

The University of Edinburgh
Learning & Teaching Committee
Terms of Reference

1. Purpose and Role

1.1 The Learning and Teaching Committee is responsible, on behalf of Senatus, for undergraduate, taught postgraduate and other forms of academic provision, apart from postgraduate research and higher degrees.

1.2 The Committee provides a forum to facilitate and encourage the development of academic strategy and also discusses and promotes academic developments, whether internally driven or externally indicated.

2. Remit

The remit of the Learning and Teaching Committee is to:

2.1 Discuss, formulate and promote strategic initiatives which enhance the student experience as it relates to teaching and learning and which contribute to, and which support attainment, of the University's objectives.

2.2 Support the creation and development of a high level framework which encourages and supports innovation, flexibility, accessibility and interdisciplinary initiatives.

2.3 Promote and promulgate specific innovations in learning, teaching and assessment, embracing new pedagogies and technologies in support of the enhancement of the student experience.

2.4 Approve any specific local developments or initiatives which could have substantial implications for University strategy or policy or for University level services and/or operations.

2.4 Proactively engage with any high level issues or themes arising from the National Student Survey, the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey, the International Student Barometer and other internal and external student satisfaction surveys.

2.6 Engage in horizon scanning to anticipate and prepare for new opportunities and likely future developments in learning and teaching.

3. Governance

3.1 The Committee will act with authority, as delegated by the Senatus, in order to take strategic and high level policy decisions in the area of teaching and learning.

3.2 In taking forward its remit, the Committee will support and encourage diversity and variation where this is beneficial, whilst seeking consistency and common approaches, where these are in the best interests of staff and students.

3.3 The Committee shall report directly to the Senatus as necessary, but at least annually.

3.4 The Committee shall liaise with relevant Court Committees and with specific managers and offices in respect of issues or instances where matters of academic policy intersect with management issues.

3.5 The Committee shall identify and agree the ways in which it will periodically interact and exchange information with relevant academic and student services in matters relating to teaching and learning.

4. Operation

4.1 The Committee will meet at least four times per annum. The Committee will also interact electronically, as is necessary for its business to be effectively progressed.

4.2 The Committee may also meet electronically to note formal items or items which are not considered to be of strategic importance.

4.3 The Committee will follow a strategic agenda which is set prior to the start of the Academic Year and which is agreed through consultation with Senatus, the Convenors of the other Senatus Committees, and other relevant members of the University community.

4.4 Limited life Task Groups will take forward as relevant the detailed examination of, and consultation on, the strategic issues which make up the majority of the Committee's work.

4.5 Task Groups will be given a clear brief and will consult as appropriate during their work in order to ensure the confidence of the Committee, the Senatus, and the wider University Community in the resulting conclusions and recommendations.

4.6 Information on Task Group activities will be made available electronically to ensure that members of the University Community are kept informed and can contribute to specific developments.

4.7 Agenda, papers and approved minutes will be published on the University's web pages in accordance with the University's agreed publication scheme and the status of the above listed in respect of freedom of information legislation. This will include details of the membership of the Committee.

4.8 The University Secretary or his/her nominee will be responsible for ensuring the provision of secretariat support for the Committee.

4.9 The Convenors of the other Senatus Committees shall receive papers for the Committee and can attend any of the meetings.

5. Composition

5.1 The Committee shall be convened by the Senior Vice-Principal. The Vice-Convenor shall be the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance.

5.2 The Colleges shall each nominate two senior members of staff who have responsibility for learning and teaching.

5.3 The Edinburgh University Students' Association Vice President Education shall be an ex officio member of the Committee. A permanent member of Students' Association staff shall also be an ex officio member.

5.4 The University Secretary or his/her nominee shall be an ex officio member of the Committee. The University Secretary shall also identify a member of staff to act as the expert academic governance member of the Committee.

5.5 The Director of the Institute for Academic Development or his/her nominee shall be an ex officio member of the Committee.

5.6 The Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions or his/her nominee shall be an ex officio member of the Committee.

5.7 The Director of the Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division of Information Services or his/her nominee shall be an ex officio member of the Committee.

5.8 The Director for Careers and Employability or his/her nominee shall be an ex officio member of the Committee.

5.9 Up to 5 additional members may be co-opted onto the Committee by the Convenor depending on the expertise required. Co-opted members will normally serve a three year term. Other co-opted members may serve for shorter periods.

5.10 The Convenor may invite individuals for specific meetings or agenda items.

5.11 Substitution of members (ie due to an inability to attend) shall be at the discretion of the Convenor of the Committee.

6. Responsibilities and Expectations of Committee Members

All members of the Committee:

6.1 Are expected to be collegial and constructive in approach.

6.2 Should attend regularly and participate fully in the work of the Committee and its Task Groups. This will involve looking ahead and consulting/gathering input in order to provide the broad spectrum of thoughts and opinions which are necessary for proper consideration of the area being discussed.

6.3 Will need to take collective and individual ownership for the issues under the Committee's remit and for the discussion and resolution of these issues. In taking ownership of the work of the Committee, members should take steps to ensure that they are empowered to take decisions on behalf of academic and managerial colleagues.

6.4 Are expected to be committed to communicating the work of the Committee to the wider University Community.

Version 8, May 2018