Teaching Associates.	Subject area
	9	Given the issues identified by the review area with regard to limited ICT support during rollout of recent initiatives, the move to the Virtual Learning Environment 'Learn' during this academic year is to be particularly **commended**.		