THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Senate Committees'
e-Newsletter

Introduction

Welcome to first edition of the Senate Committees' Newsletter in 2020. 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 Education Committee

Responsible, on behalf of Senate, for taught and research student matters, particularly strategy and policy concerning learning, teaching and the development of curriculum.

Documentation for the meeting held on 11 December 2019 is available at https://edin.ac/2oR9kfB .

Key topics considered included:

Curriculum Review (verbal update)

The Vice-Principal Students, Professor Colm Harmon, advised Education Committee that the University will need to take a decision on how transformative it wants its proposed curriculum review to be. In order to facilitate this, Professor Harmon is in the process of producing a 'green paper' discussing the University's vision for its graduates. Once complete, this will be circulated for widespread consultation, and will lead into a second piece of work before the summer around the type of curriculum that will deliver this vision. The final and most challenging piece of work, to be undertaken from academic year 2020/21, will be mapping the existing curriculum onto the desired curriculum and implementing changes as required.

Professor Harmon will present in more detail on curriculum review at the next meeting of Education Committee (11 March 2020).

Edinburgh Futures Institute Portfolio (https://edin.ac/2tQ4n9i, Paper B)

Education Committee received a presentation from representatives of the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI). Members noted that the first EFI programmes will be launched in September 2021, and that current focus is on overall vision and developing infrastructure for new kinds of teaching. Interdisciplinarity, inclusion, flexibility, hybrid teaching, teaching with non-academic partners, and data skills are central to the provision being developed.

Because the provision being developed differs in both scale and complexity to the University's existing provision, particularly on account of its interdisciplinary nature, it does not fit well within the University's

November 2019 / January 2020
Meetings covered by the November 2019 / January 2019 Edition

Date	Committee
14 November	APRC
5 December	QAC
11 December	Education Committee

Report from Education Committee (continued)

School-based structure. In order to avoid students having a very fragmented experience, Education Committee therefore approved a governance structure whereby EFI will have formal management of and administrative responsibility for ('ownership of') its programmes and courses. Programmes will be identified as 'EFI' in EUCLID, and EFI will take responsibility for delivering the required professional services support. However, EFI will not be a 'School', as academic staff teaching on the courses and programmes will continue to be based in their own Schools.

Student Support and Personal Tutor Project Update (https://edin.ac/2tQ4n9i, Paper C)

Education Committee welcomed the Consultation Report and Options Appraisal presented by representatives of the Project team. They were very supportive of the emphasis on enhanced engagement, the focus on learning as part of an effective community, and the integration of learners' development into the curriculum. Members discussed the importance of ensuring that students were known as individuals during their time in Edinburgh and the most appropriate location for the delivery of course and programme advice and guidance. They also discussed the need to balance the desire to bring greater consistency to student support arrangements across the University with an expectation that Schools should build on the proposed model to ensure that it suits their particular context.

Education Committee approved the support model outlined in the paper and the Project team will now to move forward to the next stage of the work.

Support for Doctoral Supervisors – Development of an Online Course (https://edin.ac/2tQ4n9i, Paper D)

Generous resource has been provided by the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) to develop an online course for doctoral supervisors to complement mandatory supervisor briefings. It is hoped that the draft course will be ready by the end of February 2020 and will be piloted over the following months, with the aim of launching in full at the start of academic year 2020/21.

Temporary Governance Arrangements for Postgraduate Research Provision (https://edin.ac/2tQ4n9i, Paper E)

Education Committee agreed temporary measures to ensure that the business formerly undertaken by Researcher Experience Committee (REC, disbanded at the end of academic year 2019/20) continues to be well-managed whilst the 'Doctoral College' (http://edin.ac/2I4yApS, Paper D) is being established.

For further information about any Education Committee matter, please contact Philippa.Ward@ed.ac.uk
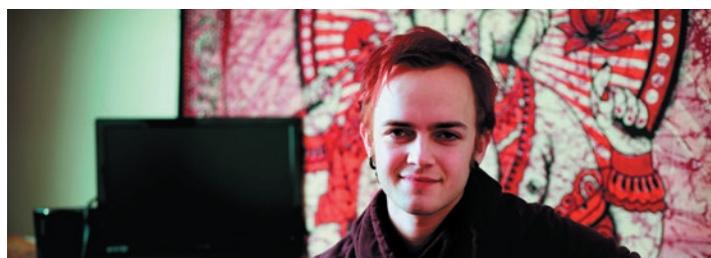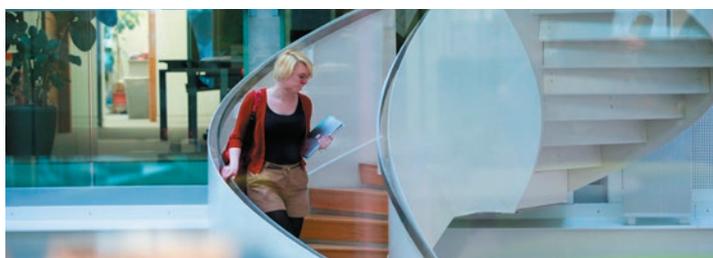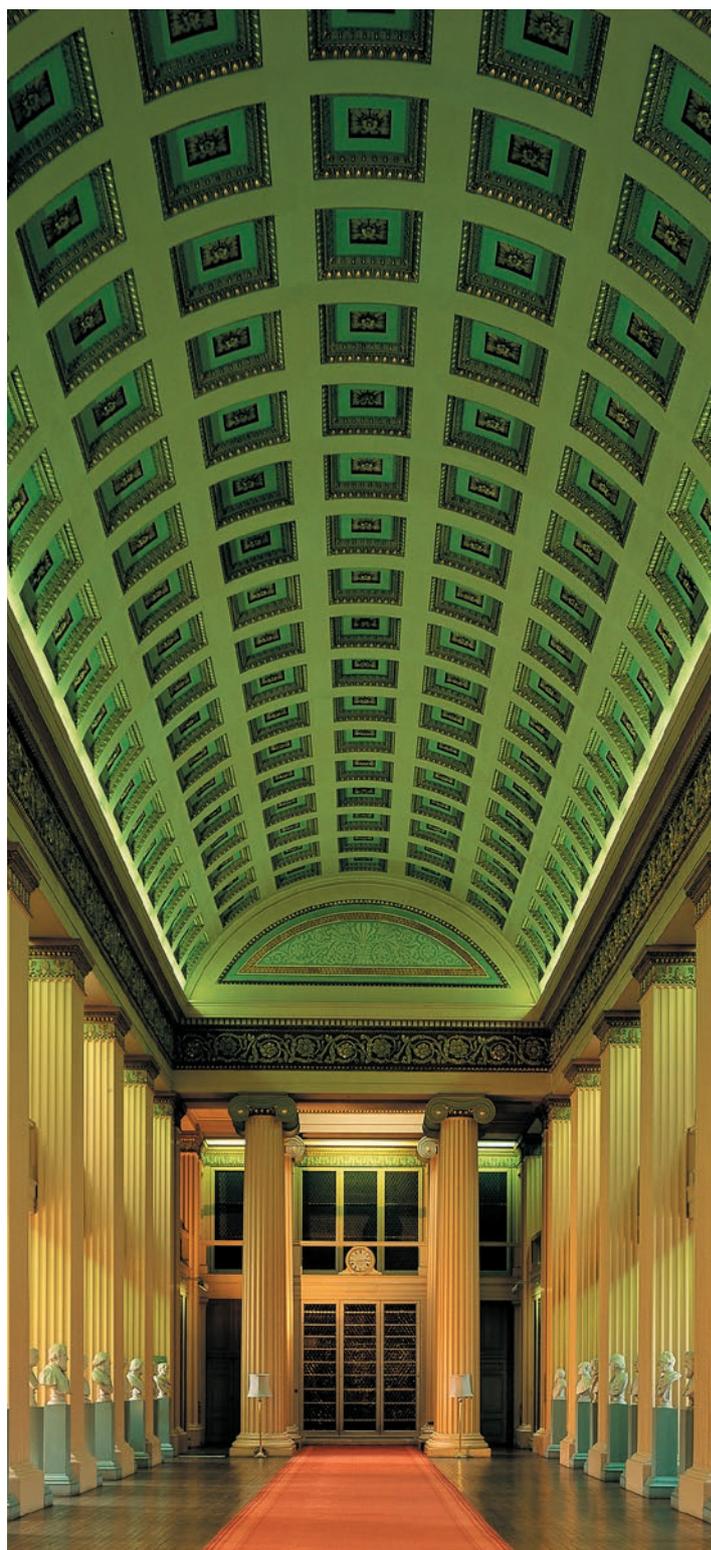
Report from Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

Responsible, on behalf of Senate, for the University's framework of academic policy and regulation, apart from those aspects which are primarily parts of the Quality Assurance Framework.

Documentation for the meeting held on 14 November 2019 is available at http://edin.ac/2pAaOv7

Key points discussed included:

Special Circumstances: Request for Policy Changes 2020/21 (https://edin.ac/35BT41P, Paper A)

The Committee received a Service Excellence Programme paper which provided an update on policy changes that would be required in 2020/21 to support the incoming Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) team. The proposed changes reflect the fact that the ESC team will review all special circumstances applications to determine the validity of the cases and secure evidence. The academic impact of supported cases will be determined by the School. The changes include an expedited process for dealing with cases relating to waiving late penalties, or extensions of more than seven days. The ESC team service is due to launch in July 2020. APRC will review proposed amendments to the wording of the Special Circumstances policy to reflect these changes early in 2020.

Proposals for Review of the Student Appeal Regulations (https://edin.ac/35BT41P, Paper B)

The Committee agreed the methodology of the planned review of the Student Appeal Regulations. This review is expected to take place this Semester.

Academic Year Dates 2021/22 and Provisional Dates 2022/23 and 2023/24 (https://edin.ac/35BT41P, Paper F)

The academic year dates given in the paper were approved.

Industrial Action – Concessions to Regulations and Policies (https://edin.ac/35BT41P, Paper G)

The Committee approved a paper which allows temporary concessions to regulations and policies, where these are necessitated by disruption to assessment processes due to industrial action.

For further information about any APRC matter, please contact ailsa.taylor@ed.ac.uk

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Report from Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

Responsible, on behalf of Senate, for the framework which assures standards and enhances the quality of the student learning experience.

Documentation for the meeting held on 5 December 2019 is available at http://edin.ac/1MUwq8L

Course Enhancement Questionnaires - Review (https://edin.ac/2T9F3G8, Paper L)

The Committee approved the framework for a fundamental review of Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQs). Professor Tina Harrison (Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance) will chair the review group, which will include academic representatives from each College. The group will consult on the current approach to collecting end of course feedback across the University and develop proposals to enhance the system for implementation by September 2020.

Undergraduate Taught External Examiner Reports – Thematic Analysis (https://edin.ac/2T9F3G8, Paper F)

The Committee considered an analysis of data from the External Examiner Reporting System (EERS) covering undergraduate programmes for the academic year 2018-19. The report noted a high number of commendations across the University and a low number of issues that require attention. Of the issues highlighted by External Examiners, the most frequently mentioned were in relation to the provision of information, and issues raised in previous reports.

Annual Academic Appeals, Student Discipline and Complaint Handling Reports (https://edin.ac/2T9F3G8, Paper I)

There continues to be an upward trend in the volume of academic appeals and student discipline cases. However, the numbers remain small relative to the overall student population.

Annual College Quality Reports for 2018-19 (https://edin.ac/2T9F3G8, Paper E)

A number of issues were noted for action at University level. Progress updates on these will be circulated to Schools and Colleges as part of the annual review process during the coming year.

For further information about any QAC matter, please contact brian.connolly@ed.ac.uk

Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)

Drafting of the Reflective Analysis, which is our key document for the forthcoming Enhancement-Led Institutional Review, is well underway. Individual chapters have been developed, with contributions from staff and students through a series of meetings and the Teaching Matters blog: http://edin.ac/2tBdhaZ. A first draft of the Reflective Analysis will be available for review by key internal and external colleagues during the last week of January and the first week of February. Comments received will help develop a second draft which will be made available to all students and staff in early March for comment before a final version passes through University committees for approval in June.

Review visit dates:

- Planning visit: 1 October 2020

- Main visit: week beginning 16 November 2020 (visit likely to last 5 days)

For further information please contact ELIRsupport@ed.ac.uk

Senate Elections 2020

The membership of Senate is changing from 1 August 2020. All current Senate memberships (professorial and elected) will end on 31 July 2020, and the new membership will take up their positions on 1 August 2020.

The new membership will consist of:

- 200 elected academic staff members (100 professorial and 100 non-professorial)

- 30 elected student members

- Approximately 70 *ex-officio* members

Elections for academic staff members will be held this Semester.
The provisional timetable for the election of academic staff members is:

- 5 February 2020 - nominations open

- 5 March 2020 - nominations close

- 24–26 March 2020 – voting open

Dates will be confirmed at the meeting of Senate on 5 February 2020.

This will be an opportunity for all members of the academic community to get involved with Senate. Please visit the Senate website for further information: https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/senate.

Further information will be sent to academic staff in due course.

Contact: Senate.Support@ed.ac.uk

Remaining Senate Committee Dates for 2019/20

Senate	E-Senate	Education	APRC	QAC
5 Feb 2020	14-22 Jan 2020	–	23 Jan 2020	27 Feb 2020
–	–	11 Mar 2020	19 Mar 2020	23 Apr 2020
27 May 2020	5-13 May 2020	20 May 2020	28 May 2020	21 May 2020