



Academic Services
January to February 2019

Senate Committees'

e-Newsletter

Introduction

Welcome to the third edition of the Senate Committees' Newsletter for 2018/19. This publication aims to keep the University community better informed about discussions and decisions occurring within Senate (the University's supreme academic body) and its Standing Committees (the four Committees to which Senate has delegated its authority in particular areas). We hope you find it interesting and informative.

Report from Senate

Overall responsibility for regulating and superintending teaching and discipline, and promoting research.

Documentation for the E-Senate meeting held from 15 to 23 January 2019 and the Senate meeting held on 6 February 2019 is available at <http://edin.ac/1FL8RtJ>

Senate heard presentations on the Research Excellence Framework. These provided an overview of the preparations the University is making for REF 2021 and the impact these preparations are having on research in Colleges. Senate also discussed the Student Experience Action Plan (further information contained in the report from LTC).

For further information about any Senate matter, please contact theresa.sheppard@ed.ac.uk



This newsletter is produced by Academic Services.

Please direct any queries or suggestions to Philippa.Ward@ed.ac.uk.

Further information on Senate and its Standing Committees is available at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/committees>.



Report from Learning & Teaching Committee (LTC)

Responsible for undergraduate, taught postgraduate and other forms of academic provision, apart from postgraduate research and higher degrees.

Documentation for the meeting held on 23 January is available at <http://edin.ac/1tHNcJB>

Key topics considered included:

Student Experience Action Plan (<https://edin.ac/2N8r4eQ> Paper B)

The University is in the process of developing a Student Experience Action Plan, which aims to deliver 2 outcomes: *happy students* (students feeling cherished) and *happy staff* (staff wanting to come to work and being energised by their contributions). The Plan will adopt a holistic approach with 4 main areas of work: actions to enhance the student experience; actions to enhance the staff experience where this impacts on the student experience; a communications strand; and a leadership strand. Prioritisation going forward will be through logic modelling and financial cost-benefit analysis.

Teaching and Academic Careers Project (<https://edin.ac/2N8r4eQ> Paper G)

This project is a strand of the Student Experience Action Plan and aims to review processes for the recognition and reward of and support for teaching alongside other parts of the academic role. Following widespread consultation, the group leading the work has developed a set of guiding principles and is now moving into phase 2 of the project. This will involve 3 main strands of work: review of HR policies and procedures; review of support and expectations for professional development; and review of the way in which the University evidences excellence in teaching. It is hoped that most of the work will be completed by the end of this semester, but some areas – particularly the review of HR policies – may take longer.

Jan / Feb 2019

Meetings covered by the
January / February 2019 Edition

Date	Committee
15 – 23 January	E-Senate
23 January	LTC
24 January	CSPC
25 January	REC
6 February	Senate

Near Future Teaching Project (<https://edin.ac/2N8r4eQ> Paper C)

The Near Future Teaching Project was launched in 2017 to develop a values-based vision for the future of digital education at the University of Edinburgh. It has used futures-thinking and design-based methodologies to work with over 400 students and staff to co-produce the vision.

LTC discussed the Project and were particularly impressed by its creativity. The paper proposed a number of short to medium-term actions to take forward the vision. The Assistant Principal Digital Education is also discussing ways in which the Project outputs might inform longer-term areas of work, including the Student Experience Action Plan discussed above.

Task Group on Using the Curriculum to Promote Inclusion, Equality and Diversity (<https://edin.ac/2N8r4eQ> Paper E)

A task group of LTC is exploring ways in which institutional action can assist in promoting inclusion, equality and diversity in the curriculum. LTC considered an interim report from the group, which has developed a set of draft principles to guide its work and initial ideas about institutional actions. Members discussed the importance of ensuring that action is taken by Schools as a result of the group's work. To this end, Schools will be provided with subject-specific examples of what change might look like.

Research into Undergraduate Non-Continuation (<https://edin.ac/2N8r4eQ> Paper F)

As noted in the Nov / Dec 2018 edition of this newsletter, non-continuation statistics for undergraduate students at UK universities are coming under increasing scrutiny, and the University's non-continuation rates are less positive than its comparators'. Governance and Strategic Planning (GASP) has undertaken research to help the University better understand its patterns of non-continuation. The impact on non-continuation of a number of factors including age, gender, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic factors has

already been investigated. LTC has agreed that additional research into the impact of prior attainment or entry qualifications and engagement with societies or extra-curricular activities on non-continuation should now be undertaken (subject to GASP securing the required resources).

Resource Lists Framework (<https://edin.ac/2N8r4eQ> Paper I)

LTC agreed to support formally the introduction of the Resource Lists Framework, and academic staff are strongly encouraged to make use of the Framework. Further information is available at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/research-teaching-staff/resource-lists>

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) (<https://edin.ac/2N8r4eQ> Paper K)

LTC agreed that the University will adopt a strategic approach to expanding the University's MOOC portfolio in line with priorities around Distance Learning at Scale, City Deal, the Learning and Teaching Strategy and student recruitment. This will include a targeted call for the development of new MOOCs in the near future.

Lecture Recording

As compared with January 2018, 62% more lectures are being recorded, and viewings have increased by 98%. The Lecture Recording Policy came into operation on 1 January 2019 and since this time, only around 15% of those courses with lectures that could have been recorded have opted out. As such, the proportion of lectures being recorded at Edinburgh is higher than the sector average.

For further information about any LTC matter, please contact Philippa.Ward@ed.ac.uk



Report from Curriculum & Student Progression Committee (CSPC)

Responsible for the academic regulatory framework, apart from those aspects which are primarily parts of the Quality Assurance Framework.

Documentation for the meeting held on 24 January 2019 is available at <http://edin.ac/2y83LIO>

Key points discussed included:

Academic Year Dates

(<https://edin.ac/2SJRJnr Paper A>)

CSPC explored possible models to mitigate the impact of the truncated revision and examination diet projected for Semester 1 2020/21. The Committee requested further modelling from the Head of Timetabling and Examination Services to determine whether additional space for examinations might reduce the time required for the examination period.

Amendments to the Code of Student Conduct

(<https://edin.ac/2SJRJnr Paper B>)

CSPC approved amendments to the Code of Student Conduct. These are designed to equip the University to deal more appropriately with allegations of serious misconduct. Court will now consider a resolution to enact these planned changes, which could take effect from the start of 2019/20.

Support for Study

(<https://edin.ac/2SJRJnr Paper K>)

CSPC commented on proposed revisions to the Support for Study Policy which would introduce a new stage to the Policy. This would allow a University-level panel some additional options when the University has particular concern for the student's physical or mental health and its adverse impact on their studies or on other members of the University community. The Committee will review the final version of the Policy at its meeting on 21 March 2019.

Postgraduate Assessment and Progression

(<https://edin.ac/2SJRJnr Paper C>)

CSPC discussed a range of models for changes to pass marks and / or the progression hurdle between the taught and research component of the most common type of Master's degree. It agreed to consult on Model C, which would retain current pass marks whilst removing the progression hurdle (average of 50 over 120 credits, passing a minimum of 80 credits). High academic standards would be maintained by requiring an average of 50 over the full 180 credits plus a mark of 50 for the dissertation or project. Academic Services will consult via relevant College committees in the first instance.

Boards of Studies Terms of Reference

At its March meeting University Court approved a simplified version of the Board of Studies Terms of Reference. The simplified document provides an appropriate level of governance by focusing on high-level matters, with operational matters detailed in the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy. The simplification of the Terms of Reference does not require Schools to change practice. The updated version of the Terms of Reference will be posted on the Academic Services [website](#) shortly.

For further information about any CSPC matter, please contact theresa.sheppard@ed.ac.uk

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2020 – Contextualised Themes

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) is the method by which the Quality Assurance Agency (Scotland) reviews universities and other Higher Education institutions in Scotland. Edinburgh's last ELIR took place in 2015, and the University received the highest possible judgement: 'effectiveness' in the management of academic standards and enhancing quality. The University's next ELIR will take place in October and November 2020. Preparations are underway, and Senate and its Standing Committees discussed the University's proposed 'Contextualised Themes' – the primary areas of activity the University will focus on during the Review.



Report from Researcher Experience Committee (REC)

Responsible for postgraduate research degree training, higher degrees and provision for the training of other, early career researchers.

Documentation for the meeting held on 25 January 2019 is available at <http://edin.ac/1Q528n5>



Postgraduate Research Experience (<https://edin.ac/2N0eyha> Paper A)

Supervisor support and training - A task group of the Excellence in Doctoral Training and Career Development Programme is exploring this area. The group will report to the March meeting of REC and make recommendations on a career and professional development framework for supervisors.

Support for students who teach – Academic Services plan to undertake an evaluation of the policy on recruitment, support and development for tutors and demonstrators during Semester 2 2018/19.

PGR space – REC continues to make representations to the Space Strategy Group to ensure that PGR needs are considered as estates' projects progress.

Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2019

PRES is a UK sector-wide survey that gathers information on the PGR student experience. The University participates every two years and PRES 2019 will open for Edinburgh's students at the beginning of March 2019. REC approved the optional, institutional questions that will be included in this year's survey. (Please contact Susan.Hunter5@ed.ac.uk if you would like further information about the institutional questions.)

The University's Student Surveys Unit can provide further information about PRES and offer advice on promoting the survey to students. Previous PRES results are available on the student surveys wiki: <https://edin.ac/2G51AyA> (EASE log in required).

PhD with Integrated Study (<https://edin.ac/2N0eyha> Paper G)

REC received the final report of a task group that had been considering the practical operation of PhD with Integrated Study programmes. The Committee approved a framework and guidance to support Schools setting up new programmes. This will now be circulated to relevant Colleges and Schools.

LERU Doctoral Summer School

The University is hosting the League of European Research Universities (LERU) Doctoral Summer School in July. The deadline for nominations for student participants is Friday 1 March 2019. More information on the internal selection process is available from Susan.Hunter5@ed.ac.uk

Postgraduate Regulations Review (<https://edin.ac/2N0eyha> Papers D-F)

REC provided advice on proposed amendments to the Postgraduate Degree Regulations and Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees, including clarification of PhD and MPhil criteria and regulations governing PhD by Research publications. The proposed amendments will now be considered by Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC).

For further information about any REC matter, please contact susan.hunter5@ed.ac.uk

Senate Committee Dates for 2018/19

Senate	E-Senate	LTC	CSPC	REC	QAC
		13 Mar 19	21 Mar 19	12 Mar 19	25 Apr 19
29 May 2019	7-15 May 2019	22 May	30 May 19	14 May 19	23 May 19

Further Information

The next University of Edinburgh Learning and Teaching Conference will take place on Wednesday 19 June 2019 in the John MacIntyre Conference Centre, Pollock Halls of Residence. Please save the date.

