THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Electronic Senate
E-Senate will commence on Tuesday 21 September 2021 and
close at noon on Wednesday 29 September 2021

AGENDA

1.	**Minute** To approve the minute of the meeting held on 2 June 2021	**e-S 21/22 1 A**

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

2. An update to the Senate membership - New Student Members
   - Adam Turner – Economics UG School Representative
   - Ioana Băltărețu –Chemistry UG School Representative
   - Ammir Barakat – Informatics UG School Representative
   - Emily Jacobs – Biomedical Sciences UG School Representative
   - Audra Swan – GeoSciences UG School Representative
   - Pia Wahi-Singh – Medical UG School Representative

3.	**Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council on Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity 2020/21** To note and comment	**e-S 21/22 1 B**
4.	**Conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita** To approve	**e-S 21/22 1 C**
5.	**Communications from the University Court** To note	**e-S 21/22 1 D**
6.	**Report from Knowledge Strategy Committee** To note	**e-S 21/22 1 E**
7.	**Membership of the Knowledge Strategy Committee** To approve	**e-S 21/22 1 F**

Electronic Senate

21 – 29 September 2021

Minutes of Senate meeting held on 2 June 2021

Description of paper

1.   The paper provides the minutes of the Senate meeting held on 2 June 2021.

Action requested / recommendation

2.   For approval.

3.   For E-Senate, members are invited to submit any comments, observations or reservations by email. A nil response is taken as assent. Any comments on this paper should be emailed to SenateSupport@ed.ac.uk quoting "comment on e-S 21/22 1 A". These comments will be published verbatim at https://edin.ac/2DYSYJT This is an EASE-protected webpage were comments can be viewed by other Senate members.

Resource implications

4.   None.

Risk management

5.   Not applicable.

Equality & diversity

6.   Not applicable.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

7.   Key decisions were communicated in the Senate Committees' Newsletter to stakeholders on the distribution list:
      www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/newsletter

Author
Senate Secretariat
September 2021

Freedom of Information
Open paper

**UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING
OF THE SENATUS ACADEMICUS**
held online Wednesday 6 June 2021

OPEN SESSION

This section of the meeting is open to all members of staff. 615 members of staff attended.

1.   **Convener's Communications**

The Convener provided a short update, followed by a Q&A session:

- Scottish Elections - since the February 2021 meeting of Senate, a new Government had been elected. The Convener had attended an introductory meeting with the new Minister for Higher Education and Further Education, Youth Employment and Training, and had outlined some of Edinburgh's priorities. The Minister was keen to visit the University in due course. The University also looked forward to having productive, working relationships with the Deputy First Minister, who had also been appointed Cabinet Secretary for COVID Recovery, and the new Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

- University Campuses – the University was planning for the return of undergraduate students to campuses in September 2021. Clarification was being sought from the Scottish Government on likely social distancing requirements and other COVID mitigations, but it was recognised that the University would need to remain flexible and able to adapt to changes to restrictions at short notice.

- Hybrid Working – staff surveys had indicated that a substantial majority of staff wished to continue some element of working remotely. Work was being undertaken by the Chief Information Officer and his team to understand what was necessary to give staff choice and flexibility, whilst also ensuring that the University's business needs were met.

- House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee Report, 'Universities and Scotland' – the recently published report examined the challenges and opportunities faced by Scottish universities as the sector adjusts to the pandemic and life outside the EU, and assessed the further action needed by Scottish and UK governments. The report suggested that the future funding landscape for Scottish institutions might be considerably more difficult than that of the past. It noted that additional funding provided by the Scottish Government during the pandemic for research and student hardship was time-limited, and that the forthcoming review by the Scottish Funding Council of the coherence and sustainability of universities and colleges in Scotland was likely to have a significant impact on the sector.

- Research Funding – a substantial proportion of the University's research funding comes from UK Government sources and three recent developments give cause for concern: cuts to Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding; possible changes to the way in which the UK's continued association with Horizon Europe would be funded; and recognition that, although the UK Government has

committed to increasing spending on research overall, money may be given to other research agencies and institutes and may not directly benefit universities.

- Financial Position – the University is approaching the end of the financial year and there would be detailed reporting on the University's financial position in due course. In brief, the financial position was relatively healthy. The University had taken some difficult decisions, particularly around its capital programme, and as such, it had been possible to retain a surplus. It was noted that the pandemic had impacted less negatively on international student recruitment than had been anticipated.

- Freedom of Expression – the topic had attracted significant attention and debate within the sector and the media. The University had published a statement on its position on freedom of expression some months ago and the Russell Group had also subsequently published a statement. However, the topic remained controversial and the Convener suggested that there may be benefit in considering the matter further at a future meeting of Senate.

- Security of Universities – the Convener noted that a substantial amount of work was being undertaken in this area and that it was an issue that was likely to increase in prominence. UK security agencies understood that universities need to take risks in order to succeed and maximise their potential, but they need to understand these risks and mitigate them where possible.

In response to questions received from attendees, the Convener and other senior staff noted that:

- The University remains absolutely committed to the Humanities and Social Sciences. Edinburgh sees the strength of being a comprehensive university, and does not agree that STEM and non-STEM subjects should be funded differently.
- The University's has confidence in its existing statement on Freedom of Expression, but the statement will remain under constant review.
- The University is in discussion with the Scottish Government about vaccination for all members of the community, including international students who arrive in the UK unvaccinated and those under the age of 18. The University's position is in line with that of the Scottish Government and it will not therefore require members of the community to be vaccinated.

2. **Strategic Presentation and Discussion**
   Looking Forward – Delivering on Strategy 2030

   Attendees received six presentations:

   1. Delivering on Strategy 2030 – the Vice-Principal Strategic Change and Governance and University Secretary, Sarah Smith, provided an introduction to the presentation and discussion section of the meeting, noting that it aimed to explore ways in which the University might best deliver on the aspirations of Strategy 2030. Attendees were reminded that all staff had received a communication on 29 April 2021 sharing some of the work that had already been done in this area and inviting feedback. The communication focussed on a number of questions around enabling a way of working that allows staff to contribute their best to the University's vision and purpose; Curriculum Transformation; supporting and enhancing our world-renowned research;

equality, diversity and inclusion and the development of community; the delivery of professional services; the University's estates and financial strategies; and the University's approach to decision-making and engagement. The Vice-Principal and University Secretary had received a number of thoughtful responses to the communication.

2. Key Planning Assumptions – the Director of Strategic Change, Barry Neilson, provided an update on the key planning assumptions for academic year 2021/22. Restrictions permitting, the intention was for students, staff and support services to be back on campus, and for significantly more in-person learning and teaching and research activity to take place than had been possible in 2020/21. Gaining staff and student confidence in the University's approach to the return to campus would be crucial. Sectoral guidance on academic year 2021/22 was, as the Convener had stated, not yet available, but the University was continuing to engage with the Scottish Government on a range of issues. Planning assumptions needed to balance optimism with a degree of caution, and had been shared with all staff via a Sharepoint site: What You Need To Know (sharepoint.com). Significant work on contingency planning was also underway.

    Between now and September 2021, and as Edinburgh moved through the Government's COVID-19 protection levels, the University was aiming to set expectations and prepare as thoroughly as possible for the new semester. Priority areas for return to campus were being identified. Clear communications plans for both students and staff had been developed with Communications and Marketing.

3. Student Experience and Student Support – the Vice-Principal Students, Colm Harmon, addressed questions raised by colleagues about the University's student mental health provision. It was acknowledged that 2020/21 had caused significant challenges for students and therefore for the University's mental health services, despite increased investment in this area. The University's services provide a point of triage into NHS services and this can create a bottle-neck. Nonetheless, the University had managed to develop its mental health services over the academic year, and had focussed particularly on enhancing pastoral support and developing a sense of belonging. This had included staff development to help staff better support students with mental health difficulties, and the introduction of more robust case escalation processes. There had also been a focus on supporting survivors of sexual violence. The University had appointed its first Sexual Violence and Harassment Liaison Manager and was funding, on a fractional basis, a counselling support worker through Rape Crisis. It was clear that the needs for mental health support and support for those who experience sexual violence were increasing. Expanding relevant University services would be a focus of attention in 2021/22.

    Early timetable modelling was now available and reflected a substantial uplift in in-person learning activities. Schools were, in general, prioritising in person delivery for senior and PGT-level teaching where classes tend to be smaller, and digital delivery for the teaching of larger classes in the earlier years. Feedback from 2020/21 suggested that students had struggled to understand the heterogeneity of teaching across disciplines and that they had a strong preference for synchronous teaching. These issues would require further consideration.

    The Vice-Principal Students advised attendees that the Curriculum Transformation Hub had now been launched: Curriculum Transformation Hub - Home (sharepoint.com). The critical question to address at this stage was 'What do we want for the Edinburgh student and graduate?' – who are they and what do

we want them to be? Consultation around this would continue until the end of this calendar year and potentially into the beginning of the next. It was noted that some concerns had been raised about whether or not this was the correct time to be embarking on this work. The Vice-Principal Students believed it was the right time, provided the work was done at the correct pace.

The Personal Tutor and Student Support Review would be given further consideration in the coming academic year with a view to implementing its recommendations, albeit potentially in part, in academic year 2022/23.

4.   Research and Innovation – the Senior Vice-Principal, Jonathan Seckl, advised attendees that the University had entered its Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission two months earlier, which was a remarkable achievement. The submission was substantial and early metrics were encouraging.

It was acknowledged that research during the pandemic had been difficult. Far fewer researchers had been able to be on campus, and spend on research and outputs had reduced. However, grant applications and awards had increased. It was hoped that it would be possible to reduce restrictions around research environments in due course and therefore to increase activity.

The Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) Programme was going from strength to strength and exceeding its targets.

The University had a strategy to drive up industry engagement and this was proving successful. The funding environment overall was challenging, but the University was managing well and the outlook was positive.

5.   Estates and Infrastructure – the Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services, Catherine Martin, provided attendees with a recap on the previous year, noting that Edinburgh has one of the largest and most complex estates of all UK universities. The initial lockdown in March 2020 was managed by the Estates department over a very compressed period, while re-opening was governed by the Adaptation and Renewal Estates and Digital Infrastructure Group. This Group then folded into the 2021/22 Planning Group in spring 2021.

There had been challenges throughout the period for those who were continuing to work on campus. The University's lateral flow testing centre was established at short notice before the Winter Break. Actions were also taken in relation to the University's capital programme, with the deferral for two years of projects that were not yet subject to contract.

Looking ahead to 2021/22, around 94% of campus buildings were now open to some degree, albeit not at full capacity. The University was at this stage planning for 1m social distancing with additional safety measures in place. Physical distancing guidance for non-educational and research environments would be established in line with sectoral guidance when this is available.

A risk assessment approach to the use of the estate had been adopted. This included an overarching general teaching risk assessment and local risk assessments for specialist spaces. COVID security measures were being put in place to allow the University to bring vibrancy back to the campus in a safe way.

The expectation was that students would be on campus in 2021/22 and therefore that a proportion would be in University-managed accommodation. Appropriate

safety measures were being put in place and the University was continuing to discuss with the Scottish Government the possibility of providing quarantine facilities for those students coming to Edinburgh from Red List countries.

The University was looking afresh at its capital development programme through a short-life working group convened by the Principal which would report to University Executive and Estates Committee in September 2021.

Beyond 2021/22, consideration was being given to de-carbonisation of the University's heating systems.

The Vice-Principal recognised the critical importance of high quality operational estate management over the past 15 months and the colleagues who had been instrumental in facilitating this.

6. Hybrid Working – the Vice-Principal and Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University, Gavin McLachlan, noted that he was overseeing a programme to look at the future of hybrid working at Edinburgh. This was a fast-moving area, and the University had initiated its programme by developing a set of guiding principles. Key principles were around enabling staff to perform at their best, regardless of whether they were working on or off campus; emphasising people and well-being; campuses being a centre of gravity; staff being informed; and not fixing new hybrid work patterns for the first year.

   Hybrid working would be one aspect of the University's overall approach to flexible working. Any working patterns established would need to balance the needs of the organisation with those of teams and individuals, and would be underpinned by optimal use of the estate and modern digital approaches.

   Local managers would provide staff with information about any return to campus and would be guided in their decisions around this by information provided centrally around prioritisation of staff, the Estates re-opening programme and the Hybrid Working Framework, which it was hoped would be published the end of June 2021.

   The Hybrid Working Programme consisted of four steps: tranche 1 feasibility study (end of April to end of June 2021, although it was noted that timings may change if Edinburgh did not progress through the COVID-19 protection levels as anticipated); tranche 2 feasibility study (end of June to end of September 2021); interim hybrid working arrangements to allow ongoing testing and evaluation (September 2021 to April 2022); and incorporation of best practice into the University's Flexible Working Policy and the fixing of working patterns (from May 2022).

The Convener thanked the presenters for their contributions to the presentation and discussion and opened the Q&A section of the meeting. The following responses were provided to attendees' questions:

- In relation to a question about whether or not the University would be participating in the Scottish Government's four-day working week pilot study, it was noted that this was a pledge that was included in the SNP's election manifesto. No further details were known as yet. The University would look to see what was most appropriate for the institution when more details were available, in conjunction with work already being undertaken on hybrid and flexible working.

- In relation to a question about what the University was doing to support staff mental health following an extremely challenging 14-month period, it was noted that all staff wellbeing resources had been pulled together within the Health and Wellbeing hub: [Health & Wellbeing | The University of Edinburgh](). In addition, the University:
    - had given seven additional respite days;
    - was operating a 'best endeavours' approach;
    - how allowed unused annual leave to be carried forward into the following year;
    - was experimenting with meeting and / or email-free days in some areas;
    - was constantly reviewing activity to see where pressures on staff might be reduced;
    - and was giving consideration to what might be done to reduce wait times for the Staff Counselling Service.
- In response to a question about whether or not the quality of the University's current professional services was viewed as being sufficient, it was noted that there were opportunities to build from strengths: colleagues' existing significant expertise and experience would be used to identify where there was scope for efficiencies or improvements in quality.
- While we broadly remain an Edinburgh-based University, it was noted that hybrid working practices now make it possible for some University roles to be undertaken anywhere in the world. Going forwards, the University may need to reconsider its recruitment practices to ensure that it remains competitive and is able to attract the best talent.
- In response to a question about making available detailed information about the University's income and expenditure, to enable areas to engage fully with discussions around Curriculum Transformation and other strategic priorities, it was noted that the University does publish this information at the end of each financial year. In addition, updates on the University's financial position are produced by the Director of Finance and his team throughout the year. Attendees were advised that the University has six main budget areas (the three Colleges plus the three professional services groupings), and that cross-cutting projects such as Curriculum Transformation do not map directly onto any one of these six areas. As such, discussions about the best mechanism for funding these strategic priorities were underway.
- Strategy 2030 was developed prior to the pandemic. The University was confident that the Strategy still remained fit for purpose, though recognised that the speed at and way in which its aspirations were achieved may have been affected by the pandemic.
- Attendees were advised that the Hybrid Working Programme was not an Information Services Group (ISG) project as such: the project was being convened by the Chief Information Officer, but much of the work was being undertaken by colleagues in Human Resources, Finance and other areas. The Hybrid Working Group included representatives of HR and the Unions, and senior representation from across the University. Final decisions were being taken by University Executive.
- In response to a question about ways in which the University might better support the local community, particularly young people who were finding it more difficult to secure apprenticeships and entry-level roles because of the pandemic, it was noted that the University has a strong track record of community engagement and widening participation. However, it was recognised that there may be value in making the University's work in this area more visible, and community engagement would also be given careful consideration as part of the Curriculum Transformation work.

- Attendees asked about the link between the University's increased research grant success rate and the provision of increased research support resource. In response, it was noted that the University was in the process of reviewing the way in which it supports research through 'Growing Research Together'. It was hoped that it would be possible to accelerate the pace of this work and to make improvements within the next 12 months.
- There was discussion around an assumption that student support is necessarily better provided in person. It was agreed that there were some situations in which support could be provided just as, if not more effectively, online. Other situations were better handled in person. It would be important for the University to strike a balance going forwards. However, it was also noted that the expectation was that the campus would be the heart of the student experience from September. As such, it would be essential to provide students with visible, accessible, in-person support services on campus.
- It was recognised that staff would need to be provided with further guidance around the successful delivery of hybrid meetings as staff gradually returned to campus.
- Concerns were raised about overseas students who were prohibited from travelling to Edinburgh in September and students who needed to self-isolate and were therefore unable to participate in in-person teaching. It was noted that the University's working assumption was that students would be on campus in September and that any delays to arrival would be relatively short. However, to facilitate hybrid teaching where required, all centrally bookable lecture theatres and seminar rooms were being equipped with hybrid Level 1 classroom technology. In addition, a small number of teaching spaces would be equipped at Level 2, and a smaller number still at Level 4. Other hybrid options were also available to staff and they were encouraged to discuss these with learning technologists within their areas.
- In relation to PGT student numbers, it was noted that the University had committed to no growth for growth's sake. PGT provision would be considered as part of the Curriculum Transformation work. This would include creative thinking about the required components of a PGT programme.
- In relation to ensuring that staff expertise, values and priorities were central to the implementation of Strategy 2030, it was noted that the University sees the implementation of the Strategy as a collective responsibility. The 29 April 2021 communication discussed earlier in the meeting invited staff to contribute to discussions, and also raised questions around the University's approaches to engagement and decision-making. The results of staff surveys would be used to guide developments and the Staff Experience Committee, which reports into University Executive, would have a significant role to play in this work.
- Further consideration would be given to the format of online Senate meetings to see if there were better ways of handling attendees' questions and to ensure that presenters made use of accessibility best practice.

The Convener closed the open session of Senate, noting that Senate members were invited to join the formal meeting of Senate at 4.00pm.

FORMAL MEETING OF SENATE
This section of the meeting is open to Senate members only.

Present: P Mathieson (Chair), F Abou Jawad, A Akinola, R Andrew, M Barany, R Baxstrom, C Beckett, S Benjamin, S Bennett, J Bradfield, H Branigan, M Brennan, D Byrne, C Campbell, D Cavanagh, U Chan, K Chapman, N Chue Hong, A Connor, J Crang, H Critchley, J Crook, S Cunningham-Burley, J Danbolt, L De Mets, A Desler, K Donovan, L Dritsas, L Duncan-Karrim, J Dunlop, H Ellis, J Evans, M Evans, S Ewing, S Forbes, C French, D Friedrich, L Grant, G Gray, D Gray, D Grumett, K Halliday, L Hamilton, G Harrison, T Harrison, D Hay, E Haycock-Stuart , S Henderson, C Heycock, M Highton, J Hillston, A Holloway, J Hopgood, J Hoy, M Khattar, L Kirstein, A Maciocia, F Mackay, S MacPherson, K Matthews, E Mavin, G McLachlan, J Menzies, D Miell, N Moran, S Morley, T Morrison, A Murray, J Murray, P Navarro, C Naydani, B Ngwenya, R Nicol, P Norris, M Novenson, I Omah, M O'Toole, K Pantoula, D Paton, C Phillips, J Reynolds-Wright, R Reynolds, K Rice, S Riley, J Robbins, S Rolle, T Schwarz, A Scully, R Semple, G Simm, S Smith, A Snell, A Sorace, S Stock, P Taylor, E Taylor, J Terry, N Tuzi, J Upton, P Walsh, S Warrington

In attendance: G Douglas, T Gold, S MacGregor, R Siro, P Ward

Apologies: E Bomberg, C Boswell, S Bowd, C Caquineau, J Cruz, J Evans, D Evensen, S Fawkner, R Fisher, C Harmon, K Jenkins, R Kenway, S Lamont-Black, K Lingstadt, W Loretto, L McAra, A McCormick, N McCrossan, L Mckie, A Morris, D Robertson, J Sakovics, M Shipston, J Smith, T Stratford, A Tudhope, J Turner, K Vellodi, B Wahi-Singh

3. **Senate Members' Feedback on Presentation and Discussion Topic**

Senate members provided the following additional feedback on the presentation and discussion topic:

- The importance of ensuring that staff members who feed into strategic discussions can see how their input makes a difference to high-level decision making was reiterated. The Vice-Principal Strategic Change and Governance and University Secretary agreed that this was an issue that required ongoing consideration.
- Members discussed the transparency of the University's budget model and the sense that some programmes which generate significant income for the University do not always benefit from this resource. The Convener noted the complexities of the institution, but was keen to discuss this matter further outside of the meeting.
- In relation to student mental health support, it was noted that the University's expenditure in this area increases year on year. Members were supportive of this, but also expressed the view that there would be benefit it undertaking work to build student resilience. This was likely to be particularly necessary amongst the new student cohort entering in 2021/22 given how disrupted their final years of school had been by the pandemic.
- Members discussed the value for knowledge exchange of the University hosting academic conference and meetings, but noted the climate impact of such events. It was agreed that the academic community should be thinking carefully about ways of reducing travel. However, in-person gatherings were also important if the University was to remain internationally significant. There was therefore a place for continuing to hold such gatherings, but ensuring that knowledge exchange was maximised; best use was made of available hybrid technology; and that events' carbon footprints were accurately quantified and offset.

- The view that research does not cover its costs was challenged: although grant income may not fully cover costs, the University's research also generates significant REF income and builds the University's reputation, allowing it to attract the highest calibre staff and students. Members discussed the symbiotic relationship between teaching and research and the importance of ensuring that they are not viewed as separate areas of University business.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

4. Report from E-Senate

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

A Senate member raised a question about item 10 of the Report - the Report of the Senate Exception Committee. The Exception Committee Report noted that degree awards may be rescinded if students had unpaid tuition fee debt, and it was asked if the University could be more flexible around this given the circumstances of the pandemic.

In response, it was noted that the University's approach was in line with that of the sector and that it is standard practice for students not to be permitted to graduate until debt is at least understood, and preferably cleared. Enhanced measures that had been put in place by the University to support students financially during the pandemic included:

- stopping the practice of withdrawing students' access to the University's IT systems when in debt.
- making significantly more student hardship funding available: in a typical year, £1.2 million would be made available, and an additional £2 million had been available this academic year.

It was noted that widening participation students are not responsible for paying their own fees and would therefore not incur tuition fee debt.

5. Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees

Members approved the Annual Report.

The Convener of Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) advised members that a large number of concessions requests had recently been dealt with by Convener's Action. These had been well-filtered by Colleges and Schools and none were rejected.

Members were invited by the Convener of Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) to identify any gaps in the priorities for the coming academic year outlined in the paper. A question was raised about the extent to which sustainability was being considered by the three Senate Standing Committees. The Convener expressed confidence that sustainability was very prominent in the University's thinking, and it was noted that sustainability was embedded within a number of the priorities detailed in the paper, including Curriculum Transformation and Digital Maturity. However it was acknowledged that there would be value in making this issue more explicit in the Standing Committee priorities, and the Conveners would give this further though.

Action: Senate Standing Committee Conveners to give further thought to ways in which issues relating to sustainability might be made more explicit in the Committee priorities for 2021/2.

6. Senate Standing Committees: Membership and Terms of Reference

Members approved the Senate Standing Committees' memberships and terms of reference, though noted that a senior member of CMVM staff appeared to have been omitted from the APRC membership.

Action: Senate Clerk to check the membership of APRC. [Secretary's note: this action is now complete].

The potential value of including on the membership of the Standing Committees additional 'at large' members of Senate was discussed. A number of members were supportive of this, agreeing that it could assist in making the Committees more representative and enhance discussions around high-level University policy. It was also recognised that:

- the current terms of reference and memberships for the Standing Committees were approved in September 2019 and were therefore relatively new;
- the Standing Committees were already large;
- there was an expectation that those already on the memberships of the Committees were not there as individuals but to represents their constituencies.

It was agreed Senate would welcome a discussion paper on this topic at a later date.

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL OR NOTING

7. Conferment of the Title of Emeritus Professor

The paper was approved.

8. Report from the Honorary Degrees Committee

The paper was approved. It was noted that the number of nominees was small because the University was, where possible, keen to wait for normal graduation arrangements to resume before awarding Honorary Degrees.

9. Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) – Outcome

The paper was noted.

10. Research Strategy Group Update

The paper was noted.

11. Senate Membership 2021/2

The paper was noted.

12. Senate Exception Committee Terms of Reference and Membership

The paper was approved.

13. Senate Standing Orders – Minor Amendment

The paper was approved.

14. Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate

The paper was noted.

Electronic Senate

21 – 29 September 2021

Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council on
Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity 2020/21

Description of paper
1. The paper is the University's annual report to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on institution-led review and enhancement activity 2020/21. The report was submitted to Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) on 16 September 2021, where the contents were approved. Following approval by SQAC, Senate is invited to note and comment on the report. The report, accompanied by any comments from Senate, will be submitted to University Court for consideration and formal approval at its meeting on 6 October 2021.

Action requested / recommendation
2. To note formally and transmit any comments to University Court.

3. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, Senate is asked to note:

   - This year's annual report includes the outcomes of the annual monitoring, review and reporting process for 2019/20 as the timescale for reporting was extended.
   - Information on the impact on the internal periodic review schedule is included.

4. For E-Senate, members are invited to submit any comments, observations or reservations by email. A nil response is taken as assent. Any comments on this paper should be emailed to SenateSupport@ed.ac.uk quoting "comment on e-S 21/22 1 B". These comments will be published verbatim at https://edin.ac/2DYSYJT This is an EASE-protected webpage were comments can be viewed by other Senate members.

Background and context
4. This paper is relevant as Senate has overall responsibility for quality assurance. However, Senate devolves its powers to SQAC, which has responsibility for the University's quality assurance framework, and the annual report details the outcomes of quality assurance framework processes. SQAC has approved the contents of this report on behalf of Senate.

5. In accordance with SFC guidance on quality, University Court are required to approve the annual report. The report will then be submitted to the SFC following the Court meeting.

6. The report is being presented to Senate as electronic business due to the reporting deadline set by SFC, and on the basis that the content of the report has previously been approved by SQAC on behalf of Senate.

Discussion
6. Senate is invited to note and transmit any comments on the report, which is attached as an appendix, to University Court.

Resource implications
7. There are no specific resource implications associated with the report.

Risk management
8. The provision of a high quality student experience is a high level risk on the University's Strategic Risk Register, and is overseen by the Risk Management Committee reporting

to Audit & Risk Committee and Court. Additionally, failure in effectiveness of the quality assurance framework, including aligning review activity with external expectations and taking action on findings, constitutes an institutional risk.

Equality & diversity
9. Quality assurance policies and processes are subject to Equality Impact Assessment.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed
10. Senate Quality Assurance Committee has oversight of the implementation and communication of actions relating to quality assurance and enhancement activity.

11. Senate Support will transmit any comments received from Senate to the University Court.

Author
Professor Tina Harrison (Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance) and Nichola Kett (Academic Policy Manager, Academic Services)
17 September 2021

Freedom of Information
Open.

The University of Edinburgh

Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity 2020/21

Summary of the institutional-led review outcomes from the preceding academic year (AY) including main themes, recommendations and/or commendations

The University carries out regular reviews of its subject areas and Schools as one of the main ways in which it assures itself of the quality of its academic provision and the student experience. The reviews are carried out on a six-yearly cycle and take the form of internal periodic reviews (IPRs).

IPRs – 2020/21[1]
- Clinical Education (postgraduate taught)
- Mathematics (postgraduate research)
- Moray House School of Education and Sport (postgraduate)+
- Oral Health Sciences (undergraduate)
- Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences (postgraduate)+
- Social and Political Science (postgraduate taught)+

+ IPRs which were due to take place in semester 2 2019/20 and were postponed to 2020/21 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Due to the knock-on effects of postponing these IPRs and the Enhancement-led Institutional Review being postponed from autumn 2020 to spring 2021, permission was sought and granted to reschedule the following IPRs from 2020/21 to 2021/22:
- Biological Sciences (taught)
- Health in Social Science (all)
- History Classics and Archaeology (undergraduate)
- Informatics (taught)
- Law (all)

Additionally, permission was sought and granted to reschedule the following IPRs from 2021/22 to 2022/23:
- Divinity (postgraduate)
- GeoSciences (postgraduate taught)
- Edinburgh College of Art (undergraduate)
- Mathematics (taught)
- Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences (undergraduate)

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[1] Reports available at: https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview/internal-review/reports

For rescheduled IPRs, all provision will continue to be reviewed through annual monitoring, with School annual reports being considered by Colleges to inform their annual reports and a Sub Group which provides a report to Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SAQC). These existing processes will continue with any issues requiring attention being acted upon in the meantime.

All IPRs took place online in 2020/21 and supporting guidance[2], informed by benchmarking with other Scottish higher education institutions, was developed. It is planned that all IPRs will take place online in 2021/22 and the supporting guidance will continue to be developed as the online process is reflected upon.

SQAC receives an annual report in September each year on areas of good practice and for further development from IPRs and remits actions as necessary[3]. A progress report on actions is then considered by SQAC at an appropriate point. The areas of good practice and for further development from 2020/21 reviews are:

Areas of good practice

- The dedicated support provided and commitment and leadership shown by both academic and professional services **staff**, including in challenging circumstances due to the pandemic, was recognised in 15 commendations across all six reviews. Additionally, **student support** as a theme was recognised across five reviews, including four commendations relating to the Personal Tutor system and commitment to providing pastoral support. Examples include:
  o Academic staff for their commitment, expertise and their collegiality [Clinical Education]
  o Vision, leadership and day-to-day management in developing and operating a large, vibrant graduate programme [Mathematics]
  o Outstanding work of the Programme Director for their collaborative leadership style in enhancing the learning and teaching culture [Oral Health Sciences]
  o The academic and professional services staff for their exceptional effort in the move to online provision and continuing to support students in their learning under challenging circumstances [Social and Political Sciences]
  o The Personal Tutor system the School has in place for Masters students [Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences]
  o The Personal Tutor System which is working well within the School [Moray House School of Education and Sport]

- The consideration of **equality, diversity and inclusion** throughout many aspects, including recruitment, support for student-led initiatives, online activity to support widening participation and funding resulted in six commendations from four reviews. Examples include:
  o Activity in interleaving equality diversity and inclusivity in internationalisation and curriculum transformation plans [Moray House School of Education and Sport]
  o Consideration of equality and diversity in programmes [Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences]
  o Commitment to widening participation and online widening participation activity [Social and Political Sciences]

- **Community building** activities, initiated by both staff and students, were commended four times across the same number of reviews. Examples include:

- o Success in creating and maintaining communities of online learning and practice, including a flexible and student-centred approach and attention to the diverse needs of students across career stage, specialism and geographical location [Clinical Education]
  - o The Research Training Fair as an excellent initiative for building community and supporting students in preparation for their dissertation [Social and Political Sciences]

- Approaches to listening to the **student voice** were commended five times across four reviews. Examples include:
  - o Use of student interns to encourage the student voice and engagement [Moray House School of Education and Sport]
  - o Subject area for their approach in engaging with and listening to the student body [Oral Health Sciences]
  - o For prioritising the student voice [Social and Political Sciences]

Areas for further development (identified in multiple reviews)

- **Tutors and demonstrators (seven recommendations across three reviews).** Recommendations covered training, the provision of information, allocation of work, and support.

Beyond reviews taking place online, no significant changes were made to the IPR process in 2020/21.

Annual monitoring, review and reporting – 2019/20 and 2020/21[4]

A Sub Group of SQAC reviews School annual quality reports and submits a report to SQAC on the outcomes, identifying areas of good practice and for further development and remitting actions as necessary[5]. Responses to the additional School-, College- and University-level actions arising from the review of School annual quality reports are then made available to SQAC.

2019/20[6]
At its meeting in May 2020, SQAC agreed to suspend the normal annual monitoring, review and reporting processes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Instead, a light-touch, interim process was approved with the aim of complementing ongoing academic contingency work. Streamlined reports focussed on the impact of and learning from the pandemic and allowed for optional updates on actions identified from last year's reporting cycle and reflection on other aspects of academic standards, student performance and the student learning experience (including industrial action). Deadlines for the submission of School annual quality reports were extended from August to November and thus outcomes are included in this year's annual report to SFC.

Themes of positive practice for sharing at University level:
Examples of good practice were identified in every School annual quality report. The following themes reflect the areas where there was a critical mass of good practice examples.

- **Student and staff welfare: sense of community, support provided to students by staff, and local level communication.** Examples include:
  - o Increased social and pastoral support processes, additional personal tutor sessions, regular Collaborate sessions and regular signposting to mental health and wellbeing services within the University [Molecular, Genetics and Population Health Sciences].

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[4] https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview/annual-monitoring-review-and-reporting
[5] Example from last year sqac-agendapapers-20201217-web.pdf (ed.ac.uk) (Paper B)
[6] sqac-agendapapers-20201217-web.pdf (ed.ac.uk) (Papers B and C)

- o The introduction of a monthly student review meeting involving key academic and professional staff to improve awareness of individual students experiencing difficulties [Economics].
- o Retained high student engagement through frequent contact resulting in students feeling supported, cohort and peer support networks being built and maintained, and early detection of issues [Biological Sciences].

- **Teaching and learning: positive innovations as a result of the transition to hybrid teaching and partnership approach to curriculum adaptation.** Examples include:
  - o A coordinated and comprehensive response to the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, specifically the Adapt, Support, Implement, Deliver project which supported the transition to hybrid teaching through co-creation with students [Mathematics].
  - o Existing online postgraduate taught programmes provided resources to support undergraduate hybrid teaching in semester 2 [Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (RDSVS)].
  - o Curriculum Renewal in Engineering Workshops were held over summer and these led to the development of the new first and second year structure and courses [Engineering].

- **Assessment: adaptions to and diversification of assessment methods were well received by students and staff.** Examples include:
  - o Innovative approaches to assessment, including video presentations [Education].
  - o Consultation with students on how they would be assessed, leading to a greater sense of student ownership of their education [Biological Sciences].
  - o The use of different assessment methods has prompted a rethink on future examination policy and an anticipated move away from sit down examinations [Chemistry and Literature, Languages and Cultures].

- **Equality, diversity and inclusion: Schools strove to promote an inclusive learning environment during the pandemic.** Examples include:
  - o An active Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee and support for postgraduate research students to develop their own race equality campaign, ConveRACEions [Health in Social Sciences].
  - o A range of initiatives to support and enhance the experience of students from widening participation backgrounds [Physics and Astronomy and GeoSciences]
  - o Workshops run by the Decolonising the Curriculum working group help staff to think through how to ensure inclusiveness and avoid racial bias in the content and delivery of their courses [Informatics].
  - o Informal networks for students and staff who are parents or carers and for LGBTQ+ staff and postgraduates [Physics and Astronomy].
  - o The introduction of two new groups, a short life Race Equality and Anti-Racism Working Group and a longer term Inclusivity Group which will set priorities and develop objectives that improve inclusivity and diversity within the programme [Edinburgh Medical School].

- **Administration: the rapid development of new and innovative administrative systems and procedures, including the move to online Boards of Examiners and PhD vivas.** Example include:
  - o The successful move to online Boards of Examiners meetings, identified as an innovation that could be used in future years [Law].
  - o Online vivas enabling the appointment of international examiners due to the removal of travel requirements [RDSVS and Mathematics].

o   The use of SharePoint for to support Board of Examiners through an asynchronous approach [Literature, Languages and Cultures].

Areas for further development at the University level:

- **Staff Welfare.** Schools expressed concern that the pandemic had exacerbated existing staffing and workload pressures.   While academic and professional services staff demonstrated superb commitment, resilience and dedication, the need for additional wellbeing and mental health support for staff was raised by schools. The move to online teaching, hybrid modes of simultaneous online and on-campus teaching and the impact of increasing student numbers were highlighted as areas of pressure.
- **Communication.** A theme that emerged across School reports was University communications to students and staff and the need to ensure that University level communications to students align with local communications and plans as a key element to managing student expectations. There was also a widespread desire from staff for more information and clarity in relation to initiatives or projects that were halted due to the pandemic.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion.** Schools highlighted the impact of the pandemic on students with protected characteristics, caring responsibilities, and students from widening participation backgrounds
- **Extensions and Special Circumstances.** Schools reported that the implementation of the Extensions and Special Circumstance (ESC) system had been very challenging, causing additional workload for staff at a time when they were already under pressure.
- **Online learning platforms.** Schools highlighted issues with the online learning platforms that the University had in place at the start of the pandemic, in part reflecting the rapid shift to digital delivery, and reported a desire for a strategic assessment of digital learning platforms to ensure they are fit for purpose going forward.
- **On-campus space and resources.** Access to the University's on-campus space and resources continued to be a theme across School reports. Concerns were raised in terms of the consistency of quality and suitability of teaching and community building space that was under strain before the pandemic and which may be under further strain when students return to campus under social distancing constraints. Loss of access to specialised discipline-specific spaces and physical library resources because of the pandemic had a particular impact on the student experience. In addition, Schools noted the impact of expanding student numbers on an estate already under strain, and timetabling challenges including delays and lack of suitable rooms.
- **Assessment and Progression Tools (APT).** Some Schools (predominantly in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) reported issues with the functionality and reliability of APT.

SQAC agreed that positive lessons from the adaptation of the annual monitoring, review and reporting processes should be built on for future cycles. In particular, the streamlining of reports while maintaining a good level of information on quality assurance issues and activities and the merits of a themed template would be explored.

2020/21
In April 2021, SQAC approved amendments to the reporting templates to support the continued suspension of normal annual monitoring, review and reporting processes due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the interim process to review and reflect on 2020/21. The light-touch process continued, focussing on the impact and learning from the Covid-19 pandemic as well as including updates on actions identified from previous years' reporting cycles and a reflection on other aspects of academic standards, student performance and the student learning experience.

Themes of positive practice for sharing at University level:
Examples of good practice were identified in every School annual quality report. The following themes reflect the areas where there was a critical mass of good practice examples.

- **Community Building: the sense of community evoked by the pandemic and support that academic and professional service staff provided for their students and each other.** Examples include:
  - Postgraduate research coffee mornings, online writing groups, online town halls to complement Student-Staff Liaison Committees and co-created research seminars [Literatures, Languages and Cultures].
  - Creating a dedicated space on Teams to bring together new students in an "academic-free" environment developed community [Clinical Sciences].
  - Research groups ran additional social activities and a convivial PhD student poster evening (online) was organised to encourage further student-student and student-academic contact [Physics and Astronomy].

- **Online/Hybrid Enhancements: in response to the pandemic, Schools/Deaneries developed new approaches to teaching & learning and administrative systems and procedures.** Examples include:
  - Enhancements have enabled: synchronous and asynchronous activities and a trial of teaching collaborations across the world; accessibility of learning material and the use of LEARN for discussions (ease of contributing through digital tools valued by students); labs adaptability; dissertation advice to ensure resilience; supervision arrangements [History, Classics and Archaeology].
  - Online vivas have been successful and should be rolled out post-Covid as this allows for international examiners to be appointed at no extra travel costs [The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies].
  - Online submission and marking of continuously assessed work has been received overwhelmingly favourably by both staff and students; the remote supervision of final-year projects and dissertations has been highly effective overall; and successful implementation of online computing labs and online tools for collaborative coding [Mathematics].

- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI): there were a number of initiatives by Schools striving to promote an inclusive learning environment.** Examples include:
  - Online Widening Participation (WP) support; outreach activity; online events; decolonisation and inclusive pedagogy workshops; decolonisation working group; new appointments; diversification of curricula ongoing; flagging sensitive content and supporting students guidance; consideration in Board of Studies [Literatures, Languages and Cultures].
  - Introduced two new groups (a short life working group Race Equality and Anti-Racism Group; and a longer term Inclusivity Group) which will set priorities and develop objectives that improve inclusivity and diversity within the programme [Medical Education].
  - Initiating a new research project to investigate the causes of Informatics student attainment gaps and learn which interventions and support measures are working and how well. The study will be cohort-based, following students from first year to final year and graduation (or other exit route) [Informatics].

Areas for further development at the University level:

- **Staff Welfare and Student Experience.** There are ongoing concerns that the pandemic has exacerbated existing issues in relation to staffing and workload pressures. This year's reports raised concerns that these may now be impacting the student experience.
- **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.** Increasingly Schools/Deaneries have engaged with student data and reflected on the gaps in attainment of different groups of students within their local area and across the University. Concerns were raised in a number of reports about the University's support of students with protected characteristics, particularly in relation to the impact of the pandemic. The issues have been widely discussed and schools/deaneries would now like support from the University to address the underlying causes.
- **Online/Hybrid Platforms.** In response to the pandemic, Schools/Deaneries developed new approaches to teaching & learning and administrative systems and procedures. They would like to maintain and carry these innovations into the post-pandemic world and, to support this aspiration, there is a general desire for a strategic assessment of the University's online learning platforms with the aim of improving functionality and suitability.

The Sub Group also noted the importance of the following issues and recommends that SQAC request follow-up actions and monitor progress:
- Issues relating to postgraduate research students, including the long-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on research and welfare.
- The implementation of the Extensions and Special Circumstances system, exacerbated by Covid-19 mitigations.
- Resourcing of the evolved model of support which will be implemented in response to the Student Support and Personal Tutor review.

The Sub Group again agreed that the streamlined process had worked well and that positive lessons from the adaptation be built on.

Sharing Good Practice from Institution-led Review and Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting
The reports identifying themes of positive practice for sharing and areas for further development at University level and a paper outlining examples of good practice from annual monitoring, review and reporting processes are passed to the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) to identify content for Teaching Matters[7] and the Learning and Teaching Conference. Examples of Teaching Matters blog posts that have been identified through quality processes are tagged[8]. Good practice is also shared at College-level[9]. Additionally, an area of the University's quality website has been developed to share good practice and resources[10]. Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was not possible to hold the usual University-level event to share good practice but Academic Services and IAD are exploring opportunities to share good practice in 2021/22.

Ways in which support services were reviewed

Student Support Services Annual Review (SSSAR) – reporting on 2019/20
Student-facing support services are reviewed annually by a sub-committee of SQAC. The sub-committee submits a report on the outcomes of the review process to SQAC annually in late November/early December[11]. For reporting on 2019/20, the process was streamlined to focus on impacts of industrial action and the Covid-19 pandemic. Services were invited to submit their

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[7] https://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/teaching-matters
[8] https://www.teaching-matters-blog.ed.ac.uk/tag/quality-enhancement-report-examples/
[9] For example CMVM Good Practice Showcase 2021_Recording - Media Hopper Create
[10] https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/good-practice
[11] sqac-agendapapers-20201217-web.pdf (ed.ac.uk) (Paper M)

reports from the end of August 2020 for a mid-November deadline to a new SharePoint site, which facilitated sharing of experience and good practice

Each service receives individual feedback on their report, including commendations and areas of good practice. No sub-committee meetings were held but each service report was reviewed by the external and the Students' Association members. Common themes arising from service reports were:

- Staff response to challenges: staff commitment, flexibility and creativity provided an impressive response to the pandemic.
- Working across boundaries: increased collaborative working with other teams, services, Colleges and Schools.
- Digital processes for enhancement: digital processes provided improvements and streamlining.

The streamlined approach to reporting will continue for reporting on 2020/21 but peer review of reports will be reintroduced and it is hoped an online event to share good practice and discuss themes will be held.

Student Support Thematic Review

Thematic reviews focus on the quality of the student experience in relation to a particular theme or aspect of student support which can span both student support services and academic areas. They are reserved for significant issues requiring in-depth exploration that often cannot be achieved via IPRs or SSSAR. Topics are influenced by the outcomes of SSSAR and discussion with the Students' Association. As planned, no thematic review was carried during 2020/21, however, SQAC considered updates on actions from the thematic review of black and minority ethnic (BME) students' experiences of support at the University. Relevant actions from this review and the Mature Students and Parents and Carers review are being progressed by the SQAC Data Task Group which has been established to examine data and methodological options for the systematic monitoring of data in relation to the student journey (ie retention, progression, attainment data) with the aim of ensuring that all groups of students have an equitable experience during their time at the University. Additionally, the University established a taskforce led by the Convenor of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee to drive forward the recommendations from the thematic review of BME students' experiences of support at the University.

Role and nature of student engagement in institution-led review

The Students' Association and the University work in partnership to ensure that students are central to academic governance, decision-making and quality assurance and enhancement.

IPR and thematic reviews both include student members on review teams. The student member of a review team will typically convene one or more meetings during the review. Membership of a review team is included in the student's Higher Education Achievement Record. In addition to having student members on review teams, engagement of students from review areas as a part of IPRs is regarded as essential. Briefing material aimed at students outlines ways in which they can engage with reviews and actions taken in response. Parallel briefings guide Schools on how to engage their students with reviews. The remits for all IPRs include items proposed by students in the review area.

The ELIR commended the University's commitment to working in partnership with students and support for student involvement in IPRs.

Contextual information and key messages from analysis of data

The results of the 2021 National Student Survey (NSS) show a decline across the whole sector; satisfaction fell for every question and overall satisfaction fell by 7 percentage points. Overall satisfaction at Edinburgh decreased at a lesser rate (down by 6.5 percentage points) but our overall position is below the sector average (71% compared to 79%). Satisfaction with Assessment and Feedback remains a challenge for the University. Across the sector satisfaction fell by four percentage points. Satisfaction at Edinburgh fell by six percentage points. Both the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) perform consistently better than the NSS and our position is broadly in line with the rest of the Russell Group, although results have been affected by Covid. Action to address the persistent low scores for assessment and feedback (particularly for NSS) was the subject of a recommendation in the University's ELIR 2021 which is being taken forward by a task group over academic year 2021/22 to develop a strategic and holistic approach to assessment and feedback. The results of both the NSS and the Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) have been discussed in some depth by the Senior Leadership Team (August 2021), University Executive (at its away day in August 2021) and the Academic Strategy Group.

In April each year, SQAC considers a report on degree classification outcomes. Any subject areas judged to have diverged substantially from either the University average or comparators in their discipline are then asked to specifically reflect on the issue, and any proposed remediation, in their School annual quality report. This approach ensures systematic University oversight whilst also encouraging Schools to engage with the specific data on attainment, reflect on the issues and context, and then seek appropriate local solutions.

In December 2020, SQAC considered an analysis of the outcomes of the University's "no detriment" policy implemented for taught programmes in response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on students. Some Schools had increases in the proportion of undergraduate students achieving a first class or upper second class degree but at University level the increase was modest. However, though the proportion of students achieving a first class degree increased, the attainment gaps for black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) and Widening Participation (WP) students had widened. Attainment gaps are also being addressed in response to an ELIR recommendation.

Additionally, in April 2021, SQAC considered a suite of papers analysing data on student outcomes and progression for the year 2019/20.[12] SQAC noted that nearly all Russell Group members had seen an increase in the proportion of first class degrees awarded and most had seen a smaller increase in the proportion of high classification degrees awarded. However, the increase in first class awards at Edinburgh was greater than the Russell Group average and placed Edinburgh in the top third of the Russell Group for firsts awarded this year. Attainment gaps were noted for BAME, Scottish domiciled and disabled students.

Due to the effects of the pandemic, SQAC agreed that 2019/20 should be regarded as a statistical outlier as trend data for the year would be difficult to interpret reliably and did not identify specific subject areas where patterns in degree classification outcomes diverged substantially from either the institution average or disciplinary comparators. SQAC agreed that comparisons could be made between different student groups within the academic year 2019/20, and Schools were asked to reflect on student progression and outcomes data, and in particular the differences in attainment in their annual quality reports. This also aligned with the outcomes of the Online Remote Examinations and Assessment (OREA) Task Group which was established in summer 2020 to make recommendations in light of the hybrid approach and the move to almost entirely online assessment.[13] SQAC also agreed that further analysis was required to understand what has driven

[12] https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/sqac-agendapapers-20210422.pdf (Papers B-F)
[13] Online Remote Examinations and Assessment | The University of Edinburgh

these differential levels of attainment in relation to equality and diversity and consideration given to how the University can move from reflection on data to action on the issues identified.

Analysis of progression data showed that the University markedly outperformed the Scottish sector average and the UK sector averages for the relevant HESA Performance Indicators (non-continuation and projected outcomes), and also outperformed the HESA benchmark for the percentage projected to exit without an award or transfer. Despite these favourable rates of retention the University is not complacent; research into retention trends and associated factors has been carried out with further analysis planned.

An analysis of 2019/20 undergraduate[14] and taught postgraduate[15] external examiners' reports shows that there continues to be a high number of commendations and a low number of issues across the University. The main theme commended in undergraduate reports across all three Colleges was the assessment process, with the sub-theme of good practice and innovation (in the programme development theme) most commented on. The main theme commended in taught postgraduate reports was also the assessment process. Many commendations were course or programme specific, however the most often occurring type of commendation related to the range, quality and diversity of teaching, learning and assessment. A small number of issues raised by external examiners related to the (often timely) provision of information to examiners. No University-level action was required. External Examiners' feedback on our response to Covid-19 pandemic was overwhelmingly positive, and they recognised the huge additional effort by colleagues under difficult circumstances. They commented positively on adjustments to learning, teaching and assessment, thought that digital Boards of Examiners had operated well and felt that they had been kept well informed of changes and adjustments.

We remain committed to widening access and our students from SIMD20 areas represent 9.3% of this past year's full-time Scottish-domiciled undergraduate intake (2020 entry). We have seen large increases in Scottish students who have been flagged within our contextual admissions process and a positive increase in acceptances from students from SIMD20 backgrounds in the 2021 admissions cycle (students who will enter the University in 2022 or 2023). We have also been pleased to notice an increase in applications and acceptances from care-experienced students which we expect to be reflected in an increased number of care experienced students starting with us this September.

Summary

The previous year's IPRs and annual monitoring, review and reporting processes have identified good practice examples and it is important that these are shared across the University. Areas for further development have also been identified, and these will be considered and acted upon accordingly.

The University's approach to improving the learning, teaching and the student experience can be summarised in the ongoing and planned work outlined below, the pace and scale of which is being balanced according to the ELIR recommendations and priorities and the ongoing effects of and pressures of the pandemic.

Actions Undertaken and Planned

Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR)

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[14] sqac-agendapapers-20201217-web.pdf (ed.ac.uk) (Paper I)
[15] sqac-agendapapers-20210422.pdf (ed.ac.uk) (Paper I)

The University's ELIR took place in spring 2021 and the final reports were published in July[16]. The Review Team commended:

- Our commitment to working in close partnership with our students;
- The work of the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) in supporting staff development and sharing good practice;
- The promotion and expansion of Peer Support/Peer-Assisted Learning Schemes; and
- Our support for student involvement in Internal Periodic Reviews.

The Review Team also made a number of recommendations:

- Establish effective institutional oversight and evaluation of the implementation of policy and practice, including increasing the range and use of baseline requirements;
- Develop an effective approach to the strategic leadership and management of change to ensure timely implementation of solutions;
- Make significant progress in implementing plans to ensure an effective approach to offering personal student support and demonstrable progress within the next academic year on parity of experience for students;
- Make demonstrable progress within the next academic year in developing our approach to the design and management of assessment and feedback, including progressing proposals for the establishment of a common marking scheme;
- Provide institutional oversight on the strategic direction underpinning current learning and teaching developments;
- Implement an approach to facilitate institutional oversight and the effective planning and monitoring of students numbers;
- Consider how to address attainment gaps in student performance;
- Ensure effective implementation of the policy for the training and support of postgraduates who teach;
- Take action to remove barriers that prevent some academic staff from fully engaging with development opportunities for the professionalisation of teaching; and
- Progress with work to improve the recognition of teaching excellence.

An ELIR Response Action Plan has been developed and is being discussed with University Executive and Court. A number of the recommendations align with existing work we are already taking forward (such as Curriculum Transformation). Work has already started to progress the recommendations on assessment and feedback and personal tutor/student support, given the priority placed on these.

Strategy and Strategic Projects

Curriculum Transformation Programme
The University has committed to undertaking a major Curriculum Transformation Programme. The programme, that began with a soft launch in April 2021, is a major long-term initiative for the University, closely aligned with the University Strategy 2030. The programme will move through several distinct phases over the next 4 to 5 years. Over academic year 2021/22 the focus will be on creating a vision for the Edinburgh Graduate and Edinburgh Curriculum. The focus will then move towards developing and refining key elements of the curriculum, and the infrastructure and support it needs.

Adaptation and Renewal Team (ART)
Following the successful short-term response to the Covid-19 pandemic in semester 2, 2020, an ART, led by the Principal, was established to oversee the work needed to respond to the short, medium

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[16] University of Edinburgh (qaa.ac.uk)

and longer-term challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. ART has now been replaced by a Covid-Planning group as we prepare for learning and teaching into 2021/22.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
An Executive level University wide lead for equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) has been appointed. This visibly and firmly restates our commitment to leadership in this area and to mainstreaming EDI across the University. A University level ED&I Committee contributes to strategic development, action planning and the promotion of best practice for and beyond protected groups. The Executive level lead is also leading the taskforce to drive forward the recommendations from the thematic Review of BME students' experiences of support at the University, and will be involved in considering our actions to address attainment gaps more broadly as part of the ELIR response.

Student Voice
The Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) priority themes agreed in 2019/20 – community, student voice, and social justice – remained relevant in 2020/21. As planned, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic no funded projects took place, although the SPA and the themes remained as a key reference point for the student experience. To reflect the maturation of the SPA and to ensure close alignment and integration with core student engagement activities, the management of the SPA will move to the Institute for Academic Development for 2021/22. This move was discussed with and is supported by the Student's Association.

A fundamental review of the operation and purpose of Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQs), alongside other student voice mechanisms including mid-course feedback, took place throughout 2020. As a result of this review, reflecting a move from centrally managed CEQs to locally managed course level feedback, the Student Voice Policy was revised to require each course to offer at least one opportunity for students to provide feedback[17]. Resources to support this transition, including a toolkit and good practice examples, are being developed.

At institution-level, and maintaining institutional oversight, monthly pulse surveys were introduced in 2020/21 for all students. The short survey provided a quick barometer check of student satisfaction and flagged any issues students were experiencing with hybrid teaching and learning in close to real time to enable issues to be resolved. The surveys asked a small additional number of topical questions to get early feedback on issues like students' experiences of online exams and this was used in planning delivery of teaching and learning for 2021/22. Pulse surveys will continue to run throughout academic year 2021/22 as we emerge from the pandemic. Longer-term, a more holistic student survey will be developed to enable longitudinal data to be gathered, linked to key performance indicators.

The University continues to operate a Programme Representative system, delivered in partnership with the Students' Association, supporting approximately 1500 student representatives. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, in 2020/21, in-person training was replaced by a two-part online training, consisting of an asynchronous self-study module and a live, interactive training session delivered by the Students' Association's Representation and Democracy Team. Over 72% of Representatives completed Programme Rep Training, with 1012 completing the asynchronous self-study module and 1041 completing the live, interactive training session. As restrictions remain in place, this model will continue in 2021/22. Also in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Students' Association created an Academic Representation Forum on the Microsoft Teams platform, connecting School and Programme Representatives from across the University, allowing them to share and escalate feedback, and access support from the Association. The Forum saw a high level of engagement with

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[17] studentvoicepolicy.pdf (ed.ac.uk)

over 1420 Reps accessing it throughout the year, with over 90% being active users. Again, this will continue to be delivered in 2021/22.

Over the past year, the Students' Association has continued to expand its training and support offer for student representatives, including delivering additional sessions and resources on gathering feedback, building online communities, and utilising data. In 2021/22, student representatives will be able to access these training opportunities and resources in a single digital hub, hosted on Microsoft Teams, enabling them to make the most of the offer available.

Widening Access

We recognise the challenges that the last few years have brought for students and have done all we can to mitigate for that within our admissions processes. We had a dedicated helpline for students on results day. We are experiencing a significant increase in admissions in September 2021 and have been working hard to ensure that students from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds are supported through this process through our policy of contextual admissions or widening access offers[18].

To ensure that students are well supported we have continued and increased our digital outreach programmes with schools and colleges this year as well as the support we provide directly to applicants and offer holders (through weekly online sessions as well as one-to-ones and drop in sessions). This year also sees us open a new educational centre in Craigmillar, Edinburgh, which strengthens our commitment to our local communities and provides additional support for those students who need it most[19].

Indication of institution-led reviews for the forthcoming cycle

Please see Appendix 1. Please note that specific timings may be subject to change to reflect schedules in Schools.

List of subject areas/programmes reviewed by other bodies

In 2020/21 12 professional bodies carried out reviews resulting in all programmes being successfully accredited/reaccredited (Appendix 2).

9 September 2021

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[18] Widening access offers | The University of Edinburgh
[19] New centres to widen educational opportunities | The University of Edinburgh

Appendix 1 - Internal Periodic Review forward schedule

2021/22	• Biological Sciences (Undergraduate & Postgraduate Taught provision) **rescheduled from 2020/21** • Biological Sciences (Postgraduate Research Provision) • Data Science, Technology and Innovation (Postgraduate Taught Provision) • Health in Social Science (including Nursing Undergraduate provision, Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research Provision) **rescheduled from 2020/21** • History, Classics and Archaeology (all undergraduate provision) **rescheduled from 2020/21** • Informatics (Undergraduate & Postgraduate Taught provision) **rescheduled from 2020/21** • Law (Undergraduate provision, Postgraduate Research & Postgraduate Taught provision) **rescheduled from 2020/21** • The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (Postgraduate Taught Provision) • The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (Undergraduate provision)
2022/23	• Business (Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research Provision) • Divinity (Postgraduate Taught & Postgraduate Research Provision) **rescheduled from 2021/22** • GeoSciences (Postgraduate Taught Provision) **rescheduled from 2021/22** • Ecological and Environmental Sciences (Undergraduate provision) • Economics (Undergraduate provision, Postgraduate Research & Postgraduate Taught provision) • Edinburgh College of Art (all undergraduate provision) [20] **rescheduled from 2021/22** • History, Classics and Archaeology (Postgraduate Research & Postgraduate Taught provision) • Literatures, Languages and Cultures (all undergraduate provision) [21] • Mathematics (Undergraduate & Postgraduate Taught provision) **rescheduled from 2021/22** • Moray House School of Education and Sport (all undergraduate provision) [22] • Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences (all undergraduate provision)[23] **rescheduled from 2021/22** • Physics and Astronomy (Postgraduate Research provision)
2023/24	• Biomedical Sciences (Undergraduate & Postgraduate Taught provision, inc Zhejiang) • Chemistry (Postgraduate Research provision)

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[20] To include Architecture, Music, Art, Design, History of Art

[21] To include Asian Studies, Celtic & Scottish Studies, English Literature, European Languages and Cultures, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies.

[22] To include Applied Sports Science, Childhood Practice, Community Education, Physical Education, Primary Education with Gaelic, Sport and Recreation Management.

[23] To include Psychology, Linguistics and English Language, Philosophy

	• Clinical Sciences (Postgraduate Taught Provision)
	• Engineering (Postgraduate Research provision)
	• Medicine (Undergraduate provision)
	• Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences (Postgraduate Taught Provision)
	• Physics and Astronomy (Undergraduate & Postgraduate Taught provision)
	• Social and Political Science (all undergraduate provision) [24]
2024/25	• Earth Sciences (Undergraduate provision)
	• Edinburgh College of Art (Postgraduate Taught & Postgraduate Research Provision)
	• Engineering (Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught provision)
	• GeoSciences (Postgraduate Research Provision)
	• College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (Postgraduate Research provision)
2025/26	• Business School (Undergraduate provision)
	• Centre for Open Learning (Undergraduate provision)
	• Chemistry (Undergraduate provision)
	• Divinity (Undergraduate provision)
	• Geography (Undergraduate provision)
	• Informatics (Postgraduate Research Provision)
	• Literatures, Languages and Cultures (Postgraduate Taught & Postgraduate Research Provision)
	• Social and Political Science (Postgraduate Research Provision)
2026/27	• Clinical Education (Postgraduate Taught provision)
	• Mathematics (Postgraduate Research Provision)
	• Moray House School of Education and Sport (Postgraduate Research & Postgraduate Taught provision)
	• Oral Health Sciences (Undergraduate provision)
	• School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences (Postgraduate Research & Postgraduate Taught provision)
	• School of Social and Political Science (Postgraduate Taught provision)

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[24] To include Politics & International Relations, Social Anthropology, Sociology & Sustainable Development, Social Policy, Social Work (which will include the Master of Social Work programme)

Appendix 2 – Degree Programmes Accredited in 2020/21

Degree Programme Title	Name of Accrediting Body
Business School Accreditation (All Programmes)	EQUIS
LLB (Hons) Law and Accountancy	Association of International Accountants (AIA)
MA (Hons) Accounting and Business	Association of International Accountants (AIA)
MA (Hons) Accounting and Finance	Association of International Accountants (AIA)
MA (Hons) Economics and Accounting	Association of International Accountants (AIA)
LLB (Hons) Law and Accountancy	Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland (ICAS)
MA (Hons) Accounting and Business	Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland (ICAS)
MA (Hons) Accounting and Finance	Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland (ICAS)
MA (Hons) Economics and Accounting	Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland (ICAS)
Primary Care Ophthalmology (Online Distance Learning)(ICL) (MSc) - 6 years	Royal College of Nursing (RCN)
Primary Care Ophthalmology (Online Distance Learning)(ICL) (MSc) - 6 years	The British and Irish Orthoptic Society (BIOS)
Patient Safety and Human Factors (MSc)	Chartered Institute of Ergonomics and Human Factors
MA (Hons) Physical Education	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Primary Education	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (Art and Design)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (Biology)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (Chemistry)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (Chinese)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (Design and Technology)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (Drama)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (English)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (French)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (Geography)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (German)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (History)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (Maths)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (Music)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (Physical Education)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)
PGDE Secondary Education (Physics)	General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)

BEng (Hons) Civil Engineering	Chartered Institute of Highways & Transportation (CIHT)
BEng (Hons) Structural and Fire Safety Engineering	Chartered Institute of Highways & Transportation (CIHT)
BEng (Hons) Structural Engineering with Architecture	Chartered Institute of Highways & Transportation (CIHT)
MEng (Hons) Civil Engineering	Chartered Institute of Highways & Transportation (CIHT)
MEng (Hons) Structural and Fire Safety Engineering	Chartered Institute of Highways & Transportation (CIHT)
MEng (Hons) Structural Engineering with Architecture	Chartered Institute of Highways & Transportation (CIHT)
MSc Structural and Fire Safety Engineering - 1 Year	Chartered Institute of Highways & Transportation (CIHT)
BEng (Hons) Civil Engineering	Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE)
BEng (Hons) Structural and Fire Safety Engineering	Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE)
BEng (Hons) Structural Engineering with Architecture	Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE)
MEng (Hons) Civil Engineering	Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE)
MEng (Hons) Structural and Fire Safety Engineering	Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE)
MEng (Hons) Structural Engineering with Architecture	Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE)
MSc Structural and Fire Safety Engineering - 1 Year	Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE)
BEng (Hons) Civil Engineering	Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)
BEng (Hons) Structural and Fire Safety Engineering	Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)
BEng (Hons) Structural Engineering with Architecture	Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)
MEng (Hons) Civil Engineering	Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)
MEng (Hons) Structural and Fire Safety Engineering	Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)
MEng (Hons) Structural Engineering with Architecture	Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)
MSc Structural and Fire Safety Engineering - 1 Year	Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)
BEng (Hons) Civil Engineering	Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE)
BEng (Hons) Structural and Fire Safety Engineering	Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE)
BEng (Hons) Structural Engineering with Architecture	Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE)
MEng (Hons) Civil Engineering	Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE)
MEng (Hons) Structural and Fire Safety Engineering	Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE)
MEng (Hons) Structural Engineering with Architecture	Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE)
MSc Structural and Fire Safety Engineering - 1 Year	Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE)
PgCert Advanced Professional Studies (Mental Health Officer Award) - 1 Year	Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

Delayed Accreditations

The following programmes were due to have their accreditations reviewed by the Law Society of Scotland in 2020/21, but the reviews were delayed by one year due to COVID-19:

Law (LLB Ord)
LLB (Hons) Law
LLB (Hons) Law and Accountancy
LLB (Hons) Law and Business
LLB (Hons) Law and Celtic
LLB (Hons) Law and Economics
LLB (Hons) Law and French
LLB (Hons) Law and German
LLB (Hons) Law and History
LLB (Hons) Law and International Relations
LLB (Hons) Law and Politics
LLB (Hons) Law and Social Anthropology
LLB (Hons) Law and Social Policy
LLB (Hons) Law and Sociology
LLB (Hons) Law and Spanish
LLB (Ord) Law (Graduate Entry)

Removed Accreditations

The following programmes are no longer accredited by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) as RACS is no longer operating as an accrediting body:

ChM in General Surgery (Online Learning) - 2 Years
MSc Surgical Sciences (Online Learning) - 3 Years
MSc Clinical Education (Online Learning) - 3 Years
PgCert Clinical Education (Online Learning) - 1 Year
PgDip Clinical Education (Online Learning) - 2 Years

Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council on Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity 2020/21

Statement of assurance

On behalf of the governing body of the University of Edinburgh, I confirm that we have considered the institution's arrangements for the management of academic standards and the quality of the learning experience for AY 2020/21, including the scope and impact of these. I further confirm that we are satisfied that the institution has effective arrangements to maintain standards and to assure and enhance the quality of its provision. We can therefore provide assurance to the Council that the academic standards and the quality of the learning provision at this institution continue to meet the requirements set by the Council.

……………………………………………………………   ………………………………………………………….

Janet Legrand QC (Hon)   Date
Senior Lay Member of the University Court

Electronic Senate

21 – 29 September 2021

Conferment of the Title of Emeritus/Emerita Professor

Description of paper

1. The Senate is invited to confer the title of Professor Emeritus upon those professors who retired recently or whose retirement is imminent.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval.

3. For E-Senate, members are invited to submit any comments, observations or reservations by email. A nil response is taken as assent. Any comments on this paper should be emailed to SenateSupport@ed.ac.uk quoting "comment on e-S 21/22 1 C". These comments will be published verbatim at https://edin.ac/2DYSYJT This is an EASE-protected webpage were comments can be viewed by other Senate members.

Discussion

4. This Senate is invited to confer the title of Professor Emeritus/Emerita upon those professors who retired recently or whose retirement is imminent. A Special Minute is attached as an appendix.

Resource implications

5. None.

Risk management

6. Not applicable.

Equality & diversity

7. Not applicable.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

8. Those Professors who have been conferred with the title of Professor Emeritus/Emerita will be contacted by Senate Support in due course.

Author
Senate Secretariat
September 2021

Freedom of Information
Open paper

Special Minute
Professor Jonathan Crook BA, MSc(Econ), DBA(Hon), FRSE, FAcSS
Emeritus Professor of Business Economics

Jonathan Crook joined the University as a Lecturer in 1979 from the University of Sheffield. He became a Senior Lecturer in 1992, a Reader in 1996 and gained a personal chair in Business Economics in 2002. He is a Fellow of the Financial Institutions Center, University of Pennsylvania and an External Research Fellow of the Centre for Finance, Credit and Macroeconomics at the University of Nottingham.

Jonathan's research has concentrated on quantitative credit risk modelling and on the Economics of consumer credit, especially on credit constraints. His early work concentrated on statistical classifiers to build credit scoring models. He subsequently worked to tackle some of the limitations of these methods and on enhancements to them particularly the use of survival analysis, for which he jointly won the Goodeve Medal of the Operational Research Society, and aspects of bank capital modelling including stress testing. His recent work continues in these directions and also explores the use of new data for credit scoring that enhances credit inclusion. His research has benefited from considerable interactions with financial institutions stretching back to the early 1990s. In 1997 he founded the Credit Research Centre, one of the largest academic centres specialising in credit risk modelling in the world and has been its Director since that time. The Centre has been a world leading focus for research and research training in credit scoring.

Based on research within the Centre Jonathan developed the MSc (Banking and Risk), which contributed to the Business School being awarded Centre of Excellence status by the Chartered Bankers Institute. In 1989 he jointly started a biennial conference that attracts delegates from over 40 countries and that, together with research grants, enables the Centre to benefit from two FT Postdoctoral Fellows.

For nine years from 2010 he was the joint Editor of the Journal of the Operational Research Society and has guest edited eleven special issues of journals. He has supervised 22 PhD students, co-authored/edited five books, one of which is extensively used by practitioners and researchers alike in several continents. He has published over 75 articles.

Jonathan's research has been funded by the ESRC, the EPSRC, the Fulbright Commission (Fulbright Postdoctoral Scholarship grant in 1998), the Carnegie Trust and other organisations. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 2008 and a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in 2017.

Jonathan's service for the University includes, within the Business School, being Deputy Dean, Director of Research, Director of the Doctoral programme (twice), RAE Co-ordinator and Head of a Subject Group. He has been a member of multiple CAHSS committees. He submitted an impact case study in each of REF2014 and REF 2020. Externally, he has been a member of many committees including the Chartered Association of Business Schools Directors of Research Committee, a subject area Committee of the RSE, the Steering Committee of the Scottish Financial Risk Academy, and the Scottish Economic Statistics Consultants' Group for the Scottish Government.

Jonathan plans to continue his research into credit risk models with colleagues in the Credit Research Centre and other universities and to research into indebtedness, funded by the Leverhulme Trust. He also plans to run more marathons, to sing in more choirs and to enjoy a new verse.

Special Minute
Peter Nelson MA hons, BMus, MMus
Emeritus Professor of Music and Technology

Professor Peter Nelson joined the University of Edinburgh as lecturer in 1986 following appointments with Glasgow, Nottingham and the Open University. However Peter had a long association with the University of Edinburgh before then, graduating with a MusM in composition in 1977 and subsequently holding the Forman Fellowship in Composition at the University from 1978-80.

Studies at MIT in Boston in 1982 led him to develop specialism in computer sound synthesis and computer music composition. This experience positioned Peter at the very edge of what was possible in the area of music technology then, and he has remained an active innovator in the field ever since.

In 1992, Peter initiated a Music Informatics Research Group with Dr Alan Smaill and Professor Mark Steedman. This was a visionary move, anticipating directions in music making and music research that are now integral to all aspects of our craft. A key contribution of Peter's work has been to look both within the field of music and far beyond it too. His work in pattern recognition tessellates with his research into human movement and sensing which in-turn connects with areas of psychology, cognitive science and neuro-science.

Peter's work as a composer spans orchestral, chamber and electroacoustic music as well as music theatre and mixed-media pieces, with commissions from major performers and ensembles both nationally and internationally. He is a consummate performer too and has directed countless concerts of the newest music, giving voice to his PhD researchers and student composers and offering a practical training in new music to our best performers.

As a musicologist, Peter is editor of the international journal, Contemporary Music Review, a position he has held since 1984. Peter developed the journal into one of the leading international publications in the field of contemporary music, with a particular topic-based and interdisciplinary approach. The journal has pioneered the integration of writing in science and critical musicology with writing about the creative processes of music composition and performance, always including new technologies. The journal now runs to 36 volumes, publishes six issues per annum, and is one of the few Music journals with an ERIH 'A' rating. Peter has supported nearly 50 PhDs launching careers academic and otherwise of composers, performers, musicologists and music scientists.

To look at the Reid School of Music today is to see a rich and future-facing curriculum, a diversity in our research and teaching team, a plural and open attitude to what music was, is and what it might become. This has been thanks to Peter's guiding hand and an inspirational outlook across many years of dedicated service, curriculum review and structural upheaval. If you look more widely at Scotland's new music scene, the ensembles and musical groups active across the country and beyond, you will find Peter's persistent optimism, presence and influence.

Peter's retirement looks to be anything other than quiet with concerts he plans to conduct, membership of boards and panels, music to be written and continued research in his social theory of rhythm. We hope that we won't take unnecessary advantage of his generosity, brilliance and experience when he is no longer being paid.

Special Minute
Professor Pamela Ann Smith PhD, MSc, CertEd, RNT, RGN
Professor Emerita in Nursing Studies

Professor Pam Smith joined Nursing Studies at the University of Edinburgh in 2009. As an established nurse academic her contributions to the discipline both in the UK and internationally are extensive. Prior to coming to Edinburgh Pam was the General Nursing Council Trust Endowed Chair of Nurse Education at the University of Surrey and Director of the Centre for Research in Nursing and Midwifery Education. During her time at the Centre she led on a number of research projects including: Equal opportunities for internationally recruited nurses; Changes in nursing leadership roles and student nurse learning; The impact of governance and incentives on primary care for people with complex long term conditions; Patient safety in health care professional education; Living to be a hundred in the UK: 'It's Just Luck'. In 2010 Pam became Head of Nursing Studies.

Working to promote the public face of Nursing Studies Pam led the Leaps in the dark project, capturing the innovations and contributions of Nursing Studies over its 6 decades of existence. She also re-launched the Elsie Stephenson Memorial Lecture in 2012 and initiated the Lisbeth Hockey Memorial lecture in 2020. She has organised several conferences including the Nursing Narratives conference, a conference and exhibition on the contribution of nurses to the first world war, and in 2018 Pam organised a conference, held in London, to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the NHS alongside publication of a book commemorating this. Pam is currently president of the International Collaboration for Community Health Nursing Research (ICCHNR) the organisation founded by Lisbeth Hockey.

At the core of Pam's extensive research portfolio is the relational, and in particular emotions and care. Her seminal PhD work on emotional labour in nursing was awarded the 3Ms nursing research award and published as The emotional labour of nursing: how nurses care (1992, Palgrave Macmillan) with a revised and updated book following 20 years later, The emotional labour of nursing revisited: can nurses still care? (2012, Palgrave Macmillan). She instigated the cross-disciplinary Emotions and care seminar series, and The world as we feel it seminars. Her expertise in this area underpins her PhD supervision, and teaching contribution to the undergraduate and post-graduate nursing students, through the development of courses such as Caring and emotional work and Person-centred care which have influenced many of our graduates.

As Professorial Fellow in Nursing Studies, Pam has undertaken research projects in: Storytelling with a Leverhulme Writer in Residence; Nursing at the Extremes in Intensive Care Settings; Transitions experienced by professionals and parents of children with cancer and Transforming maternal and child health education of clinical professionals in Malawi. Pam's contribution to Nursing Studies extends beyond these various outputs to her work developing international partnerships. Within the subject area Pam has generously given of herself as she mentored early career colleagues, opening up opportunities for them to engage with new networks. Pam's contributions have been recognised by the award of an MBE in 2016, and recognition as one of 100 inspiring women at the University of Edinburgh.

e-S 21/22 1 D

Electronic Senate

21 – 29 September 2021

Communications from the University Court

Description of paper

1. To update Senate on certain matters considered by the University Court at its meetings held by videoconference on 26 April 2021 and 14 June 2021.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Senate is invited to note the report.

3. For E-Senate, members are invited to submit any comments, observations or reservations by email. A nil response is taken as assent. Any comments on this paper should be emailed to SenateSupport@ed.ac.uk quoting "comment on e-S 21/22 1 D". These comments will be published verbatim at https://edin.ac/2DYSYJT. This is an EASE-protected webpage were comments can be viewed by other Senate members.

Resource implications

4. Where applicable, as covered in the report.

Risk management

5. Where applicable, as covered in the report.

Equality and diversity

6. Where applicable, as covered in the report.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

7. Regular reports on the Court's work of interest to Senate will continue to be submitted.

Author
Dr Lewis Allan
Head of Court Services
21 September 2021

Freedom of Information
Open Paper

1   Introductory Remarks

Debora Kayembe, the University's new Rector, welcomed members and attendees to the meeting and introduced Sophia Lycouris, an academic staff member at the Edinburgh College of Art and the new Rector's Assessor. Sophia Lycouris thanked the Rector for her introduction and spoke to Debora Kayembe's career as a human rights lawyer and campaigner and her interest in anti-racism work at the University.

Ellen MacRae, Students' Association President, was congratulated on her re-election to a second term of office and Rachel Irwin, Students' Association Vice-President Activities & Services, was thanked for her service to the Students' Association and the Court on the occasion of her last meeting and wished well for the future.

2   Principal's Report

Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor, welcomed the Rector and Rector's Assessor to their first meeting, and supplemented the written report with the following points:
- As the University moves into a new phase of recovery from the pandemic, the temporary Adaptation & Renewal Team structure has been incorporated back within pre-existing management structures. Court will continue to be updated on the pandemic response, anticipated to be via the Principal's Report in future;
- An all-staff virtual Town Hall meeting was held last week with over 1,400 staff attending and over 200 questions raised. A degree of caution and uncertainty over the expected return of many staff to the campus was raised given the experience of the last year, as was a perception that contributions from professional services staff during the pandemic had received less focus than that of academic staff, which had not been intended. A sense of more positivity towards the future as the University emerges from the pandemic was also evident; and,
- Preparations for the forthcoming COP26 UN Climate Change Conference. Around 60 UK universities are involved in the civil society element of the conference with Professor Dave Reay leading for the University of Edinburgh and chairing a group covering the education and skills agenda.

Members raised the following points:
- The University's response to UK Government Official Development Assistance research funding cuts – the University as a member of the Russell Group is active in making the case that the unprecedented reductions in funding for on-going research projects will not only damage UK universities but will damage partners in developing countries and relationships with them;
- The speed of offer making to prospective undergraduates in comparison with peer institutions – this is recognised as a long-standing issue and there is an intention to address both the speed of offer making and communications around this;
- The financial effects of the recent increase in Scottish domiciled undergraduate student numbers – public funding is not sufficient to cover all costs for Scottish domiciled students so cross-subsidy from other sources is required. The aggregate level of cross-subsidy needed will increase if student numbers grow as they have done in the past year owing to the changes to school and college assessments given the pandemic; and,
- Whether public health restrictions will lead to some students repeating a year of study if their learning has been significantly impacted – the main example of this in Scotland is that all final year dentistry students will be required to repeat their final year but the University does not offer an undergraduate dental course so is

unaffected by this decision. If there were to be a further year of significant public health restrictions this may begin to impact on more courses with practical accreditation requirements.

3   Adaptation & Renewal Team Report

A final update on the work of the Adaptation and Renewal Team from February to March 2021 was reviewed. An Academic Year 2021/22 Planning Group has been established to plan for the new academic year in anticipation of new public health rules and guidelines for universities. The progress of the vaccination programme gives cause for some optimism for the next year, with a planning assumption that students will be present in Edinburgh to receive smaller group teaching in-person with 1 metre physical distancing, subject to guidance awaited from the Scottish Government. The Principal thanked Barry Neilson, Director of Strategic Change, for his work as co-ordinating director for the Adaptation & Renewal Team over the past 12 months in challenging circumstances.

A recent increase in cases at the University was discussed, noting that a group of cases have emerged connected to one event that was not a campus activity. Health protection measures have been implemented in response and cases have not subsequently increased over the past week. The assumptions behind planning for 1 metre physical distancing for the next academic year were discussed and whether this is linked to the vaccine roll-out, noting that not all staff and students will be vaccinated by the start of the new academic year. Colleagues are working with Universities Scotland on a consistent set of assumptions for the sector for planning purposes while Scottish Government guidance is awaited. The assumptions include a range of public health measures including physical distancing. The UK vaccine target is to offer all adults a first vaccine by 31 July and the University will work with public health authorities to support the vaccination of students.

4   Support for Students at Risk of Self-Harm

A briefing note on the support provided to students who are at risk of self-harm was reviewed. Demand for counselling services has grown significantly in recent years and waiting times have increased, although they remain favourable in comparison to equivalent NHS provision and a further 5 full-time equivalent staff are being recruited to join the 17 in post at the Student Counselling Service. The use of a third party provider to add additional capacity at peak times for less urgent cases is also being piloted. The following points were raised in discussion:

- It was requested that Court be updated on work to address the points of learning identified from the major internal review into the support provided to a student who died of suicide in 2020. It was noted that the coroner had decided not to issue a prevention of future death notice for this case given the University's response;
- What factors have been identified as leading to the increase in demand in counselling services – this appears to be part of a wider change witnessed in western countries in recent years and while many factors have been posited, a consensus on the key factors has not yet emerged. What the University can do in response is to understand better where particular pressures on students exist and what can done to assist with these;
- Whether the planned changes to the personal tutor system can be prioritised for implementation – the pandemic has meant that capacity is not available to start what was planned as a major 18 month project across the University. However, some areas within the College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences have felt ready to proceed on a faster timescale and will do so. Future student experience reports to Court will update on this;
- The position relative to peer institutions – the increased level of demand is similar at peer institutions and in terms of skilled staff, the University's Student Counselling Service is highly regarded and is fully accredited by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy;

- Training and support offered to non-specialist staff dealing with cases – around 500 staff take in-house training each year for supporting those with mental health difficulties. One area of training that will be reviewed to help staff is guidance on escalation of cases;
- Addressing staff pressure given increased demands and workloads more generally – the review of student support and the personal tutor system recognised this as an issue and has the intention to reduce demands on academic staff in this area. Regarding provision of mental health services for staff, there is a staff counselling service, which has moved to online provision during the pandemic in addition to the Chaplaincy listening service. In recognition of the additional pressures during the pandemic respite days have been offered and advice and guidance on remote working, including encouraging breaks and using annual leave where possible, made available;
- Whether the planned recruitment of new counselling staff will be affected by the general pause in staff recruitment. The staff recruitment exceptions committee authorised the five new positions and four are now in post; and,
- The importance of careful selection and vetting for any third party provider used, including agreeing information sharing protocols.

5   **Students' Association and Sports Union Reports**

Ellen MacRae, Students' Association President, introduced reports from the Students' Association and the Sports Union and updated on recent events, including the positive response to the opening of the Teviot Garden outdoor café/bar, the Match-Up Catch-Up buddy scheme and the Student Awards and Teaching Awards. Recent issues raised by students have included: difficulties amongst first year students in forming groups to seek private sector accommodation for the next academic year; requests for tuition fee refunds; concerns from international students regarding Covid-related impediments in applying for graduate visas; the delay in implementing the recommendations of the personal tutor and student support review; and, student safety on campus and gender-based violence. The following points were raised in discussion:
- The financial challenges of the pandemic for the Students' Association and the wish to see a strong and sustainable Association emerge from this period – internal reshaping work and digital transformation work is underway and discussions are continuing with the University on ongoing financial planning;
- The impact of redundancies on service provision – redundancies have been in areas where service provision has not been possible during the pandemic (e.g. events), with student support services protected as much as possible;
- The level of student involvement in University planning for the next academic year – this has been raised as a concern and where student representatives have been involved in discussions on topics such as online examinations this has been well received and should be broadened to more topics; and,
- Effects of more Wednesday afternoon teaching on student sport – the Vice-Principal Students noted that this is a temporary measure resulting from timetabling difficulties given physical distancing restrictions and will be returned the pre-pandemic situation as soon as practicable.

6   **Equality Reporting**
- **EDMARC Staff and Student Reports 2020**
- **Equality Outcomes 2021-25, and Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Progress Report 2017-21**

Sarah Cunningham-Burley, University Lead for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, introduced the annual Equality, Diversity Monitoring and Research Committee (EDMARC) staff and student data reports, the Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Progress Report 2017-21,

the proposed Equality Outcomes for 2021-25 and updated Court on work to understand equality-related impacts of the pandemic on students and staff to date.

On the pandemic impacts, consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion issues has been integrated within each Adaptation & Renewal Team area. This has included equality impacts assessments for each building re-opening, creating accessible hybrid learning for students (e.g. lecture subtitling), the use of additional support from the Scottish Funding Council to help attract more early career researchers through the Chancellor's Fellowships scheme with a particular focus on the recruitment of ethnic minority and female staff and data gathering through home working surveys. Areas of particular concern that have emerged are the interlinked issues of morale, workload and wellbeing.

Regarding the EDMARC reports it was acknowledged that while the term 'BME' is used within the reports for Black and Minority Ethnic students and staff, this has inadequacies and is not intended to homogenise the experiences of those included. The reports show an increase in the diversity of the student and staff population in recent years, linked to an increase in the diversity of nationalities represented. Improving the 'declaration deficit' of staff who are unwilling to declare ethnicity and disability data and improving data collected more generally would help the development of meaningful actions and is a priority for future work. The reports show a continuing student attainment gap by ethnicity and disability and a staff pay gap by gender, ethnicity and disability owing to lower representation in higher grades.

For the Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Progress Report 2017-21 and the Equality Outcomes for 2021-25, it was noted that the four proposed outcomes and accompanying actions will have more detailed local actions to accompany them, with Outcome 1 'Our staff and students feel confident and are supported to report harassment, hate crime and gender-based violence' intended as a high priority.

Members welcomed the reports and thanked staff involved in their production. The 'both/and' approach of using specialised staff and structures while working to mainstream activity was supported. It was queried whether sufficient resources are in place to recruit more specialised staff, embed the Report & Support platform and to aggregate and evaluate findings. It was agreed that the dual approach of mainstreaming and specialist support and structures is necessary at this point, the latter being particularly needed for evaluation and monitoring. Capability is in place for evaluation and monitoring if not sufficient capacity at present. For the Report & Support platform, there is optimism that resourcing will be made available to extend its use to all forms of discrimination and harassment and this will be considered by the Student Experience Committee shortly.

The EDMARC staff and student reports, the Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Progress Report 2017-21 and the Equality Outcomes for 2021-25 were all approved for publication.

7   **Gujarat Biotechnology University – Final Agreement**

David Gray, Head of the School of Biological Sciences, presented an update on the finalisation of plans for a strategic partnership between the University and the Government of Gujarat for the development of the Gujarat Biotechnology University (GBU). Work has continued throughout the pandemic, including advising on the recruitment of locally employed academic staff for GBU. University of Edinburgh staff will not be based permanently on site but will visit to provide specialist advice when appropriate. Court agreed to indicate continued support for the partnership and granted approval for the University to sign a full Stage 2 binding Collaboration Agreement to govern the 10-year partnership.

8   Draft Resolutions

The following draft Resolutions were referred to Senate and the General Council for observations:
Draft Resolution No. 2/2021: Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations
Draft Resolution No. 3/2021: Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations

14 June 2021

1   Introductory Remarks

Debora Kayembe, Rector, welcomed members and attendees and shared a statement marking Refugee Week (14-20 June), which has been published on the University's website. A series of events have also been organised Edinburgh Global to showcase the University's support of refugee projects. Réka Siró, Students' Association Vice-President Activities & Services, was welcomed as a new member of Court and Alan Johnston, Doreen Davidson and Clare Reid were thanked for their service to the University on the occasion of their last meeting as Court members. Court's congratulations were recorded to Anne Richards, former Vice-Convener of Court, on the award of a damehood in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

2   Principal's Report

Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor, supplemented the written report with the following points:
- Freedom of expression and academic freedom and autonomy are of great importance to the University – as shown by the University being one of the first in the sector to publish a statement on freedom of expression and taking a sector leading role on the topic. This was also discussed at a recent meeting involving Heads of School and the importance to all of upholding freedom of expression and academic freedom was evident;
- The overall financial position is positive and the year-end outcome should show a surplus. Action taken in response to the pandemic including the pausing of the capital plan, wage restraint and the voluntary severance scheme have all contributed to improving financial sustainability over the year;
- The latest QS World University Rankings place the University at 16th in the world, with increases in key measures underpinning the rankings;
- Student application figures are strong and have increased in almost all categories;
- This has been a record year for entrepreneurship and innovation at the University, including the award of £71 million in grants for translational research, 100 new company launches, £36 million in funding gained by spin-out companies and the £20 million award for the Advanced Care Research Centre – the largest single industrial research award ever made to the University, amongst other successes;
- As planned, the Adaptation & Renewal Team process concluded at the end of May and has been re-incorporated into the management bodies of the Senior Leadership Team and the University Executive; and,
- There will be a series of senior recruitment campaigns launched over the coming months for the appointment of: a Vice-Principal Corporate Services on a permanent basis; a Provost – a new role for the University rather than the traditional Senior Vice-Principal role; a Vice-Principal Research & Enterprise; and, two Heads of College as the terms of office of the two current postholders conclude next year. All appointments are subject to Court approval and will involve Court input in the selection process.

Members raised the following points:
- Whether the outlook for future government research funding has improved in recent months – it was noted that there has been some improvement given a recent announcement on UK government funding to help mitigate the loss of EU research funding but this is only a temporary measure. The medium term outlook will not be known until a UK government spending review expected in the autumn; and,
- A request for a written briefing on freedom of expression in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion matters in the context of a recent report at the University of Essex. It was noted that a Court briefing or seminar on freedom of expression is planned and this can be included as part of the session.

3 Curriculum Transformation Update

A progress summary of the Curriculum Transformation Programme since the last update in February 2021 was reviewed. The programme was formally launched in April 2021, with an online Curriculum Transformation Hub established with briefing papers, videos and feedback tools to encourage a University-wide discussion on the topic. The following points were raised:
- What the initial response has been from staff and any emerging themes – there has been a sense of openness to discussing the topic, with particular interest in the concept of what might be an "Edinburgh student" in a curriculum sense and how this might be a differentiator with other universities;
- The feasibility of the timescales given the impact of the pandemic on workloads and potential difficulty in engaging with all stakeholders – while the timescales are ambitious, the programme is intended to build in intensity over time, with the current phase being a more gradual conversation-initiating phase to give time for as many contributions as possible. Some who are more engaged are keen to move to later phases now, e.g. curriculum redesign, but the programme will keep to its timings to encourage more contributions;
- The decision-making process once inputs have been received – there is a Curriculum Transformation Board that reports to the University Executive but the primary body will be the Senate, with University Executive and Court involvement as appropriate;
- Whether there is a risk of fatigue impacting on engagement in some groups, especially at the end of the academic year – levels of engagement and fatigue may come in waves as the academic year cycle progresses and this will have to be managed. Timing phases to best attract student engagement will also be critical. The subject matter tends to galvanise academic staff and students and the Hub can be useful in identifying any areas which might be less engaged;
- The current spectrum of opinion and whether a "Town Hall" style event might be organised – a wide range of opinion has been expressed, with the trend towards responses that are ambitious and positive. In-person engagement is something the team are keen to do and hopefully circumstances will allow this in due course; and,
- The vision for co-creation, establishing an iterative mechanism and whether the programme is concerned with skills and employability more generally or with subject knowledge. On co-creation, the Institute for Academic Development is currently considering this and plans to bring forward suggestions for discussion by the end of the calendar year. On general or discipline-specific skills and knowledge, the programme is concerned with generic rather than discipline-specific skills.

4 Students' Association and Sports Union Reports

Ellen MacRae, Students' Association President, presented reports from the Students' Association and the Sports Union and highlighted the Student Awards and Teaching Awards ceremonies held online in May and the new student sabbatical officer team, who took up their roles earlier this month. As the University plans for the next academic year,

the Association hopes that positive aspects of the current period can be maintained, such as increased accessibility (e.g. with online exams) and speed of decision-making, while making improvements in other areas, such as closer engagement with the student voice. Members discussed points raised in the reports, including: providing University IT assistance where requested – with a secondment from the University to the Association's IT team recently made; maintaining regular communications to postgraduate students over the summer; the buddy scheme for first year students was welcomed; and, improving resources, including staff resources, dedicated to tackling sexual violence and harassment, with a request for Court to be updated on progress in this area – noting that funding for this area will increase.

Réka Siró, Students' Association Vice-President Activities & Services, noted that a priority will be to help bring students back to campus and keep spaces open and available as much as possible while maintaining and expanding help for those who may still feel isolated through the meet up and catch-up scheme and a global buddy scheme.

5   **Academic Year 2021/22 Planning Group Report**

An update on the work of the Academic Year 2021/22 Planning Group was reviewed. Helping students and staff feel confident in the approach taken to a greater return to campus life next year is a key priority, as the physical campus increasingly becomes the centre of gravity again. Government public health guidance for the sector is expected over the summer period but given lead-in times internal planning is needed before the guidance is published. In tandem with other Scottish universities, the planning assumption being taken is for in-person teaching with 1 metre physical distancing plus other risk mitigations. Other areas of focus include arrangements for testing, vaccination, managed isolation for students travelling from red and amber list countries and providing as much clarity as possible in communications to new and returning students. The following points were raised in discussion:
- Whether there will be a proportion of staff that will continue to work remotely as a default in the 'level 0 and beyond' scenario – this will depend on more detailed guidance from the Scottish Government. It is anticipated that there will be a staged return with those using on-campus research facilities, teaching in-person or providing in-person support services returning at an earlier stage;
- The rationale for the expected in-person teaching limit of approximately 50 students in one venue – this has been made in expectation of public health measures (such as 1 metre distancing) given the need to make timetabling decisions and room allocations as soon as possible and to give students more certainty about which activities will take place in-person or online; and,
- Whether the University intends to guarantee a certain minimum level of in-person teaching to every student as some other institutions have done – timetabling planning is still underway so the impact on individual programmes and students is not yet known in terms of the in-person/online mix and will likely vary depending on the particular course choices of each student. The expectation at this stage is that seminars and class will typically be delivered in-person and lectures will typically be delivered online.

6   **China Collaborations**
- **Update on current and pipeline partnerships in China**
- **Low Carbon College Joint Institute**

An update on current and planned partnerships in China was noted and the award of a procurement framework to support the strategic development of partnerships in China approved. Proposed arrangements for a Joint Institute to enhance an existing partnership with Shanghai Jiao Tong University in the Low Carbon College in Lingang, Shanghai, were noted.

7 Prevent Duty Implementation Update

An annual update on the University's implementation of the Prevent duty was noted.

8 Education Act 1994 Compliance/EUSA Democracy Regulations

The Students' Association Certificate of Assurance was noted and the Articles of Association (remaining as previously) was given a renewed approval. Proposed changes to the Students' Association Democracy Regulations to improve postgraduate representation were approved.

9 Resolutions

The following resolutions were approved:
Resolution No. 2/2021: Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations
Resolution No. 3/2021: Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations

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Electronic Senate

21 – 29 September 2021

Knowledge Strategy Committee Report

Description of paper

1. The paper reports on the Knowledge Strategy Committee meeting held by videoconference on 25 May 2021.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Senate is invited to note the report.

3. For E-Senate, members are invited to submit any comments, observations or reservations by email. A nil response is taken as assent. Any comments on this paper should be emailed to SenateSupport@ed.ac.uk quoting "comment on e-S 20/21 2 E". These comments will be published verbatim at https://edin.ac/2DYSYJT This is an EASE-protected webpage were comments can be viewed by other Senate members.

Resource implications

4. Where applicable, as covered in the report.

Risk management

5. Where applicable, as covered in the report.

Equality & diversity

6. Where applicable, as covered in the report.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

7. Regular reports on aspects of the Committee's work of interest to Senate will continue to be submitted.

Author
Dr Lewis Allan
Clerk to Knowledge Strategy Committee
16 September 2021

Freedom of Information
Open paper

REPORT FROM THE KNOWLEDGE STRATEGY COMMITTEE

25 May 2021

1   Distance Learning at Scale: Lessons Learned and Recommendations

A presentation on the lessons learned and recommendations from the three year research and development programme to design, create and test the University's ability to produce and support sustainable, at-scale online courses was received. An element of the programme, the creation of 'An Edinburgh Model for Online Teaching' course has played a key role in enabling the rapid pivot to remote learning from March 2020, having been studied by 700 staff and will be updated for the coming academic year. In response to the pandemic a Covid-19 Critical Care Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) was developed at pace and has now been studied by over 40,000 learners, including many front line health workers. Reviewing options for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Executive Education courses with the intention of offering a broader portfolio of income generating online courses was discussed and supported. An overarching theme of dismantling distinctions and obstacles between online and in-person courses to enable a more consistent and coherent approach was welcomed. The direction of travel was supported, with a revised version of the paper to be submitted to the University Executive.

2   Service Prioritisation

A summary of work to prioritise the existing suite of University services provided by Information Services Group (ISG) to inform future decision-making was received. All 92 services have been prioritised from 1 (critical, must continue) to 4 (no longer required, could be stopped) by senior staff within ISG. IT Committee will review these in detail as part of a first round of consultation, with the prioritisation level of each service to kept under regular review, anticipating that some services will increase or decrease in priority over time.

3   Chief Information Officer Update

The Chief Information Officer noted that this is the last meeting for the Convener, Doreen Davidson, and thanked Doreen on behalf of the Committee for her service to Knowledge Strategy Committee and for her valued advice and guidance within the Committee and beyond.

Key activities and events since the last meeting were reported on, including: a planned freeze on changes to software at the start of the next semester to avoid the risk of disruption to any online/hybrid teaching or other essential services; the continuing global shortage of laptops and computer chips, expected to last at least another 6 to 12 months – advance orders for laptops have been placed to build a buffer stock; preparations for hybrid teaching next semester – teaching rooms are being upgraded for hybrid learning and a Scottish Funding Council grant has also enabled some rooms to be upgraded for hybrid research meetings; and, the growth of many different educational technology applications during the pandemic, with this to be considered at the next meeting in the context of whether any new applications should be considered for campus licences.

4   Diversifying the University Collections / University Histories

Activities which Library & University Collections staff are currently undertaking, or wish to undertake in the near future, in order to ensure that collections, services and staff reflect the University's diverse student and staff communities, as well as external researchers and

community groups wishing to engage with the collections were reviewed along with outline plans for a major project working towards a "University Histories" resource for 2032/33 (the University's 450th anniversary). Activities include diversifying the library holdings and collections via acquisitions, resource creation (the University Histories project), an improved range of subject guides, internships and a BAME graduate trainee librarian post, two annual research fellowships on the University's institutional history and archives, training on bias in professional practices and the establishment of an Academic Support Librarians Equality, Diversity & Inclusion group.

The paper was welcomed and members discussed resourcing many of the activities on a longer term basis, noting the opportunity for philanthropic fundraising and the importance of continuing these activities into the future. Noting that the paper has been presented to the College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences' Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee, it was requested that it be presented to the equivalent committees in the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine and the College of Science & Engineering and this is planned for next semester.

5	**ISG IT and Business Readiness for Start of Term 2021/22**

An overview of the project preparing IT and Library support for new students at the start of the next academic year was considered. As with the current academic year, it is planned to deliver University cards to students by mail rather than requiring collection at the Main Library as occurred pre-Covid. The rollout of the University network to halls of residence should aid new students in registering in advance for many of the online services they may wish to use on campus. The following points were raised in discussion:
- If student feedback is sought to help planning – student interns work in the project team and are a valued source of feedback, including checking communications to students before they issue;
- Liaison with the Students' Association – the team liaises with the Students' Association, particularly on communications;
- Supporting those students with non-standard start dates, such as veterinary medicine students – the Head of IT for the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine provides information to the project team for this cohort. A software change freeze begins in late August, before the standard start of term date to avoid any risk of disruption of services for as many students as possible.

6	**Microsoft Teams for Teaching**

A summary of a project to consider the feasibility and desirability of integrating the Microsoft Teams business communication platform within University systems such as Learn, EUCLID and Timetabling to aid its use as a teaching tool was reviewed. The project was undertaken following requests from some staff who have begun using Microsoft Teams for teaching, with similar requests from those who have begun using Zoom for teaching. The University has in place a fully integrated Virtual Learning Environment (Learn) with videoconferencing ability (Collaborate), and this is the recommended platform for teaching but some features of Teams and Zoom have been attractive for staff trialling different remote teaching tools. The Zoom project has found that it can be integrated into University systems in an effective way and this will be undertaken. However, the Teams project has found that it would take a number of years at a high cost given the complexity of Teams, which is itself integrated into a wide array of other Microsoft applications. The following points were raised in discussion:
- The Edinburgh Futures Institute intends to use Teams as its features suit the hybrid and collaborative teaching model planned;

- There were requests to set out a roadmap for Teams integration, particularly to show the feasibility of a lighter touch/lower cost integration;
- While there are many advantages in having only one Virtual Learning Environment this may not suit the diverse teaching needs across the University;
- Collaborate has greatly improved but initial negative experiences may have made some staff reluctant to use it and there could more communication of its improvements to reassure staff;
- Feedback from students in the School of Mathematics has been that they find Teams and Zoom more engaging to use than Collaborate;
- The next upgrade of the University's Virtual Learning Environment will make integration of Teams easier but any integration of Teams will incur greater costs at a time when budgets are under pressure.

It was agreed that a wider discussion about the use of different software for online learning was needed.

7   University Computing Regulations

Proposed minor updates to the University Computing Regulations were reviewed prior to submission to Court. A query was raised over the reference added to the existing Social Media Policy, which applies to staff, and whether there is a student equivalent. It was noted that the addition of the reference had been requested by staff trade unions and it would be checked whether there is a student equivalent. *[Secretary's note: it was subsequently confirmed that the Code of Student Conduct, which is already referenced in the Computing Regulations, includes student behaviour on social media.]* It was agreed to recommend the revisions to Court for approval.

8   Network Replacement Programme Update

A regular update on the deployment of the new University data network, approved by Court in December 2018, was reviewed. It was noted that the technical issue raised in the paper has not delayed the rollout of the new network to halls of residence (now 90% complete) and has now been resolved by the supplier, with the rollout to other areas to resume.

9   Other items

Updates on the Enterprise Infrastructure Procurement, the People & Money System, the Hybrid Working Programme, Information Security and the development of a Digital Strategy were reviewed, along with a summary of the Core Systems Strategies presented to IT Committee on 12 May. Regular reports from Library Committee and the Digital Research Services Steering Group were noted.

Electronic Senate

21 – 29 September 2021

Knowledge Strategy Committee Membership

Description of paper
1. The paper:

   i) briefs Senate on the current membership of Knowledge Strategy Committee;
   ii) seeks approval to appoint Dr Paul Norris as a Senate appointee to Knowledge Strategy Committee; and,
   iii) seeks approval to appoint Professor Colm Harmon as interim Convener while a review of the Committee's terms of reference take place.

Action requested / recommendation
2. To approve the appointment of Dr Paul Norris as a Senate appointee to Knowledge Strategy Committee and to approve the appointment of Professor Colm Harmon as interim Convener while a review of the Committee's terms of reference take place. Approval is sought by e-Senate as the next meeting of Knowledge Strategy Committee takes place on 11 October 2021, before Senate next meets on 20 October 2021.

3. For E-Senate, members are invited to submit any comments, observations or reservations by email. A nil response is taken as assent. Any comments on this paper should be emailed to SenateSupport@ed.ac.uk quoting "comment on e-S 21/22 1 F". These comments will be published verbatim at https://edin.ac/2DYSYJT This is an EASE-protected webpage were comments can be viewed by other Senate members.

Background and context
4. Knowledge Strategy Committee is a joint committee of both the University Court and Senate. The Committee's purpose is to oversee the University's knowledge management activities in the areas of Library, Information Technology, technology enhanced learning, Management Information and e-Administration on behalf of Court and Senate. This includes oversight of the Library Committee, IT Committee and University Collections Advisory Committee.

5. The Committee comprises 12 members plus attendees including representatives from the three Colleges. The membership consists of 5 members appointed by Court, 5 members appointed by Senate, 1 student representative nominated by the Students' Association (normally the Vice-President Education) and the Chief Information Officer. The 5 Senate members include the Conveners of the Senate Committees to aid strong linkages between the work of the Senate Committees and Knowledge Strategy Committee and two Assistant Principals with expertise in key areas of the Committee's remit (Digital Education and Online Learning).

6. The current membership is:

   Court appointees
   Sue Currie, external member (IT professional)
   Sarah McAllister, Professional Services Staff Member
   Dr Kathryn Nash, Court Trade Union Academic Staff Member
   Dr Claire Phillips, Court Senate Assessor
   Vacancy

Senate appointees
Vice-Principal Professor Colm Harmon (Convener of the Senate Education Committee)
Assistant Principal Professor Tina Harrison (Convener of the Senate Quality Assurance Committee)
Assistant Principal Online Learning Melissa Highton
Assistant Principal Digital Education Professor Siân Bayne
Vacancy – previously held by Assistant Principal Professor Alan Murray (Convener of the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee)

Chief Information Officer (ex officio)
Gavin McLachlan

Student Representative
Tara Gold (Vice-President Education)

Discussion
Vacancy for a Senate appointee
7. It is proposed to appoint Dr Paul Norris, the new Convener of the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee, to fill the vacancy on Knowledge Strategy Committee for a Senate appointee. This will continue to ensure that all Senate Committee Conveners are members of Knowledge Strategy Committee and maintain close links between the work of the Senate committees and Knowledge Strategy Committee.

Committee Convener
8. The Committee's terms of reference state that the "Convener of the Knowledge Strategy Committee will be a lay [i.e. neither a member of staff nor a student] member of Court appointed by Court and Senate on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee." Nominations Committee reviewed this position at its last meeting (31 May 2021) ahead of the then Convener concluding their term of office on 31 July 2021. The Committee agreed to recommend to Court and Senate that the restriction on who can be appointed Convener be reconsidered with a view to enabling Senate appointees to serve as Convener, as well opening up the category of potential Conveners to include any category of Court member rather than lay members alone. Nominations Committee also agreed to recommend that Professor Colm Harmon be appointed as an interim Convener of Knowledge Strategy Committee while a full review of Knowledge Strategy Committee's terms of reference takes place. Court agreed these recommendations at its meeting on 14 June 2021 and Senate is now invited to agree these recommendations prior to the first Knowledge Strategy Committee meeting of the new academic year on 11 October 2021.

Resource implications
9. N/A

Risk management
10. Including the Conveners of Senate Committees within the membership of Knowledge Strategy Committee aids a joined-up approach between the work of the Senate Committees and the Knowledge Strategy Committee and helps mitigates any risk in this area.

Equality & diversity
11. Equality and diversity implications are considered when proposing committee memberships.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

12. If agreed, the membership will be updated accordingly prior to the first Knowledge Strategy Committee meeting of the new academic year, on 11 October 2021. The recommendations from the review of the Committee's terms of reference will be submitted to Senate and Court for approval when complete.

Author
Lewis Allan
Head of Court Services and Clerk to the
Knowledge Strategy Committee

Freedom of Information

13. Open paper