H/02/27/02

APRC 24/25 4

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee
Thursday 20 March 2025 at 2:00pm
Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House / Teams

AGENDA

1.	**Welcome and apologies**	
2.	**Minutes of the previous meeting** To approve • 23 January 2025	**APRC 24/25 4A**
3.	**3.1 Matters Arising** • Convener's communications • Actions log **3.2 Report of Convener's Action** • Summary of approved concessions	**Verbal Update**
4. SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS		
4.1	**Undergraduate Degree Regulations 2025/26** To comment and recommend to Court	**APRC 24/25 4B and 4B Appendix 1**
4.2	**Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2025/26** To comment and recommend to Court	**APRC 24/25 4C and 4C Appendix 1**
4.3	**Exam Delivery – Two Session Day Proposal** To approve	**APRC 24/25 4D and 4D Appendix 1**
4.4	**Special Arrangement Exams Extra Time** To approve	**APRC 24/25 4E and 4E Appendix 1**
BREAK		
4.5	**Taught Assessment Regulations – Initial discussion of proposed amendments** To comment	**APRC 24/25 4F and 4F Appendix 1**
4.6	**Committee Priorities 2025/26** To comment	**APRC 24/25 4G**
4.7	**CMVM Programmes with Non-Standard Academic Years 2025/26** To approve	**APRC 24/25 4H**
5. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NOTING		

5.1	**Update on Regulations Work Associated with Curriculum Transformation Project (PGT)** To note	**APRC 24/25 4I**
5.2	**Update on Lecture Recording and Captioning** To note	**APRC 24/25 4J**
5.3	**Implementation of Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020** To note	**APRC 24/25 4K**
6.	**Any Other Business**	
Date of next meeting Thursday 22 May 2025, 2-5pm, Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House, Central Area / Teams		

H/02/27/02

APRC 24/25 4A

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee
Thursday 23 January 2025 at 2:00pm
Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House / Teams

DRAFT MINUTES

Present:	
Professor Gill Aitken	Dean of Education (CMVM)
Dr Matt Bell	Senate representative (CSE)
Victoria Buchanan	Director, Disability and Learning Support Service
Dr Adam Bunni	Head of Academic Policy and Regulation, Registry Services
Professor Jeremy Crang	Dean of Students (CAHSS)
Lisa Dawson	Academic Registrar, Registry Services
Dr Murray Earle	Senate representative (CAHSS)
Lucy Evans	Deputy Secretary, Students
Amanda Fegan	Head of Postgraduate Research Student Administration (CSE)
Dr Valentina Ferlito	Senate representative (CMVM)
Professor Mohini Gray	Dean of Students and Alumni (CMVM)
Professor Patrick Hadoke (Convener)	Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM)
Clair Halliday	Deputy Manager, The Advice Place
Karen Howie	Head of Digital Learning Applications and Media, Information Services
Professor Linda Kirstein	Dean of Education (CSE)
Isabel Lavers	Academic Administration Manager (CMVM)
Katy McPhail	Head of Taught Student Administration (CSE)
Catriona Morley	Head of Taught Student Administration & Support (CAHSS)
Dr Donna Murray	Head of Taught Student Development (IAD)
Callum Paterson	Academic Engagement Coordinator, Students' Association (Co-opted member)
Dr Emily Taylor (Vice-Convener)	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Validation (CAHSS)
Professor Stephen Warrington	Dean of Student Experience (CSE)
In attendance:	
Patrick Jack	Academic Policy Officer, Registry Services
Apologies:	
Dylan Walch	Vice President Education, Students' Association
Kirsty Woomble	Head of Postgraduate Research Student Office (CAHSS)

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1.	**Welcome and apologies** The Convener welcomed members to the meeting. It was noted that Victoria Buchanan had joined the Committee as a co-opted member and that Dr Matt Bell was attending his first meeting as an elected member of Senate on the Committee.
2.	**Minutes of the previous meeting (Paper 2A)** To approve • 21 November 2024 Members noted two minor amendments made to the originally circulated draft minutes regarding a change in title to one member and the specific wording of the action recorded under section 5.1. No other comments had been received or were raised by members. The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting.
3.	**3.1 Matters Arising** • **Convener's Communications** The Convener had no communications to share with members. • **Actions Log** The Convener noted that no updates had been made to the Actions Log. **3.2 Report of Convener's Action** • **Student Appeal Committee** The Convener informed members of the approval of 17 new members to the Student Appeal Committee. • **Posthumous Diploma** The Convener highlighted approval of a posthumous Diploma on 20 December 2024, noting that it was appropriate in this case to issue expedient approval. • **Summary of Approved Concessions** **Since the last meeting (November 2024):** Number of individual student concessions approved: 14 (12 PGR, 1 UG, 1 PGT) Number of cohort concessions approved: 0 The most common type of approved concession requests (12 out of 14) was for extensions and authorised interruptions of study (AIS), predominantly due to health reasons.
4.	**SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS**
4.1	**Updates to the Authorised Interruption of Study Policy (Paper 3B)** To approve. The paper was presented by Dr Adam Bunni, Head of Academic Policy and Regulation. The paper proposed amendments to the Authorised Interruption of Study (AIS) Policy, due for review this academic year, with members asked to approve proposed amendments. Should approval be issued, the revised policy would come into effect from 2025/26 onwards. In introducing the paper, the Head of Academic Policy and Regulation informed members that the proposed amendments are the result of initial consultation with Colleges and subsequent consultation with

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colleagues in Schools, EUSA and relevant support services. Members were informed that there was strong engagement and indication of support for the direction of travel of these proposals throughout the consultation process.

The Committee was asked to note the key proposed amendments to the policy, including: providing greater clarification that the AIS Policy is a supportive policy as opposed to an exceptional process; the separating out of the process between taught and research students due to varying processes; the provision of a clearer definition of AIS; clarifying the support available to interrupted students; providing more detail around the return to study process. Members further noted that the policy will be supplemented by an updated guidance document in due course.

The Committee proceeded to have a wide-ranging discussion on the proposed amendments, with the following points being raised by members:

Definition of AIS

- It was noted that some AIS do take place retrospectively in practice. It could be considered unfair on students when they are refused retrospective interruptions due to inconsistent application, which may in some cases create a substantial financial impact on students. Similarly, there are often instances where it is highly reasonable to apply retrospective AIS.
- Retrospective AIS could also serve to benefit students based in conflict zones, as well as online students more generally.
- It was requested that text be added to cover these issues relating to retrospective AIS.

Return to Study

- In instances where an interrupted student requires visa sponsorship to study, it was noted that the return to study plan should include advice provided to the student by the Student Immigration Service (SIS). A member asked why SIS would provide this information in a template format directly to students, as opposed to providing this directly to their Student Adviser or Research Supervisor, citing the risk that such advice may be misinterpreted by the student.
- Concern was noted with regard to a number of concession cases involving students returning to Edinburgh, whereby the student has not obtained their visa on time. If SIS had been able to consult students in timely manner, this may have helped address this issue. A managed return to study process could also help address this, ensuring that a student's immigration status is communicated clearly at the start of an AIS.
- In terms of SIS input into the return to study process, it was argued that responsibility around visa status should rest with the student. There is a suite of compliance reports in place and a supportive reporting process involving students and Schools to ensure that visas do not lapse, providing students with an effective safety net.
- A member asked whether the policy could mandate that return to study plans must be completed before a student resumes study at the University, noting the benefit this may provide to return to study panels.
- The return to study process is essential for disabled students and students with interruptions relating to their mental health. It is often challenging to engage these students in this process, therefore additional text which reinforces the need for engagement with return to study planning would be welcome.
- Should students be permitted to return if they have not engaged with the return to study process, or submitted medical evidence when required? It was noted that students who have demonstrated that they are capable of interacting with the return to study system generally succeed once they return and vice versa. It would be reasonable to request medical evidence where necessary.
- There are cases where students carry over assessments over too many sessions, thus potentially blocking AIS.

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Changes to Programme

- In terms of students being aware of any relevant changes to courses or programmes during return to study conversations, does this include changes to elective courses? If so, this may prove challenging.
- The proposed text in section 6.1 could be amended to avoid confusion around when changes to courses and programmes have taken place. “Substantial changes” to the curriculum as well as programme and course closures should be included within the policy.

General Comments

- The Institute for Academic Development (IAD) is fully supportive of the amended policy as it is more flexible and supportive to students.
- Successive periods of maternity leave require APRC approval. Does this need to be made more explicit within the policy in order to avoid misinterpretation? If this practice is retained, more clarity should be provided around AIS requests of this nature always being approved.
- Section 11.3 references *dangerous materials or substances*. It could be clarified whose definition applies here, noting that this is at each School’s discretion.

The Head of Academic Policy and Regulation thanked members for their helpful input and noted that the following changes to the draft presented would be taken forward:

- Add a line to section 11.2 to clarify that in instances where a return to study plan has not been completed pre-interruption, a plan should be completed prior to returning to study, albeit that this would not act as a mandatory requirement.
- In terms of the provision of medical evidence, it is agreed that the policy should remain as drafted. However, there may be benefit in providing additional guidance around this issue on relevant web pages.
- Text would be added in section 2.3 clarifying that AIS cannot be applied retrospectively without the approval of the relevant College. Further clarification would be provided that retrospective applications cannot be made for visa-holding students.
- Sections 8.2 and 10.2 would include a statement noting that requests for interruption may be refused where they would not be compatible with other University regulations or policies.
- Add a footnote under sections 8.2 and 10.2 to clarify that requests for interruption for maternity leave would not be refused.
- The word order in the final sentence in section 6.1 would be reversed for purposes of clarification.
- Section 6.2 would be amended to capture both significant changes and closures to courses and programmes.
- No changes are required within section 11.2 with regard to the process for issuing visa advice. SIS will provide advice in a template format, for students to share directly with their School, unamended. Further work will be undertaken with SIS to develop the process around this, with consideration given to the potential to make use of the notes function in EUCLID.

The Committee agreed to **approve** the proposed amendments to policy, subject to the additional revisions noted above being made. It was noted that once the further amendments are made, approval will be issued via Convener’s Action.

Action: The Head of Academic Policy and Regulation to take forward the agreed revisions and resubmit the amended policy to the Convener for approval.

4.2 **Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy (Paper 3C)**
To approve.

The paper was presented by Dr Adam Bunni, Head of Academic Policy and Regulation.

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The Committee noted that the Undergraduate Progression Boards policy (UG PBP) is scheduled for review during the current academic session. The Policy was introduced in 2015 in order to address perceived issues with inconsistent practice across Schools at that time with regard to confirmation of undergraduate students' progression status and required that Schools hold Progression Boards to make decisions about students' progression status at least once per year. In 2016, the first iteration of the Handbook for Boards of Examiners (BoE) for Taught Courses and Programmes was approved. Upon the introduction of the Handbook, other policies were discontinued; however, this policy persisted due to its prominence and recent introduction at that stage.

Members were informed that, upon review, it has been considered whether it would be more effective for the UG PBP to be incorporated into an amended BoE Handbook, helping simplify the suite of documents for those supporting and attending BoEs. Most content within the UG PBP is covered by existing content with the Handbook with some additions to the Handbook being proposed within the paper to help cover any gaps. Members were requested to approve the removal of the UG PBP and to approve the amended BoE handbook, both from 2025/26 onwards.

Upon considering the proposals, members raised the following points:

- In terms of sections 4.18 and 4.19, the Handbook specifies that at least one external examiner must participate in exam boards but they are not required to approve individual decisions. The role of the external examiner in the BoE decision making process should be clarified.
- Could it be further clarified that the BoEs do not require the presence of an external examiner to be quorate? The current wording of "participate" does not indicate whether external examiners are required to be present at BoE meetings.
- The process around the releasing of BoE minutes upon request, as detailed within sections 8.7-8.14, is often not currently managed well within Schools and the process is unclear for students to submit Subject Access Requests. Could section 8.13 be clearer in signposting students to where they can request minutes, as well as providing turnaround times?
- There is a role for the Colleges in terms of communicating proposed updates to Schools, such as BoE briefing events, sharing guidance and signposting to relevant information available on SharePoint.
- Could Colleges relay information to students around helping demystify BoEs? The Deputy Secretary, Students noted their strong support for this and informed members of the ambition to provide a simple reference point for students who wish to know more about BoEs, with Schools taking ownership of this work moving forward.
- Could these requirements be extended to cover PG progression boards?

The Head of Academic Policy and Regulation thanked members for their helpful input. The points around the role of external examiners in BoEs more generally and extending these requirements to PG progression boards were noted; however, it was suggested that the ongoing BoE Project would be better placed to take these discussions into consideration. Notwithstanding the Curriculum Transformation Programme, it was agreed that these are points that should be clarified moving forward and could also be revisited by the Committee at a later date. Similarly, the Head of Academic Policy and Regulation suggested that a separate discussion take place to address the challenges noted around information compliance and how best to take this forward.

The Committee **approved** the deletion of the Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy and **approved** the proposed amendments to the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes, to accommodate content from the existing Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy, subject to an amendment being made in section 4.19 to clarify that the External Examiner is not part of the quorum for Undergraduate Progression Boards.

5. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION / NOTING

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5.1	**Committee Priorities – Mid-Year Reflection (Paper 3D)** To note and comment The paper was presented by the Convener. Members noted the actions taken against each of the Committee's priorities and were informed that the paper will be reported to Senate in February 2025 as part of the mid-year reflection on standing committee priorities. The mid-year reflection will also inform the Committee's work on the priorities for the remainder of the academic year. The scheduled review of policies during 2024/25 was summarised. In relation to future amendments to the Taught Assessment Regulations (TARs), it was noted that moderation is a recurring theme within CAHSS, with moderation specifically remitted to the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group which reports to Senate Education Committee. It was queried how this work will align with the review of the TARs. The Head of Academic Policy and Regulation noted this point and agreed to look into this further, particularly as the moderation process is directly relevant to the role of Boards of Examiners. **Action:** The Head of Academic Policy to query the status of development around moderation guidance with the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group.
6.	**Any Other Business** The Committee noted the following items of any other business: **APRC and Senate** A Senate representative noted that a recurring question is being raised by some members of Senate around whether Senate should be issuing final approval for certain papers which are currently being approved at APRC, such as the amendments to policy considered at this meeting. The Convener reiterated to members that APRC has delegated authority from Senate to take decisions regarding the regulatory framework for the University's educational activities and to approve proposals for new or revised academic policy or regulation. There is a threshold around the policies that APRC considers within its delegated authority, with more high-level strategic matters being appropriate for Senate to consider and approve directly. There are three representatives of Senate on each of the Senate Standing Committees which strengthens the links between Senate and the committees. It was noted that the Senate External Review report judged that Senate Standing Committees are operating well and fulfilling their remits. It has been recognised that the terms of reference vary across each of the standing committees and members were informed that work is being led by the Vice Principal (Students) to review these terms of reference in partnership with the Senate External Review Task and Finish Group. It is currently hoped that terms of reference will be updated by May 2025 for consideration by Senate. It was further noted that Academic Quality and Standards will ensure that Senate members are notified regarding the publication of Senate Standing Committee papers moving forward. Senate members had not been notified of the issue of APRC papers for this meeting due to an error, for which the Head of Academic Policy and Regulation apologised. **2025/26 APRC Convenorship**

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	The Convener informed members that he will be demitting from his College role at the end of 2024/25 and consequently will no longer be a member of APRC. This will necessitate the installation of a new Convener of APRC for the next academic year. Members were encouraged to consider nominating themselves for the role. Any member interested would be welcome to discuss this with the current Convener or Vice-Convener. Should a vote be required for the next Convener of APRC, this will take place during the final APRC meeting of 2024/25 on 22 May 2025.

Date of next meeting
Thursday 20 March 2025, 2-5pm, Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House / Microsoft Teams

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Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

20 March 2025

Undergraduate Degree Regulations 2025/26

Description of paper

1. This paper contains the draft Undergraduate Degree Regulations for 2025/26. A "Key Changes" section is included to draw the Committee's attention to the proposed changes.

Fit with remit

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee	Y/N
Oversee the development, maintenance and implementation of an academic regulatory framework which effectively supports and underpins the University's educational activities.	**Y**
Ensure that the academic regulatory framework continues to evolve in order to meet organisational needs and is responsive to changes in University strategy, and in the internal and external environments.	**Y**

Action requested / recommendation

2. For discussion and recommendation to Court. The Degree Regulations are approved via the Court Resolution process.

Background and context

3. The Degree and Assessment Regulations are reviewed annually to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and that enhancements can be made on a cumulative basis.

Discussion

4. APRC is invited to discuss the draft Undergraduate Degree Regulations for academic year 2025/26. Appendix 1 includes only those regulations which include proposed changes. Following this meeting, Academic Quality and Standards will amend the draft regulations to take account of any Committee comments.

5. Degree Regulations are formally approved by University Court as a "Resolution". Academic Quality and Standards will submit a draft Resolution to Court at its 28 April 2025 meeting. Court will consult with Senate in May 2025, before considering a final Resolution at its 23 June 2025 meeting.

6. In December 2024, all Colleges were invited to consult Schools and Deaneries regarding proposals for changes to the Degree Regulations, with the intention of identifying any necessary updates due to changes in related policies or practices, and to address any errors or lack of clarity. Colleges were also invited to recommend areas for potential enhancement to the Regulations.

Key Changes to Undergraduate Degree Regulations 2025/26

Links within the regulations to other information and changes in terminology have been updated as necessary. Other minor changes to wording are included in Appendix 1.

Regulation Updated	What has changed
9 Commencing studies	Amended to state that students cannot resume study following an interruption of study more than two weeks after the beginning of a Semester. Schools encounter situations where students request to return to study late in a Semester, where they had been planned to return at the beginning of the Semester. It is not in a student's interest to seek to reintegrate into study – often following a year away – in the middle of a Semester. Preventing late returns therefore mitigates the increased risk of students struggling, both academically and potentially in terms of their wellbeing, on their return to study. The revised Authorised Interruption of Study Policy (for use from September 2025) sets an expectation that students should, wherever possible, agree a return to study plan before they take an interruption, and that Schools must contact the student to confirm that they are ready to return before their return to study date.
26 Leave of absence	Clarification has been added that leave of absence is not appropriate for long-term study at a distance from Edinburgh, which should only be offered as part of a specific online or distance-learning programme.
28 Optional Study Abroad	Amended to remove reference to students being required to pass Year 2 courses at the first attempt. This avoids appearing to exclude from consideration students who may have repeated assessment (including repeating Year 2) due to Exceptional Circumstances. The revised regulation clarifies that the required credits must have been awarded before the normal publication date for continuing student results, i.e. before the resit diet.
33 Withdrawal and Exclusion	Amended to add reference to the fact that a former student who has withdrawn from study may apply for admission to the same programme of study, provided that they had not failed to meet the requirements for their programme at the point they withdrew. The regulation sets a time limit of three years for readmission on this basis, which is line with the requirements of regulation 58, and based on Admissions requirements regarding recency of qualifications. This seeks to offer a clearer alternative option for students who may be struggling with health or personal issues (including affordability of study) which are preventing them from studying, leading to successive periods of interruption

	of study, with no obvious sign of improvement. For some students, withdrawal, with the potential to return to study when their health or personal circumstances improve, may offer a more beneficial option than successive periods of interruption. Readmission will remain at the discretion of the relevant College, since it must be contingent on factors such as whether a programme is still running, specific considerations regarding professional programmes, and significant changes in admissions requirements. As such, when students are considering this option, they will need to be given advice that readmission cannot be guaranteed. In most cases, students may need to reapply via UCAS, but Academic Quality and Standards will be holding discussions with Admissions colleagues regarding providing a simpler route for students to apply for readmission. Applications for readmission from former students are considered alongside those from new applicants, so there is no risk of the proposed amendment leading to over-recruitment of students in certain subject areas.
42 Addressing credit deficits	Wording clarified to indicate that students who have not progressed due to a credit deficit in pre-Honours years are entitled to return (usually on an assessment-only basis) to complete reassessment, where they have remaining assessment attempts available to them.
43, 44 Additional credit	Clarification added that the restrictions regarding additional credit do not apply to courses being retaken from previous years in order to address a credit deficit.
58 Returning to complete an Honours degree	We have removed the expectation that students returning on this basis would "normally be required to achieve a further 240 credit points", amending this to state that students will be required subsequently to meet the requirements of the Degree Programme Table for the relevant Honours degree. In most cases, students would have exited with 360 credits, and therefore require to complete only a further 120 credits, provided that the structure of the programme has not changed.
Changes to Degree Specific Regulations	
64 BA Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	Amended to remove the requirement that students must not only have a substantial volume of credits in a major subject of study at the relevant SCQF levels, but also have at least 40 credits in each of two other subjects. This requirement has proven unreasonably restrictive especially for students who have been exiting from

	combined degrees, which often do not have sufficient space in the curriculum to allow for multiple courses in outside subject areas. Removing this requirement would not reduce the academic requirements for these degrees, either in terms of depth of study in a subject area, or credit attained at specific SCQF levels.
College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine specific regulations	
77, 80, 82	Amended to reflect removal of the Progression Review Committee.
78	Amended to clarify that students in Year 1 of the MBChB (Medicine) programme may have up to four attempts to pass the year, in line with the standard entitlement under the Taught Assessment Regulations.
80	Amended to reflect the expectation that students should pass all components for a relevant year in a single year, i.e. students cannot carry forward passed components from a previous attempt at a year.
95, 97	Amended to remove reference to the previous, 5-year MBChB programme. Minor stylistic amendments.
99	Removed as duplicates 102.
100	Redrafted to align with regulation 97 relating to the MBChB.
104	Addition of an Honours exit award for students who have completed an appropriate amount of study at SCQF level 10 at the point that they exit the programme. A new regulation has been added, copied directly from regulation 98, specifying compliance, attendance, and participation requirements for the Honours exit award programme.

Resource implications

7. Any resource implications associated with the proposed amendments are covered in the Key Changes table, above.

Risk management

8. Any risks associated with the proposed amendments are covered in the Key Changes table, above.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

9. The proposed amendments do not contribute to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals.

Equality & diversity

10. Any equality and diversity implications associated with the proposed amendments are covered in the Key Changes table, above.

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

11. Academic Quality and Standards will communicate approved regulations in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies. Academic Quality and Standards will also cover any changes to regulations in Boards of Examiners briefings and other relevant briefing events for staff in Schools and Colleges.

Author
Dr Adam Bunni
Academic Policy Manager
Academic Quality and Standards

Presenter
Adam Bunni

Freedom of Information Open

Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations 2019/20

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

A General Undergraduate Degree Regulations

9. Students should commence their degree programme at the start of the academic year, and should commence the courses that they are enrolled on at the start of semester in which the courses are taught. No student may commence any year of their degree programme more than two weeks after the start of the relevant academic year, or resume study following an authorised interruption of study more than two weeks after the start of a Semester, without the permission of the Head of College. No student will be enrolled on a course more than two weeks after the start of semester in which the course is taught without the permission of the Head of College. Where a student withdraws from a course more than six weeks after the start of the relevant semester, the course enrolment remains on the student's record. Students in Honours years are not permitted to withdraw from a course marked as optional on the Degree Programme Table more than six weeks after the start of the relevant semester in order to substitute the course with another optional course in a subsequent semester, unless the relevant Board of Examiners has awarded a null sit for the course under the Exceptional~~Special~~ Circumstances procedure, and the requirement above to enrol on the course within the first two weeks of the relevant semester can be met.

Attendance and Participation

26. Leave of absence is required where students undertake compulsory and optional activities related to, or as part of, the programme of study away from campus in Edinburgh. Leave of absence is not appropriate for long-term study at a distance from Edinburgh.

Students must have the formal approval of the College for any leave of absence to study away from Edinburgh that is 30 calendar days' duration or longer. Study location changes of less than 30 calendar days must be agreed with the Supervisor or Student Adviser. Where the activity is a compulsory part of the programme of study and is organised by the School or College, permission may be given by the College for a cohort of students without individual applications being made. Colleges and Schools must maintain records of all leaves of absence. Certain students' visa conditions may be affected by study away from Edinburgh. This regulation does not apply to students on a recognised distance learning programme.

Optional Study Abroad

28. Students must have achieved 240 credits before participating in Optional Study Abroad in year 3. ~~All year 2 courses must be passed at the first attempt; resits during the summer diet are not permitted.~~ Students must have achieved 360 credits before participating in Optional Study Abroad in year 4 of a 5 year programme. All required credits must be ratified and published by the normal publication deadline for continuing student results at the end of the academic year immediately prior to departure (normally June).

Withdrawal and Exclusion

33. Any student may withdraw permanently from their programme of study at any point in the year. Students may be excluded for reasons outlined within the procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/withdrawal_exclusion_from_study.pdf

A former student who has withdrawn voluntarily from study will be permitted to apply for readmission to the same programme of study subsequently, provided that they had not failed to meet the requirements for the degree at the point they withdrew, and that not more than three academic years have elapsed between the point at which they withdrew and their readmission to study. Where a student is readmitted to study on the same, or a related programme, the College may permit the transfer of some or all of the credit previously gained at the University towards the new enrolment, in line with Regulation 22.

Progression and Permissible Credit Loads

42. The College will~~may~~ offer students who are unable to progress due to a credit deficit the opportunity to return to study the following year in order to seek to address this deficit, where they have assessment attempts remaining for courses, in line with the Taught Assessment Regulations. Such a return to study without progression may be offered on a full-time, part-time, or assessment-only basis.

43. In pre-Honours years, a student may be allowed to take up to 40 credits of additional ~~Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF, www.scqf.org.uk/)~~SCQF level 7 and 8 courses (in addition to the normal 120 credits), subject to the approval of the Director of Teaching or delegated nominee (e.g. student's Student Adviser). This requirement does not apply to courses from previous years being retaken in order to address a credit deficit (see Regulation 40).

44. Exceptionally, students in their honours years, with College approval, may take up to 40 credits of additional ~~Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF, www.scqf.org.uk/)~~ SCQF level 7 or 8 credit and, more rarely, up to 10 credits at levels 9-11 in the Honours years. This requirement does not apply to courses from previous years being retaken in order to address a credit deficit (see Regulation 40).

58. A candidate who already holds a General or Ordinary degree may be permitted by the appropriate Head of College to apply for the degree with Honours, provided that not more than three years have elapsed between their first graduation and acceptance as a candidate for the subsequent degree with Honours. Such a candidate will be required subsequently to ~~will normally be required to achieve a further 240 credit points, or credit points as deemed appropriate by the Head of the receiving College, at the levels stipulated in the~~meet the requirements of the ~~appropriate~~ Degree Programme Table for the relevant Honours programme. Candidates who have exited the University with a General or Ordinary degree due to failure to meet relevant requirements for an Honours degree are not eligible to apply for readmission on this basis.

Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations 2024/25

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

B College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Undergraduate Degree Regulations: Degree Specific Regulations

General and Ordinary Degrees

64. BA (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences)

To qualify for the award of the degree of BA (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) students must have obtained 360 credit points from passes (or accreditation of prior learning) normally at the rate of 120 credit points per year.

The overall curriculum must include at least:

360 credit points, of which at least 240 credit points must be at SCQF level 8, 9 or 10. Courses at SCQF level 8, 9, or 10 must include:

- A minimum of 200 credit points from courses in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.
- A minimum of 140 credit points in a major subject of study in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (which may be part of the 200 credit points listed in the point above) comprising related and consecutive courses in this subject over three years of which 60 credit points must be at SCQF level 9 or 10.

~~In addition, there must be at least 40 credit points at SCQF levels 7-10 in each of a minimum of two other subjects of study.~~

Students have a free choice of the remaining credits at SCQF levels 7-10.

BA (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) in a designated discipline:

To qualify for the award of the BA (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) in a designated discipline students must have obtained 360 credit points (or accreditation of prior learning) normally at the rate of 120 credit points per year.

The overall curriculum must include at least:

360 credit points, of which at least 240 credit points must be at SCQF level 8, 9 or 10. Courses at SCQF level 8, 9, or 10 must include:

- A minimum of 200 credit points from courses in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.
- A minimum of 160 credit points in a major subject of study in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (which may be part of the 200 credits listed in the point above) comprising related and consecutive courses in this subject over three years of which 80 credit points must be at SCQF level 9 or 10.

~~In addition, there must be at least 40 credit points at SCQF levels 7-10 in each of a minimum of two other subjects of study.~~

Students have a free choice of the remaining credits at SCQF levels 7-10.

77. In exceptional circumstances students may be permitted to interrupt studies or repeat a year of study because of ill-health, service or sporting commitments, or an episode of academic failure. Only in highly exceptional circumstances will students be permitted more than two such years of interrupted progress, whether taken consecutively or at intervals throughout the programme. Exceptions are very unlikely to be considered in the case of prolonged or repeated academic failure. Students who wish to be considered for a further interruption should seek advice from their Student Adviser. Students recommended by the Board of Examiners for exclusion may appeal via the University Appeals process. Approved study for an intercalated degree does not constitute interrupted progress.~~Students who wish to be considered for a further interruption or repeat year of study must apply to the Progression Review Committee. Approved study for an intercalated degree does not constitute interrupted progress.~~

Progression

78. MBChB students are only entitled to two assessment attempts for courses which are part of the MBChB programme. This regulation supersedes the resit assessment regulation within the Taught Assessment Regulations for all programme years, with the exception of Year 1 where this regulation still applies (i.e. students may have up to four attempts to pass Year 1). Students in Year 1 and 2 have their second attempt in the August resit diet. Students who have not passed by end of end of the academic year, and are eligible for another attempt, will be required to repeat all teaching and assessment in the following year.~~.~~

80. No student may proceed to the next year of study for the MBChB programme until they have passed all components of the previous year of the programme in a single academic year, unless the Board of Examiners ~~or Progression Review Committee~~ has exceptionally granted permission.

82. Students on the 6- year MBChB programme may be permitted to interrupt their studies during the honours year with medical evidence and proceed directly into Year 4 of the MBChB programme the following academic year with approval of the ~~Progression Review Committee~~Programme Director.

95. For students on the ~~5-year~~ MBChB programme, ~~the Bachelor of Medical Sciences degree is intercalated after Year 2. For students on the 6-year MBChB programme,~~ the course marks gained in Year 3 determine their classification for the Bachelor of Medical Sciences degree. Students entering the 6-year MBChB programme in Year 4 who do not already hold an Honours degree may exceptionally be permitted to take the Bachelor of Medical Sciences degree after Year 4, subject to the approval of the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. The BMedSci (Hons) will be awarded to students who have attained 480 credits and met the other requirements for Honours degrees outlined in

Regulation 6 of the General Undergraduate Degree Regulations above. This may include credits awarded on aggregate.

96. Limitation on Courses Taken in Honours Years: Students in all Honours years may take Honours curriculum courses to a maximum value of 120 credit points, all of which count in the final Honours award and classification.

Ordinary Degree

97. The Ordinary degree of Bachelor of Medical Sciences may be offered as an exit award to students on the ~~5-year or 6-year~~ MBChB programme who have attained 360 credits and met the other requirements for Ordinary degrees outlined in Regulation 6 of the General Undergraduate Degree Regulations. This may include credits awarded on aggregate.

98. The compliance, attendance and participation, and progression requirements for the degrees of MBChB apply.

BSc in Veterinary Science

Honours Degree

99. Every student admitted for the degree of BSc (VetSci) (Hons) must also be a student for the degree of BVM&S, or have obtained the BVM&S degree not more than five years before the date of admission as a student for the Honours Degree. A student in another University studying for a recognised primary veterinary undergraduate qualification may be admitted as a student for the intercalated degree of BSc (VetSci) (Hons) ~~in Veterinary Science~~, subject to the approval of the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine.

~~100. Every student for the degree must normally attend in the University of Edinburgh during not less than two academic years the courses of instruction in the classes of the first two years of the curriculum for the BVM&S degree and pass the assessments prescribed for these courses.~~

100~~1~~. In addition every student must pursue studies for at least one year in the University of Edinburgh in one of the Honours Degree Programmes available at:
~~www.eevec.vet.ed.ac.uk/secure/page.asp?ID=in0000id~~
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/IHP/

101~~2~~. The year of study in the Honours Degree Programme may be intercalated not earlier than the end of the second year of study, provided that a student has successfully completed the appropriate assessments and satisfied such conditions as the Head of the School concerned may require, subject to the approval of the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine.

102~~3~~. Students in all Honours years may take Honours curriculum courses to a maximum value of 120 credit points, all of which count in the final Honours award and classification.

~~Ordinary Degree~~Exit Awards

~~104. No student shall be admitted as a student for the degree, except on transfer from candidature for the degrees of BVM&S 5 year programme or BVM&S 4 year Graduate Entry Programme. Students on the 5 year programme are eligible to be considered for the ordinary degree if they have successfully completed 240 credits from the First and Second Professional Examinations and, have shown sufficient attainment in the Third Year BVM&S assessments. Students on the graduate entry programme are awarded 120 credits of recognised prior learning. The Ordinary Degree of BSc (Veterinary Science) may not be conferred on any student who already holds, or is eligible to receive, the Degree of BSc in Veterinary Science with Honours.~~

103. The Ordinary and Honours degrees of BSc in Veterinary Science may be offered as an exit award to students on the 4-year or 5-year BVM&S programme who have attained 360 credits (BSc (Vet Sci)) or 480 credits (BSc (Vet Sci) (Hons)) respectively, and have met the other requirements for Ordinary and Honours degrees outlined in Regulation 6 of the General Undergraduate Degree Regulations. This may include credits awarded on aggregate.

104. The compliance, attendance and participation, and progression requirements for the degree of BVM&S apply.

Bachelor of Science General Degree

113. To qualify for the award of the degree of BSc (General) students must have obtained 360 credit points from passes (or recognition of prior learning), normally at the rate of 120 credit points per year: 240 credit points in courses listed in Medicine and Veterinary Medicine Schedule T, Science and Engineering Schedules K-Q and from subject areas Language Sciences and Psychology in Schedule I; 200 credit points at ~~Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF, www.scqf.org.uk/)~~SCQF level 8, 9 or 10; 80 credit points at SCQF level 8, 9, 10 in courses listed in Medicine and Veterinary Medicine Schedule T, Science and Engineering Schedules K-Q and from subject areas Language Sciences and Psychology in Schedule I; 60 credit points at SCQF level 9 or 10.

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Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

20 March 2025

Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2025/26

Description of paper

1. This paper contains the draft Postgraduate Degree Regulations for 2025/26. A "Key Changes" section is included to draw the Committee's attention to the proposed changes.

Fit with remit

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee	Y/N
Oversee the development, maintenance and implementation of an academic regulatory framework which effectively supports and underpins the University's educational activities.	**Y**
Ensure that the academic regulatory framework continues to evolve in order to meet organisational needs and is responsive to changes in University strategy, and in the internal and external environments.	**Y**

Action requested / recommendation

2. For discussion and recommendation to Court. The Degree Regulations are approved via the Court Resolution process.

Background and context

3. The Degree and Assessment Regulations are reviewed annually to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and that enhancements can be made on a cumulative basis.

Discussion

4. APRC is invited to discuss the draft Postgraduate Degree Regulations for academic year 2025/26. Appendix 1 includes only those regulations which include proposed changes. Following this meeting, Academic Quality and Standards will amend the draft regulations to take account of any Committee comments.

5. Degree Regulations are formally approved by University Court as a "Resolution". Academic Quality and Standards will submit a draft Resolution to Court at its 28 April 2025 meeting. Court will consult with Senate in May 2025, before considering a final Resolution at its 23 June 2025 meeting.

6. In December 2024, all Colleges were invited to consult Schools and Deaneries regarding proposals for changes to the Degree Regulations, with the intention of identifying any necessary updates due to changes in related policies or practices, and to address any errors or lack of clarity. Colleges were also invited to recommend areas for potential enhancement to the Regulations.

Regulation Updated	What has changed
5 Code of practice	The wording has been amended to emphasise the importance of the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students as an accompaniment to the regulations.
9 Late admission	Amended to state that students cannot resume study on a taught course following an interruption of study more than two weeks after the beginning of a Semester. Schools encounter situations where students request to return to study late in a Semester, where they had been planned to return at the beginning of the Semester. It is not in a student's interest to seek to reintegrate into study on a taught programme – often following a year away – in the middle of a Semester. Preventing late returns therefore mitigates the increased risk of students struggling, both academically and potentially in terms of their wellbeing, on their return to study. The revised Authorised Interruption of Study Policy sets an expectation that students should, wherever possible, agree a return to study plan before they take an interruption, and that Schools must confirm with the student that they are ready to return before their return to study date.
12 Conflicting studies	Amended to state that the regulation does not apply to visiting or non-graduating students. Visiting students are by definition students who are undertaking study at another institution, while non-graduating students may undertake study at several institutions simultaneously.
20 Permissible credit loads	Amended to remove the limit of 40 additional credits' worth of courses which students may take on a class-only basis, i.e. not for credit (sometimes referred to as "auditing"). It is common for postgraduate research students in particular to attend courses on a class-only basis, where this may be of benefit to their research. Where a student attends a course on a class-only basis, they do not submit assessment for the course, and may or may not attend all classes. Attendance of courses on a class-only basis requires the approval both of the relevant supervisor or Programme Director, and the Course Organiser for the relevant course. As such, there are sufficient safeguards in place to prevent a student being overloaded with courses, or a course having an excessive number of students in attendance.
23 Transfer to another programme	Clarification added that Colleges will confirm the remaining time permitted to complete a programme, following a transfer by a student. This allows Colleges to set an appropriate deadline for completion of a programme, for

	example when a student on a doctoral programme is transferred to an MPhil or MSc by Research programme.
24 Attendance and participation	Clarification added that in-person attendance may not be required for periods of extension for submission or resubmission of dissertations or research projects. This reflects existing guidance that resubmission of postgraduate taught dissertations under the Taught Assessment Regulations (58) will not normally require in-person attendance.
30 Leave of absence	Clarification has been added that leave of absence is not appropriate for long-term study at a distance from Edinburgh, which should only be offered as part of a specific online or distance-learning programme.
33 Authorised Interruption of Study	Amended to clarify that, on doctoral programmes, the total permitted period of interruption is 36 months, with the exception of PhD with Integrated Study programmes, for which the total permitted period of interruption is 48 months. This reflects the existing position, but seeks to prevent an unfair disparity arising between most doctoral programmes, which consist of a 36-month prescribed period of study, followed by a 12-month submission period, and some new programmes which consist of a 48-month prescribed period of study with no submission period. Without this additional clarification, students on the latter type of programme with a prescribed period of study of 48 months would be entitled to 48 – rather than the usual 36 – months' interruption.
36 Supervision	Amended to remove statement that the arrangement of Principal Supervisor plus Assistant Supervisor is the "usual arrangement" at the University, since this is not the prevailing approach in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. The existing wording does not entail a mandatory requirement, so its removal poses no risk.
37 Supervision – training	Amended to state that supervisors who are staff at Associated Institutions may be exempted from mandatory supervisor training at the University, provided that they have undertaken equivalent training at their institution within the relevant period. In line with the existing regulation, supervisors who are members of staff of other higher education institutions may be exempted from UoE supervisor training, where they have undertaken equivalent training locally. Some Associated Institutions also offer comparable training, so it is appropriate to extend this regulation to cover their staff. Schools remain responsible for ensuring that any such training is sufficiently comparable to training provided by the University.

39 Supervision – Eligibility	Amended to clarify that the existing requirement that supervisors should be "salaried" members of academic or non-academic staff means that they must not be on Guaranteed Hours or other casual contracts. This does not reflect a change in policy. It is appropriate to restrict eligibility to act as a supervisor to staff on salaried contracts as it is desirable to ensure as far as possible that students have consistent, stable supervision during the period of their research.
45 Request for Reinstatement on Doctoral and MPhil degrees	Amended to remove statement that "students are not eligible to be considered for reinstatement where they have been excluded from the University for any reason other than lapse of time". There may be other circumstances where students have been excluded and may reasonably be allowed to be reinstated, for example where they have been excluded for fee debt and have subsequently resolved this. A link to the Withdrawal and Exclusion Procedure has been added, which will clarify which categories of exclusion make a student ineligible to apply for reinstatement. Reinstatement remains at the discretion of the relevant College, so the amendment does not pose a risk of students being reinstated where this would not be academically appropriate. A further amendment has been made to clarify that, where students are reinstated following exclusion for lapse of time, their reinstatement is for a period of one month. This reflects existing practice within the Colleges. Clarification has also been added that, where a student does not submit their thesis within this one-month period, they will be excluded for lapse of time, and not permitted to apply for reinstatement again. This is an appropriate limit to avoid setting an expectation that students may be able to be reinstated multiple times, where this would not be in the interest either of the student or the University.
46 Vacation Leave for Research Students	Amended to clarify that the period of eight weeks' vacation leave applies to students on MSc by Research programmes which are examined by the relevant College Postgraduate Committee (see Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 46). These MSc by Research programmes are structurally similar to doctoral and MPhil programmes, and it is therefore appropriate that students should have the same entitlement to annual leave. By contrast, MSc by Research degrees which follow the structure of taught programmes include vacation periods at specific points in the calendar.

52 PhD (by Research Publications)	Amended to clarify that Honorary staff are eligible to apply for the degree of PhD by Research Publications. Existing eligibility covers University staff and staff at Associated Institutions, so it is appropriate that it should also include Honorary University staff. Honorary staff are, for example, also regarded as Internal Examiners on research degrees. It is not anticipated that the proposed amendment should lead to a significant increase in applications for PhD by Research Publications.
60 Application for Associated Postgraduate Diploma or Masters	Amended to clarify that students who have exited the University with a Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma due to failure to meet the requirements for the associated award for which they are applying are not eligible to apply for readmission on this basis. This amendment mitigates the risk that students who have exited from a Master's programme with a Certificate or Diploma due to failure to meet progression requirements will consider themselves eligible to apply for readmission to the same programme.
Changes to Degree Specific Regulations	
65 Doctor of Education (EdD)	Regulation removed as this programme is no longer offered.
77 Postgraduate Certificate in Democracy and Public Policy	Regulation removed as this programme is no longer offered.
84 Master of Public Policy; PG Dip and PG Cert of Public Policy	Regulation removed as these programmes are no longer offered.
85 Diploma in Professional Legal Practice	Amended to reflect changes approved within the Law School. The amendments remove "elevated hurdle" pass marks for specific courses on the Diploma, and increase the allowance for resit assessment from two to three attempts for each course.
87 Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (DClinDent)	Regulation removed as this programme is closing and is no longer admitting new students. The information in the regulation is available to remaining students in programme handbooks.
88 Master of Surgery (ChM)	Regulation removed as these programmes are being restructured. Information for current students is provided in programme handbooks.
89, 90, 93, 94 Doctor of Medicine (MD)	Substantial content removed as this information is now either redundant or provided in the Degree Finder.

95-99 Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)	Regulation removed as this programme is closing and has no remaining students.

Resource implications

7. Any resource implications associated with the proposed amendments are covered in the Key Changes table, above.

Risk management

8. Any risks associated with the proposed amendments are covered in the Key Changes table, above.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

9. The proposed amendments do not contribute to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals.

Equality & diversity

10. Any equality and diversity implications associated with the proposed amendments are covered in the Key Changes table, above.

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

11. Academic Quality and Standards will communicate approved regulations in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies. Academic Quality and Standards will also cover any changes to regulations in Boards of Examiners briefings and other relevant briefing events for staff in Schools and Colleges.

Author
Dr Adam Bunni
Academic Policy Manager
Academic Quality and Standards

Presenter
Adam Bunni

Freedom of Information Open

H/02/27/02

APRC 24/25 4C Appendix 1

Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations 2019/20

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Introduction

Code of Practice

5. The degree regulations are supported by the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students, which provides essential information for staff and students: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/copsupervisorsresearchstudents.pdf
~~The Code of Practice, although not regulatory, provides essential information for staff and students.~~

A General Postgraduate Degree Regulations

Late Admission

9. No student may commence a postgraduate degree, diploma or certificate programme more than two weeks after their given start date without the permission of the College. No student will be enrolled on a course more than two weeks after the start of the course without the permission of the Head of College. This includes students resuming courses following a period of authorised interruption of study. Students are not permitted to withdraw from a course marked as optional on the Degree Programme Table more than six weeks after the start of the relevant semester in order to substitute the course with another optional course, unless the relevant Board of Examiners has awarded a null sit for the course under the ~~Special~~ Exceptional Circumstances procedure, and the requirement above to enrol on the course within the first two weeks of the course can be met.

Conflicting Studies

12. Students registered on a programme of study at this University may not undertake any other concurrent credit bearing studies in this (or in any other) institution, unless the College has granted permission. The College must be satisfied that any additional credit-bearing studies will not restrict the student's ability to complete their existing programme of study. This regulation does not apply to visiting or non-graduating students.

20. Students may take courses on a class-only basis (i.e. not for credit), with the agreement of the course organiser, and the approval of the Director of Teaching or delegated nominee (e.g. Programme Director or Student Adviser), or supervisor. Decisions will be based on the overall load (credit and non-credit bearing) on the student in the year. ~~Students may not take more than 40 additional credits in any year.~~

Transfer to Another Programme

23. A student may be allowed to transfer to a different degree programme from another within the University by permission of the receiving College. When such permission is granted, the student shall, in addition to satisfying the requirements for the degree to which transfer is made, pursue such further courses of study as the College may require. The College may approve the transfer of some or all of the credits the student has attained for their previous programme into the new programme, as appropriate. The time permitted to complete the programme onto which the student is to be transferred will be confirmed by the College, in consultation with the School.

Attendance and Participation

24. Students must attend and participate as required in all aspects of their programme of study. This includes being available for teaching sessions, assessment, examination and meeting Student Adviser(s), Programme Directors or Cohort Leads or supervisors face-to-face and/or electronically. Except when registered on an online or distance learning programme, or where remote participation is specifically stated, students are expected to attend and participate in person, including during ~~any~~ the period spent working on a dissertation or research project (with the exception of periods offered for resubmission of postgraduate taught dissertations or research projects, where in-person attendance may not be required – see the Guidance on Resubmission of Postgraduate Taught Dissertations and Research Projects). The Degree Programme Table and programme handbook sets out programme requirements for attendance and participation. Certain students' visa conditions may require the University to monitor attendance and participation in specific ways. Non-attendance and non-engagement may affect a student's visa sponsorship status.

Leave of Absence

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30. Leave of absence is required where students undertake compulsory or optional activities that are part of their programme of study away from campus in Edinburgh. Leave of absence is not appropriate for long-term study at a distance from Edinburgh.

Students must have the formal approval of the College for any leave of absence to study away from Edinburgh that is 30 calendar days' duration or longer. Study location changes of less than 30 calendar days must be agreed with the Supervisor or Director of Teaching or delegated nominee (e.g. Student Adviser). Where the activity is a compulsory part of the programme of study and is organised by the School or College, permission may be given by the College for a cohort of students without individual applications being made. Colleges and Schools must maintain records of all leaves of absence. Certain students' visa conditions may be affected by study away from Edinburgh. This regulation does not apply to students on online or distance learning programmes.

Withdrawal and Exclusion

31. Any student may withdraw from their programme of study at any point in the year. Students may be excluded for reasons outlined within the procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies or due to termination of supervision as outlined in regulation 43:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/withdrawal_exclusion_from_study.pdf

Authorised Interruption of Study

33. A student may apply for an Authorised Interruption of Study, and it may be authorised by the College if there is a good reason for approving the interruption. Students may be required to provide evidence to support their applications. Interruptions of study will not be applied retrospectively. Any one period of authorised interruption of study will not exceed one year, unless authorised by the College. The total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is the same for full-time and part-time continuous students and will not exceed 100% of the prescribed period of full-time study, except in the following cases:

- On doctoral programmes, the total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is 36 months, with the exception of PhD with Integrated Study programmes, for which the total permitted period of interruption is 48 months;
- For part-time intermittent students, the total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is calculated as half of the prescribed period of study, for example, three years for a six-year Master's programme.

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- On programmes with a prescribed period of full-time study of 9 months, the total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is 12 months;
- On part-time continuous Masters programmes with a prescribed period of study of 36 months, the total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of study is 24 months.

The Head of College may exceptionally authorise an Interruption of Study which would take the total period of interruption beyond 100% of the prescribed period of study, provided this does not exceed the maximum allowable study period.
https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/authorisedinterruption.pdf
Also see the Study Period Table:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studyperiodtable.pdf

Additional Regulations for Doctoral and MPhil Research Degrees

Supervision

36. Each student will work under the guidance of at least two supervisors appointed by the College. Supervision continues until the final version of the thesis is submitted. There are two types of supervisory arrangement: Principal Supervisor plus Assistant Supervisor (or supervisors if more than one); or Co-Supervisors, one of whom is designated the Lead Supervisor. ~~The former option is the usual arrangement, but the latter option may be chosen when it is clear that the student's work involves interdisciplinary research.~~

37. Schools are responsible for ensuring that all supervisors who are members of University staff (including honorary staff)~~, and staff at Associated Institutions~~, have completed mandatory supervisor training at the University within the last five years. Schools are also responsible for ensuring that supervisors who are not University staff, or honorary University staff~~, or staff at Associate Institutions~~, for example staff at Associated Institutions, or at other higher education institutions, have either attended a supervisor briefing at the University within the last five years, or undertaken an equivalent training / briefing elsewhere within the same timescale.

39. The Principal/Lead Supervisor is responsible to the School's Postgraduate Director for the duties set out in the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students, and must be:

~~a)~~ a ~~salaried~~ member of ~~the academic~~ staff of the University~~; or~~

~~b)~~a) ~~a non-academic member of staff employed by the University~~ who has appropriate expertise in research and is not on a Guaranteed Hours or casual contract; or

~~c)~~b) an honorary member of staff; or

~~d)~~c) (when the student is studying full time in an Associated Institution) an employee of an Associated Institution.

Request for Reinstatement on Doctoral and MPhil degrees

45. A student who has been excluded for lapse of time or has withdrawn voluntarily before the end of their period of study may ask the College to reinstate their registration at a later date to permit examination of a completed thesis. The College will decide whether or not a student should be reinstated, and factors such as (but not limited to) the passage of time and its implications for the topic of study and the availability of appropriate supervision will be taken into account. ~~Students are not eligible to be considered for reinstatement where they have been excluded from the University for any reason other than lapse of time.~~ The student must provide good reason for the previous failure to complete. Students who require Student Visa sponsorship must contact the Student Immigration Service for advice before applying for reinstatement. If reinstatement is approved:

- Students who were previously excluded for lapse of time will be reinstated for a period of one month and ~~entitled~~ required to submit their thesis for examination, in accordance with the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees. Where a student does not submit their thesis for examination within the period of reinstatement, they will be excluded for lapse of time and will not be permitted to apply for further reinstatement.~~;~~
- Students who previously withdrew before the end of their submission period will be offered the time they had remaining on their programme to complete the thesis before submission. Students may apply for extension to study or interruption of study as normal. Their thesis once submitted will be examined in accordance with the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees.
- The Withdrawal and Exclusion Procedure provides more information about where students may or may not be permitted to apply for reinstatement following exclusion.

Withdrawal and Exclusion Procedure

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Vacation Leave for Research Students

46. Research Students are entitled to a maximum of eight weeks' vacation leave (i.e. 40 working days including public holidays) in each year of their programme without applying for an interruption of study. This includes MSc by Research students on programmes which are examined by the relevant College Postgraduate Committee (see Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 46). MSc by Research degrees which are examined by a Board of Examiners in a School include vacation periods at specific points in the calendar.

Time taken as vacation leave is included within the prescribed period of study. Students must seek approval for vacation leave from their supervisor and the School Postgraduate Office. Visa restrictions may also apply in the case of international students.

Grounds for the Award of Doctoral and MPhil Research Degrees

PhD (by Research Publications)

52. Applicants must be either graduates of the University of Edinburgh of at least five years' standing; or members of staff of the University of Edinburgh (including Honorary staff) or of an Associated Institution of not less than three years' standing. Permission to register will not be granted to applicants who are in a position to submit a PhD thesis for examination or who already possess a doctoral degree. Applicants must have been active postgraduate researchers in their field of expertise for a minimum of five years, and they must not submit material published more than ten years prior to the date of registration for the degree.

Application for Associated Postgraduate Diploma or Masters

60. A candidate who already holds a Ppostgraduate Ccertificate or Ddiploma from the University of Edinburgh may be permitted by the appropriate College to apply for candidature for the associated Ppostgraduate Ddiploma or Mmasters degree, provided that not more than five years have elapsed between their first graduation and acceptance as a candidate for the subsequent award. Marks awarded for courses taken previously as part of the certificate or diploma will be used in progression and award decisions relating to the new programme. Credit for courses taken previously which form part of the Degree Programme Table for the new programme does not count against the credit allowance for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Candidates who have exited the University with a Postgraduate

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Certificate or Diploma due to failure to meet relevant requirements for the associated award for which they are applying are not eligible to apply for readmission on this basis.

B College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Postgraduate Degree Regulations: Degree Specific Regulations

~~**Doctor of Education (EdD)**~~

~~65. The degree specific regulations are:~~

~~a. **Grounds for Award.** The degree of EdD may be awarded on the basis of successful completion of assessed coursework, a research project and a thesis.~~

~~b. **Prescribed Period of Study**. The prescribed period of study is 60 months part-time, but this may be increased to a maximum of 72 months.~~

~~c. **Thesis Length**. The thesis length should be no more than 75,000 words.~~

~~**Postgraduate Certificate in Democracy and Public Policy (Edinburgh Hansard Research Scholars Programme)**~~

~~77. The degree specific regulations are:~~

~~a. **Mode of Study and Prescribed Period of Study.** The period of study is 13 weeks full time.~~

~~b. **Assessment Type.** Students will be assessed on each unit through coursework, examination and a research project linked to a placement. All units are assessed only on a pass/fail basis. Students who fail a unit will be permitted one further attempt to pass the assessment of that unit within six weeks of the result being made known to the student.~~

~~**Master of Public Policy (MPP/DipPP), PG Dip and PG Cert of Public Policy**~~

~~84. The degree specific regulations are:~~

~~a. **Prescribed Period of Study – Master.** The period of study is 12 months.~~

~~b. **Prescribed Period of Study – PG Dip and PG Cert.** Students on the PG Certificate in Public Policy may complete this full-time over four months or part-time over a two year period. On successful completion of the PG Certificate, students may transfer to the PG Diploma in Public Policy (within a three year time period). Students on the PG Diploma in Public Policy may complete this full-time over nine months or part-time over a four year period.~~

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~~On successful completion of the PG Diploma, students may transfer to the Master Public Policy programme (within a three year time period).~~

~~c. **Grounds for Award.** Students will complete a compulsory programme of courses in the first and second semesters, comprising eight 15-credit courses, and a three-month placement in a policy organisation on which the Capstone Project/dissertation will be based. Students who decide not to complete the Capstone Project may, at the discretion of the College, be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Public Policy.~~

~~d. **Resits.** Students who fail a unit of academic assessment other than the Capstone Project on the first occasion may be allowed one further attempt to complete the assessment.~~

~~e. **Placement.** A student who fails the placement component of the Capstone Project may, on the recommendation of the Board of Examiners, be offered a second opportunity to undertake the placement. A repeat placement must be completed within a further 12 months.~~

Diploma in Professional Legal Practice

85. The degree specific regulations are:

a. **Grounds for Award.** Students must pass all of the core courses and three elective courses to be awarded the Diploma in Professional Legal Practice. ~~Attaining a mark of 60% or more is required for a pass in the coursework for the following courses: LAWS11250 Company and Commercial; LAWS11249 Financial Services and Related Skills; LAWS11310 Professional Skills and Responsibility.~~

b. **Assessment Type**. Students will be assessed in writing in each course of the curriculum. Where the assessment for a course includes an examination, s~~S~~tudents may only present themselves for examination in a course if they have been certified as having given regular attendance and having successfully completed the requisite work of the class in that course. Students may be permitted two~~a single~~ re-sit assessments or examinations for each course of the curriculum in which they have failed.

C College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine Postgraduate Degree Regulations: Degree Specific Regulations

~~**Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (DClin Dent) (Orthodontics/Paediatric Dentistry/Prosthodontics/Oral Surgery)**~~

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87. Students will pursue an integrated programme of teaching and taught clinical practice. Work for an independent research dissertation will commence during the first year and will be spread over the duration of the programme. The independent research component will be assessed by examination of the written dissertation and subsequent oral examination.

Master of Surgery (ChM)

88. The ChM suite of programmes are two year Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 12 programmes worth 120 credits. In order to be awarded the ChM students must:

a. pass at least 80 credits at SCQF level 12 with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits; and
b. attain an average of at least 50% for the 120 credits at SCQF level 12 and;
c. satisfy any other specific requirements for the ChM degree programme, that are clearly stated in respective handbooks.

An exit award is available to students leaving the programme without qualifying for the award of ChM. Based on the criteria set out in the Taught Assessment Regulations, a named Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) will be awarded if students:
a. pass at least 80 credits at SCQF level 12 with a mark of at least 40% in each of the courses which make up these credits; and
b. attain an average of at least 40% for the 120 credits at SCQF level 12
c. satisfy any other specific requirements for the ChM degree programme, that are clearly stated in respective handbooks.

Professional Higher Degrees

Doctor of Medicine (MD)

89. An applicant for the degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD) must:

a. hold a qualification which is registrable with the General Medical Council and must have been engaged since graduation for at least one year either in scientific work bearing directly on the applicant's profession, or in the practice of Medicine or Surgery, and will be performing their work in the South East of Scotland*, either employed as a member of staff of the University of Edinburgh; or as an NHS employee or as a research worker employed or self-financed or grant-funded, in the University of Edinburgh or an Associated Institution or an NHS establishment

DRAFT

~~b. all applicants are required to meet the University of Edinburgh standard postgraduate research admissions requirements.~~

90. The grounds for the award of the degree of MD are consistent with the award of MPhil by Research degrees.~~:~~

~~a. a student must have demonstrated by the presentation of a thesis, a significant amount of material worthy of publication or public presentation, and by performance in an oral examination (unless this is exceptionally waived by the College) that the student is capable of pursuing original research in the field of study, relating particular researches to the general body of knowledge in the field, and presenting the results of the researches in a critical and scholarly way.~~

~~the thesis must deal with one or more of the subjects of study in the curriculum for the degrees of MB ChB of the University or with subjects arising directly from contemporary medical practice. It must be an original work making a significant contribution to knowledge in or understanding of the field of study; contain material worthy of publication; show a comprehensive knowledge and a critical appreciation of the field of study and related literature; show that the student's observations have been carefully made; show the exercise of independent critical judgment with regard to both the student's work and that of other scholars in the same general field; contain material which presents a unified body of work; be satisfactory in its literary and general presentation, give full and adequate references and have a coherent structure understandable to a scholar in the same general field with regard to intentions, background, methods and conclusions. A concise and informative summary should be included with the thesis.~~

~~93. A student who is registered for a MD may apply to the College for conversion to an alternative degree, including abbreviating the prescribed period to 1 year full time equivalent in order to complete a MSc by Research, completing a 2 year full time equivalent prescribed period to complete a MPhil, or extending the prescribed period to 3 years full time equivalent in order to complete a PhD. Conversion can only be considered prospectively, in advance of completing the necessary prescribed period of research, and will incur fees applicable for the new degree.~~

~~94. A student must submit a thesis specially written for the degree concerned and must not have submitted it in candidature for any other degree, postgraduate diploma or professional qualification. The thesis length should be no more than 60,000 words. Material to be included in a thesis may be published before the thesis~~

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~~is submitted. The thesis must record the fact of such publication. The thesis must conform to the Postgraduate Research Degree Assessment Regulations.~~

~~*for this purpose, South-East Scotland is the areas covered by the Borders, Fife and Lothian Health Boards.~~

~~**Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)**~~

~~95. An applicant for the degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) must hold a qualification which is registrable with either the General Dental Council or the General Medical Council or both and must have been engaged since graduation for at least two years either in scientific work bearing directly on the applicant's profession, or in the practice of Dentistry or other related disciplines, and will perform their research work in the South-East of Scotland*, either employed as a member of staff of the University of Edinburgh; or as an NHS employee or as a research worker employed or self-financed or grant-funded, in the University of Edinburgh, or an Associated Institution or an NHS establishment.~~

~~All applicants are required to meet the University of Edinburgh standard postgraduate research admissions requirements.~~

~~96. The grounds for the award of the DDS are that:~~

~~a. the student must have demonstrated by the presentation of a thesis and by performance in an oral examination (unless this is exceptionally waived by the College) that the student is capable of pursuing original research in the field of study, relating particular researches to the general body of knowledge in the field, and presenting the results of the researches in a critical and scholarly way.~~

~~b. the thesis must deal with one or more of the subjects arising directly from contemporary dental or surgical practice relevant to oral health. It must be an original work that:~~

- ~~makes a significant contribution to knowledge in or understanding of the field of study;~~
- ~~contains a significant amount of material worthy of publication or presentation;~~
- ~~shows a comprehensive knowledge and a critical appreciation of the field of study and related literature;~~
- ~~shows that the student's observations have been carefully made;~~
- ~~shows the exercise of independent critical judgment with regard to both the student's work and that of other scholars in the same general field;~~
- ~~contains material which presents a unified body of work;~~

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- ~~is satisfactory in its literary and general presentation, gives full and adequate references and has a coherent structure;~~
- ~~is understandable to a scholar in the same general field with regard to intentions, background, methods and conclusions.~~

~~A concise and informative summary should be included with the thesis.~~

~~97. The supervisors must undertake that they will accommodate the student and the project within their research facilities, and obtain permission from line managers as required.~~

~~98. Registration may be full-time or part-time.~~

~~a. Full-time registration will apply to students who will spend >80% full-time equivalent devoted to research related to the DDS project. They may be either not in employment for >20% full-time equivalent, or employed in a post in which at least 80% full time equivalent time is available for research related to their DDS project rather than for clinical training or practice or other duties. Full time students have a prescribed period of two years in which they will conduct the research with up to two years to write up the thesis thereafter. Thesis submission is permitted at two years at the earliest and within four years.~~

~~Part-time registration will apply to students who are in employment unrelated to their DDS project for >20% full-time equivalent, or who elect not to devote as much as 80% of their time to the DDS research project. Students may opt to study either at 40% full-time equivalent, for which they will have a prescribed period of research of four years, or at 60% equivalent, for which the prescribed period is three years. Students will have two years to write up the thesis at the end of the prescribed period. Thesis submission is permitted at the end of the prescribed period of study at the earliest.~~

~~DDS Timetable for submission~~

	~~Year 1~~	~~Year 2~~	~~Year 3~~	~~Year 4~~	~~Year 5~~	~~Year 6~~
~~DDS full time~~	~~Prescribed Period~~		~~Submission period~~			
~~DDS part time 60%~~	~~Prescribed Period~~			~~Submission period~~		

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~~**DDS part time 40%**~~	~~Prescribed Period~~	~~Submission period~~

~~99. The thesis length should be no more than 60,000 words. Material to be included in a thesis may be published before the thesis is submitted. The thesis must record the fact of such publication. The thesis must conform to the Postgraduate Research Degree Assessment Regulations.~~

~~*for this purpose, South East Scotland is the areas covered by the Borders, Fife and Lothian Health Boards.~~

106. Exit awards are available to students leaving the programme without qualifying for award of the DVetMed.

Based on the criteria set out in the Taught Assessment Regulations relating to Postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate award, the following will be awarded:

- PGCert (VetMed) upon completion of 60 credits of courses
- PGDip (VetMed) upon completion of 120 credits of courses

In order to qualify for the award of MSc (VetMed), students must meet the following criteria:

- Achieve a pass in 180 credits of courses;
- Achieve an average of 50% across 180 credits of courses based on performance at the first attempt in each course;
- Achieve a mark of at least 50% in a minimum of 120 credits of courses ~~based on performance at the first attempt in each course; this must include a minimum of 50 credits worth of research courses*~~, including at least 50 credits of specified research courses*, based on performance at the first attempt in each course.

*~~Research Proposal; Study design and methods of research; Research project part 1, 2, 3~~Contributing research courses are listed in the relevant DPT/Programme Handbook.

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Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

20 March 2025

Exam Delivery – Two Session Day Proposal

Description of paper

1. This paper outlines constraints with the scheduling of the exam timetable and proposes in-principle a return to two-session exam days from 2025/26. This is an operational change which does not directly contribute to the delivery of Strategy 20230 outcomes however the decision has the potential to have an impact on the student experience.

Fit with remit

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee	Y/N
Oversee the development, maintenance and implementation of an academic regulatory framework which effectively supports and underpins the University's educational activities.	**Y**
In taking forward its remit, the Committee will seek consistency and common approaches while supporting and encouraging variation where this is beneficial, particularly if it is in the best interests of students.	**Y**

Action requested / recommendation

2. The committee is asked to discuss and approve in-principle the proposal for a return to a two-session exam day from academic year 2025/26. Any decision which relates to cost impact will need agreement from budget holders to allocate costs, within current budgets.

Background and context

3. Pre-pandemic, central examinations were undertaken on-campus in either examination venues or in PC enabled labs. The volume of exams within the schedule required that each day within the exam diet had two available exam sessions; 9.30am and 2.30pm.
4. During the pandemic, exams moved online. A single session was identified (1pm) to accommodate as wide a range of time zones as possible as students were distributed globally. This single session and start time have been retained as standard despite the return to on-campus exams (December 2022).
5. Due to the demand for on-campus exams (appendix A), additional constraints imposed by an increased requirement for PC enabled exam space and a rise in students with special adjustment requirements, it is no longer possible to schedule a clash free exam timetable within the exam diet with only one session per day. The number of exams has reduced by c. 40% from pre-pandemic, while the number of available sessions has reduced by 50%. This has resulted in additional ad hoc sessions being added to the timetable to ensure exams are all accommodated within the diet period. For example, in December 2023, one two-session day was required. In December 2024, six two-session days were required.

6. A consultation has been undertaken involving EUSA, Schools and the Exam Service to understand the impact of returning to a standard two-session day exam diet to both staff and students (appendix B).

Discussion

7. It is proposed that a return to a two-session exam day will provide a more consistent environment for students sitting their exams, where expectations around the logistical elements of the diet can be more effectively managed. Any change would be accompanied with clear communication to students.
8. Due to the complexity of the scheduling constraints, it is not possible to guarantee students would not have two exams within one day. However, this would be actively minimised by the Exams Service in the scheduling process, who would also provide enhanced guidance and reporting to support Schools in their checking processes, in particular to minimise instances of back-to-back exams or clustering of core courses.
9. The Exams Scheduling Officer, Disability Learning Support Service and Schools would work in collaboration to ensure an appropriate schedule for students with adjustments.
10. Additional checks would be introduced for both the Exams Scheduling Officer and Schools to reduce instances of students travelling cross-campus between exams and to reduce instances of clustering of core exams. This responds to feedback from Schools and EUSA through consultation.
11. A potential unintended consequence from the reintroduction of the two-session day will reduce dependency on Saturday exams, which responds to students who have a religious observance on Saturday and recognises the logistical challenges for invigilators, Schools, Estates and the Exams Service. While we propose these slots would be retained to ensure sufficient scheduling flexibility, use of Saturday would be minimised where possible.
12. There is a financial implication of this proposal. In external venues, an additional session cost is circa. £600+VAT per additional session. Therefore, the approach would continue to be to minimise use of the additional sessions where possible and to seek to use internal space where possible. Investigations regarding greater use of internal space across all exams and modelling of additional costs is currently underway. The aim will be to seek ways where overall cost of exams does not increase. Any potential outcome that increases costs will mean the decision will be on the condition that budget holders meet this via an allocation within their current budgets.
13. While School respondents acknowledged the resource implications of this change, all Schools were either positive or neutral about the proposal, if the appropriate checks and communications were in place.
14. The following alternative options have been considered:

Option	Considerations
Introduce exams on Sunday	• Challenge securing staff to support the running of the exams and opening of venues • Staff required to work 7 days a week to deliver the diet OR additional resource requirement • Increases complaints relating to religious observance

	• Additional costs through additional securing additional venues (if external venue – up to £7,500 + VAT per day)
Extending diet	• Would encroach on vacation period or revision periods • May result in further compression of staff timelines for marking and Board of Examiners • Additional costs through additional securing additional venues (if external venue – up to £7,500 + VAT per day)

15. If approved, a central communication will be sent to all taught students during the current academic year. The communication will be coordinated with Schools to ensure support is available for students.

Resource implications

16. There are resource implications for the Exams Service and for School administrative and academic teams across the exam diets, however these implications are manageable if planned. Retaining an “ad hoc” approach risks effective planning.
17. Any additional budget would need to be built into budget holders' costs for future years.
18. The financial implications as outlined in section 12.

Risk management

19. Failure to manage student and staff expectations regarding exam delivery impacts student experience, particularly at a critical point in the academic journey.
20. If current practice continues, there is a risk the exams service cannot schedule a clash free exam timetable within the available sessions.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

21. n/a

Equality & diversity

22. An EQIA has been undertaken to assess impact on student groups. The Exams Service, DLSS and Schools will work together to mitigate impacts to students with adjustments.

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

23. If approved, a communication will be sent to Schools, via College. This will be accompanied by confirmation of the checks which will be introduced to support Schools with checking the draft exam timetable. This will also be discussed in detail at the bi-annual Exams Operations Group.
24. If approved, a communication will be sent to students explaining the rationale for this change.

APRC 24/25 4D

Author
Marianne Brown
Head of Academic Planning (Registry Services)
March 2025

Presenter
Lisa Dawson
Academic Registrar

Freedom of Information
Open

Appendix A: Reference Figures

Table 1. Number of exams, students and student sittings

Main Exam Diets	Number of Exams	Number of Students	Number of Student sittings
2020/21	848	32,114	68,628
2021/22	947	33,182	69,059
2022/23	1,167	37,096	75,909
2023/24	1,145	38,200	79,867

Table 2. Number of exam sittings by delivery mode

Main Exam Diets	On Campus	On Campus PC Lab	Online
2020/21	-	-	68,628
2021/22	2,029	-	67,030
2022/23	58,298	2,716	14,895
2023/24	67,392	3,709	8,766

Table 3. Number of students and student sittings with special arrangements

Exam Diet	No. of special arrangement students	YoY increase	No. of special arrangement sittings	YoY increase
2020/21	2,046		4,175	
2021/22	2,807	+761	5,656	+1,481
2022/23	3,298	+491	6,702	+1,046
2023/24	4,069	+771	8,663	+1,961

Appendix B: Consultation outcomes

School consultation – December 2024-January 2025

Many schools welcome a return to two-session exam days, citing improved exam organisation, easier logistics for exam deliveries, and better management of the overall exam schedule.

Resource planning

- Some concerns were raised about course administrators and academic staff needing to start earlier or finish later for exam-related tasks.
- Schools with smaller administrative teams may face challenges in covering both sessions. Some teams suggested drawing on wider resources from student support and academic staff.
- Increased drop-offs and collections throughout the day could create workflow interruptions, but most believe these are manageable with additional support.
- Some notes that the change could require additional overtime payments or TOIL for staff working outside typical hours
- Some respondents emphasised that a two-session structure should not create additional burdens for schools in managing adjustments for students
- Many would like to see this reduce the dependency on Saturday exams, which are difficult to staff.
- Some schools with fewer central exams or fixed exam schedules (e.g., Medicine) anticipate little to no impact.

Student priorities

- Several responses emphasised that a return to two-session exam days should not result in students having two exams in one day unless absolutely necessary. Schools stressed that adjustments should be accommodated to prevent unfair scheduling.

- Concerns were raised about ensuring enough time for students to travel between different exam venues, especially for those with exams in different locations on the same day.
- Many schools support two-session days as a way to avoid scheduling exams on Saturdays, which can be inconvenient for students (as well as staff)

EUSA - January 2025

Colleagues consulted understood the requirement for the return to two-session days due to the constraints outlined but emphasised the key areas for consideration from a student perspective.

- There should be checks in place to reduce instances of back-to-back exams. Where this is not possible, checks should be in place to reduce instances where exams for core courses are scheduled back-to-back or clustered within the diet
- Students with special arrangements should not have back-to-back exams; or where unavoidable, their options should be clear – for example where they can apply for special circumstances
- There should be checks in place to mitigate instances of students travelling across campus between exams
- If approved, communications will be sent to students to manage expectations

Exams Service

Exam Timetabling

- A return to two sessions days will ease the timetabling process, in particular reducing the complexity of scheduling exams with PC lab requirements which currently constrains and dictates the rest of the exam timetable. This may enable an earlier draft of the timetable being released to Schools for checking prior to publication
- There will be increased complexity in setting up and managing constraints to reduce student impact, however much of this can be managed in advance of receiving exam requirements from Schools
- There will be a dependency on Schools thoroughly checking the draft timetable to identify back-to-back or clustering of core courses as this information is not included in exam data, but guidance and checklists can be developed to support this

Resource planning

- Running two sessions throughout the diet means daily early starts and late finishes for the Exams Team and Invigilation Team; careful resource management will be required to ensure that staff are supported appropriately across this period

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Equality Impact Assessment Template

If you require this template in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background please contact HRHelpline@ed.ac.uk.

You'll find it useful, before filling in this assessment template, to complete the online course:
Introducing Equality Impact Assessment

This template is designed to be used alongside the:
EqIA Guidance and Checklist
EqIA Policy Statement

EqIA covers policies, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services, but will be referred to as 'policy/practice' hereinafter.

A. Key Information	
Policy/practice name:	Exams – 2 session exam days
General background/aims of policy/practice:	We are proposing to return to two session exam days to ensure that all central examinations can be scheduled within the exam diet window. This was standard practice pre-pandemic and is the sector norm. The current practice is schedule "ad hoc" two session days as required, which means inconsistency in student experience across the diet
School/Dept:	Registry Services
Assessed by: (name & job title)	Marianne Brown, Head of Academic Planning, Registry Services
Sign off by: (name & job title)	
Sign off date:	
Review date:	

B. Reason for EqIA	(check one)
New policy/ practice is proposed	☐
Change to existing policy/practice is proposed	☒
Other (describe in Section D below)	☐

C. Who will most impacted by this proposal?
Consider carefully how your proposal will impact both positively and negatively on people from different groups.

Consider the 9 protected characteristics as below in your proposal. There may be other identity characteristics that you wish to also include in your impact assessment. It is expected that you will consider all equality groups for impact. Please indicate below (with a tick) which groups you feel will be most affected by your proposal.

Age	☐	**Race (including ethnicity and nationality)**	☐	**Marriage and civil partnership[1]**	☐
Disability	☒	**Religion or belief (including no religion or belief)**	☐	**Sex**	☐
Gender reassignment	☐	**Pregnancy and maternity**	☐	**Sexual orientation**	☐
Other characteristics	☐				

D. Consideration of Impact
Show your considerations of how all of the above protected characteristics may be impacted. The following prompts will help you to reflect:

- What information and evidence do I have about the needs of relevant equality groups – is this sufficient to fully assess impact?
- Could this policy/practice lead to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, or create barriers or less favourable treatment for particular groups and how can you mitigate any negative impacts?
- Does this policy/practice contribute to advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations?

[1] Note: only the duty to eliminate discrimination applied to marriage and civil partnership. There is no need to have regard to advancing equality or opportunity or fostering good relations in this respect.

- How can communication of the policy/practice be made accessible to all relevant groups?

- What information and evidence do I have about the needs of relevant equality groups – is this sufficient to fully assess impact?

All taught students may be impacted by this change which would see the re-establishment of morning sessions as standard within the diet, and in some instances of two exam sittings in one day. This may be of concern to wide range of students (including across all protected characteristics) for a range of reasons, however most particularly those with adjustments. As part of the proposal, we have specified that students with adjustments assessed by the Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS) will be respected within the scheduling process to mitigate any impact to students – e.g. to ensure they do not have back to back exams or exams on consecutive days. Where this is not possible within the scheduling constraints of the diet, discussions would be had between the Exams Office, Schools and DLSS to ensure appropriate mitigations in place, e.g. alternative assessments where applicable.

In the last two years, we have had to introduce “ad hoc” two session days in the diet in order to accommodate all exams. Our rationale to moving to a full diet of two sessions is improve consistency for students (e.g. of start times of exams) and to allow clearer communications to students about their exam diet. This aims to ease student concerns and anxiety about the diet.

The Exams Team will work with Schools to ensure a robust checking process for the exam timetable to try and mitigate instances where particular students have clustering of exams, or back to back exams. This aims to reduce the pressure on all students across the diet.

A consultation has been undertaken with DLSS, Schools and EUSA to understand views on this proposal and required mitigation strategies.

- Could this policy/practice lead to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, or create barriers or less favourable treatment for particular groups and how can you mitigate any negative impacts?

Scheduling of the exam diet will take into account student adjustments but beyond that will schedule according to “best fit” to ensure all exams can be accommodated. Student characteristics beyond adjustments will not be included in the process.

- Does this policy/practice contribute to advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations?

There is no impact towards advancing equality of opportunity/fostering good relations of this proposal.

- How can communication of the policy/practice be made accessible to all relevant groups?

This change in practice would communicated centrally, with coordination with Schools to ensure local support available for students with concerns. It will be available through email but information also made available through Exams Team information site for on-going access.

E. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome Select one of the four options below to indicate how the development/review of the policy/practice will be progressed and state the rationale for the decision.	(check one)
Outcome 1: No change required – the assessment is that the policy/practice is/will be robust.	☒
Outcome 2: Adjust the policy or practice – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality and/or to foster good relations.	☐
Outcome 3: Continue the policy or practice despite the potential for adverse impact, and which can be justified.	☐
Outcome 4: Stop the policy or practice as there are adverse effects which cannot be prevented/mitigated/or justified.	☐

F. Action and Monitoring Describe any actions you will take to address the findings of this EqIA. • How can I involve equality groups or communities in the ongoing monitoring, review and potential future development, of this policy/practice? Describe how the policy/practice will be monitored going forward, to ensure that impact is frequently reviewed. Make sure you add a review date in Section A above.
The Exams Team, DLSS and Schools will continue to work closely together throughout the academic year to understand how changes are bedding in and if there are impacts which

have not been identified. We will continue to consult with EUSA to ensure student voices are being accounted for.

We will review the approach after year 1, and provide regular reporting across the first year to understand impact across student groups.

G. Publish
Send your completed EqIA to the HR EDI team (equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk) to published, and keep a copy for your own records.

APRC 24/45 4E

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

Date

Special Arrangement Exams Extra Time

Description of paper

1. This paper proposes a return to percentage-based extra time for students with special arrangements, ensuring adjustments are consistent with their Schedule of Adjustments.

Fit with remit

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee	Y/N
Oversee the development, maintenance and implementation of an academic regulatory framework which effectively supports and underpins the University's educational activities.	**Y**
In taking forward its remit, the Committee will seek consistency and common approaches while supporting and encouraging variation where this is beneficial, particularly if it is in the best interests of students.	**Y**
Consider the implications of the Committee's work and its decisions in the context of external initiatives and compliance and legal frameworks, particularly in relation to equality and diversity.	**Y**

Action requested / recommendation

2. The committee is asked to discuss and approve a return to percentage-based extra time for students with special arrangements, ensuring adjustments are consistent with their Schedule of Adjustments. If approved, the amended approach would be in place from the 2025/26 session.

Background and context

3. Reasonable adjustments are recommended by the Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS). The sector standard is 25% extra time for exams for disabled students, with three other percentages for students with more complex needs: 33%, 50% and 100%. Needs are assessed on a case-by-case basis and communicated to the student and School accordingly.
4. For the last four years a blanket +1 hour has been applied to all students with extra time adjustments. This was initially a response to the Covid pandemic approved by SEC and APRC; this paper recommends a return to use of the previously agreed reasonable adjustment arrangements to align with sector practice.
5. Reasonable adjustments should be based on assessed disability-related need, not a continuation of practise introduced during periods of exceptional circumstances and/or logistical challenges. The continuation of this practice results in reasonable adjustments not being implemented.
6. Under current practice of a blanket +1 hour most students benefit from an increase in extra time provision. However, for a smaller number the blanket

approach reduces the assessed disability-related need extra time provision, disproportionately impacting students with more complex needs.

7. In addition, the Medical School run their own exams separate to the centrally managed exam diet. The Medical School apply a maximum of 25% extra time for exams. The University is therefore running two models of reasonable adjustments and an unequitable application of extra time. It is recommended this disparity is resolved to ensure consistency and fairness for students.
8. A consultation has been undertaken by the Exams Service and DLSS to understand impact to Schools and students from this proposed change (summarised in Appendix A).
9. Any agreed change would be effective from the 2025/26 academic year.

Discussion

10. Returning to percentage-based extra time is consistent with sector practice and ensures consistency and fairness for students with their schedule of adjustment. Failure to provide the full extra time provision for students with complex needs risks a breach of the Equality Act 2010. It is therefore proposed the University reverts to implement the agreed reasonable adjustments for all exams, whether online or on campus.
11. Through consultation with Schools, concerns were raised about administering online exams, as outlined in Appendix A. Where central platforms are used, guidance would be provided by the Educational Design and Enhancement Team (within Information Services Group) to support these processes.
12. If approved, communication with students is critical. Reverting to the agreed reasonable adjustment will mean many students (c.2,800) receive less extra-time than they did with the blanket +1 hour, therefore ensuring Student Advisers and staff supporting students can provide support to impacted students is essential.

Resource implications

13. Schools will be required to set up additional drop boxes for online exams. The Exams Service will be required to provide invigilation for on-campus exams with 1+ hour of extra time, however due to the low number of students with this adjustment, the cost implication is minimal and will be absorbed within the existing invigilation allocation.

Risk management

14. If the practice of providing an additional +1 hour for all students as a blanket extra time adjustment continues, there is an ongoing risk of breach of the Equality Act 2010 because students who need more than one extra hour will not receive the necessary adjustments to meet their specific needs. As the size and complexity of the disabled student population increases, there is a risk increasing numbers of students will be in this category.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

15. n/a

Equality & diversity

16. An EQIA has been approved.

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

17. Clear communication is key to ensuring impact to students is minimised. Communications would be developed centrally and coordinated with Schools to ensure appropriate support for students. Guidance will be provided to Schools for centrally supported exams systems.

Author
Victoria Buchanan
Director of Disability and Learning Support Service

Marianne Brown
Head of Academic Planning, Registry Services

Presenter
Lisa Dawson
Academic Registrar

Freedom of Information
Open

Appendix A: Consultation summary

School consultation

There are two different views emerging from the consultation, with support for both approaches.

Those in favour of returning to the extra time stated in students' schedules of adjustment:

- This is more equitable for students
- Current approach is confusing for students, who question why everyone is getting the same and they aren't getting the % allocated
- If implemented, the change must be accompanied by a clear communication strategy, with central messaging which Schools can use to support students

Others felt that the disruption caused by varying exam end times outweighed the benefits of returning to the use of percentage-based extra time:

- Disruption caused in on-campus exams if exam end times vary
- Confusion for students in understanding different end times
- Practical and resource considerations for managing online exams

- Concerns for continuing students' experience, especially those who have received additional time through the blanket 1 hour
- Challenge of communication and managing the change

The consultation highlighted the challenges around the logistical management of online exams in particular. The challenges centred around the complexity of managing multiple dropboxes for different time adjustments (potentially up to four per exam), the increased workload and longer hours for staff who are responsible for managing these and the potential confusion for students with different exam end times. Some Schools expressed concern about accuracy of managing this process and one School felt the considerations where significant enough that they would consider their position on online examinations.

EUSA Consultation

Colleagues in EUSA understood the rationale behind the proposal, however voiced the following student impacts for consideration:

- Impact on continuing students who have experience the blanket one hour for the past four years – preference for a phased approach to minimise the impact
- The requirement for robust checks on the timetable of students with special arrangements, particularly if returning to the two-session extra day
- If approved, communication with students within the current academic year is essential, so that students could make informed choices about courses

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Equality Impact Assessment

Before carrying out EqIA, you should familiarise yourself with the University's EqIA Policy Statement and Guidance and Checklist Notes, and undertake our online training on Equality and Diversity and EqIA. These, along with further information and resources, are available at www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/equality-diversity/impact-assessment

EqIA covers policies, provisions, criteria, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services, but will be referred to as 'policy/practice' hereinafter.

A. Policy/Practice (name or brief description):

Implementation of extra time as reasonable adjustment in exams.

For the past 3 academic years, a blanket approach of applying an additional hour has been in place for any student with extra time in exams as a reasonable adjustment. Initially this was put in place as a response to the unique and complex situation presented by the global Covid pandemic. University of Edinburgh (UoE) is now in a position where the specified reasonable adjustments are not being implemented as per written instruction and assessed need, which is called a Schedule of Adjustment (SoA). Reasonable adjustments are designed and recommended by specialist staff within Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS). The sector standard is 25% extra time in exams for disabled students. Increased percentages of extra time are recommended for students with more complex needs. For most students this means they get an increase in extra time provision (greater than 25%) but for a smaller number of more complex students the blanket approach reduces their extra time provision. This blanket approach could disproportionately impacts on the disabled students with the most complex needs, and therefore this amendment in policy helps address any potential issues accordingly.

B. Reason for Equality Impact Asessment (Mark **yes** against the applicable reason):

- Proposed new policy/practice
- Proposed change to an existing policy/practice **yes**
- Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice
- Other (please state):

C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:

Name: Victoria Buchanan
Job title: Director
School/service/unit: Disability and Learning Support Service

D. An Impact Assessment should be carried out if any if the following apply to the policy/practice, if it:

- affects primary or high level functions of the University **yes**
- is relevant to the promotion of equality (in terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty 'needs' as set out in the Policy and Guidance)? **yes**

- It is one which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqIA? **yes**

E. Equality Groups

To which equality groups is the policy/practice relevant and why? (add notes against the following applicable equality group/s)

- age
- disability
- race (including ethnicity and nationality)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage or civil partnership[1]

The policy has the potential to affect all staff and students and therefore may impact on all nine protected characteristics. However, the protected characteristic of disability will be affected most, especially given the nature of reasonable adjustments, and in particular for students who undertake examinations as part of their studies at the University. DLSS can assess (or re-assess) disabled students' specific needs for individual reasonable adjustments.
The communication regarding this change will be in English and therefore there is a potential impact on race, but as English is the main teaching language of the University and individual users can use browser translation tools, the impact is likely to be small.

The University vision involves a continuing commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion for both students and staff. The University has a single Equality and Diversity Strategy to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are guiding principles in our pursuit of academic excellence.

Add notes against the following applicable statements:

- On any available information about the needs of relevant equality groups:

Disabled student statistical information and qualitative feedback is collected and monitored via DLSS. There is clear evidence of increasing numbers of and complexities of disabled students year-on-year. The continuation of a one-size-fits-all approach does not address the individual needs of disabled students.

- Any gaps in evidence/insufficient information to properly assess the policy, and how this be will be addressed:

At this stage, it is felt we have sufficient evidence to proceed.

- If application of this policy/practice leads to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, less favourable treatment for particular equality groups:

We do not believe that this change will result in any form of prohibited conduct for the reasons detailed abpve and below.

[1] Note: only the duty to eliminate discrimination applies to marriage and civil partnership. There is no need to have regard to advancing equality or opportunity or fostering good relations in this respect.

The proposed revision in practice to revert to extra time fractional percentages will impact on many continuing students who will see a reduction in the extra time that they receive in comparison to previous years. However, this a proportional measure and all disabled students will continue to receive their adjustments – accurately tailored to reflect their individual assessed needs. Under current practice of applying an additional hour, those students with more complex needs have been disproportionately affected by either not receiving their full extra time allowance or not receiving proportionally more extra time to account for their higher level of assessed need. This change in practice seeks to return to a more equitable position that meets the assessed needs of disabled students.

A change in practice would re-establish the proportionate extra time approach and ensure those disabled students with more complex needs have their adjustments met.

It is noted that continuing students may perceive that they are being treated unfairly via this change in practice. However, from an Equality Act perspective all students will be granted the extra time they need based on their assessed need. For continuing students who see a reduction in extra time as a result of this change, DLSS can conduct individual reassessments and adjust the extra time allowance as necessary to guarantee that no disabled student is disadvantaged.

For new students staring in academic year 2025-26 the standard 25% extra time in exams would reflect what disabled students should be expecting, as this is sector standard practice.

DLSS monitors and reviews the reasonable adjustments available for disabled students regularly. Where a need is identified to either revise an existing adjustment or create a new adjustment, this can be done relatively quickly. A return to working with the specific wording of the adjustments would mean that any revision of the extra time offer could be done via the existing adjustments. This would allow a more nuanced approach rather than applying a one-size-fits-all standard that does not meet the needs of all disabled students..

- If the policy/practice contributes to advancing equality of opportunity[2]

This practice would provide equity as the actual assessed needs of disabled students would be met. A blanket approach is equal but not equitable.

Consultation has taken place with Schools and Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA), who are broadly supportive of the rationale behind this change in practice. It is recognized that this change in practice may impact on DLSS/student relations in the short to medium term.

- If there is an opportunity in applying this policy/practice to foster good relations:

It is hoped that by considering impacts, positive and negative, on all protected characteristics via the system upgrade, and subsequently this EqIA, we are showing that the University is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. We have considered ways to mitigate and provide support and information to users in these groups.

- If the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?

Aside from enquiring in person with DLSS at the Health and Wellbeing Centre in Bristo Square, information about the policy change has the potential to impact students with socioeconomic considerations and lower incomes, since one of the communication options involved is predicated on accessing email or the internet via IT equipment (desktop, laptop, tablet and / or mobile device). However, all students have free, 24 / 7 IT facilities at the

[2] This question does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage or civil partnership

University, principally at the George Square Main Library. IT facilities are also provided at other campuses across Edinburgh. Public libraries in the UK also facilitate free access to the internet. Finally, other countries have similar options available.

- How the communication of the policy/practice is made accessible to all groups, if relevant?

Communication with affected groups is critical. DLSS will identify those students who are likely to see a reduction in extra time as a result of this change in practice. This will be primarily via email and website information updates. Information about this change can be made available in alternative formats upon request for disabled users. For continuing students who see a reduction in extra time as a result of this change, DLSS can re-assess students on an individual basis and increase the extra time allowance where that is needed.

Schools and the central Exams Team will be given advance notice to plan for change in practice to support the return to fractional percentages.

- How equality groups or communities are involved in the development, review and/or monitoring of the policy or practice?

Input has been sought from the ISG Disability Information Team, Exams and Timetabling Team, School Teaching Offices and EUSA. Feedback will be continually monitored and action taken where appropriate in relation to the 9 protected characteristics.

- Any potential or actual impact of applying the policy or practice, with regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and promote good relations:

Nothing other than that stated above and below.

F. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome

Select one of the four options below to indicate how the development/review of the policy/practice will be progressed and state the rationale for the decision

Option 1: No change required – the assessment is that the policy/practice is/will be robust. For the reasons detailed above and below.

~~**Option 2:** Adjust the policy or practice – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality and/or to foster good relations.~~

~~**Option 3:** Continue the policy or practice despite the potential for adverse impact, and which can be mitigated/or justified~~

~~**Option 4:** Stop the policy or practice as there are adverse effects cannot be prevented/mitigated/or justified.~~

G. Action and Monitoring

1. Specify the actions required for implementing findings of this EqIA and how the policy or practice will be monitored in relation to its equality impact (or note where this is specified above).

DLSS will maintain communication with EUSA, the Advice Place. Students who are registered with DLSS are surveyed regarding their reasonable adjustments, and response

rates to these surveys are typically high. Additional questions will be added within the survey regarding this specific change in order to monitor impact.

Schools and Exams Team are consulted annually on the adjustments made available to students. Review and monitoring of this procedural change will be picked up as part of this annual review process.

We will monitor all feedback for any comments, positive or negative, related to any of the nine protected characteristics and act accordingly. We will also advise staff of the need to make complementary reasonable adjustments where appropriate, including providing information in alterative formats, free of charge, upon request.

2. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?

A review shall take place if there are any significant changes to the policy, in addition to receiving any feedback, positive or negative, related to any of the nine protected characteristics. On each of these occasions, the EqIA will be updated.

H. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? Yes

If No – please specify when it may be published or indicate restrictions that apply:

I. Sign-off

EqIA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)): Victoria Buchanan, Director, Disability and Learning Support Service, University Secretary's Group

Accepted by (name):

School/service/unit:

Date:

Retain a copy of this form for your own records and send a copy to equalitydiversity@ed.ac.uk

APRC 24/25 4F

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

20 March 2025

Taught Assessment Regulations – Initial discussion of proposed amendments

Description of paper

1. This paper highlights a small number of proposals for amendments to the Taught Assessment Regulations for the 2025/26 session and invites initial discussion of these.

Fit with remit

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee	Y/N
Oversee the development, maintenance and implementation of an academic regulatory framework which effectively supports and underpins the University's educational activities.	**Y**
Ensure that the academic regulatory framework continues to evolve in order to meet organisational needs and is responsive to changes in University strategy, and in the internal and external environments.	**Y**

Action requested / recommendation

2. For comment.

Background and context

3. The Assessment Regulations are reviewed annually to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and that enhancements can be made on a cumulative basis. In December 2024, all Colleges were invited to consult Schools and Deaneries regarding proposals for changes to the Assessment Regulations, with the intention of identifying any necessary updates due to changes in related policies or practices, and to address any errors or lack of clarity. Colleges were also invited to recommend areas for potential enhancement to the Regulations.

4. Formal proposals for amendments to the Taught Assessment Regulations and Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees will be submitted to APRC at the May 2025 meeting. The majority of proposals received from Colleges and Schools are uncontroversial and consist of minor clarifications to existing policy. However, a small number of proposals received are more substantive and would entail a change in policy. As such, we are inviting APRC to have an initial discussion regarding these proposals at the March meeting, in order to inform any subsequent proposals in these areas.

Discussion

5. The below table provides information about the proposed amendments to the Taught Assessment Regulations which APRC is invited to discuss.

Regulation	Proposed amendment
17 Assessment deadlines	Colleges and Academic Quality and Standards frequently receive enquiries from Schools as to whether deadlines for coursework assessment may be set during the spring and winter vacation periods, and during periods designated for revision. Based on the feedback received to date, our proposal is to amend TAR 17.3 to include text stating: **"Coursework deadlines may be set during the spring vacation period, but not during the winter vacation."** Feedback from Schools indicated that coursework deadlines during the spring vacation period are relatively common. The rationale for stating that deadlines may not be set during the winter vacation period is that, by contrast with the spring vacation, the University is closed for a significant proportion of the winter vacation. As such, students may be unable to seek appropriate support in advance of deadlines set during this time. With regard to deadlines during revision periods, it may be appropriate to state that deadlines may not be set during this period, since they may conflict with scheduled exams. However, some students, especially at PGT level, may not have any scheduled exams during the revision period. It may therefore be unreasonably restrictive to prevent the setting of deadlines during this period. One option would be to delegate authority to Colleges to approve the setting of coursework deadlines during scheduled revision periods.
27 Resit assessment	The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences have proposed a change in approach to the marking of resit assessment. Currently, in line with TAR 27.14, marks for resit assessment are not capped, with the full range of marks available at each attempt. The exception to this is where resits are offered at Honours and PGT level for professional purposes, the mark for the initial attempt is used for classification. The Appendix to this paper includes a consultation document which was circulated among Colleges, Schools, and EUSA regarding this proposal.
58 Resubmission of postgraduate dissertations or research projects - **Permitted number of resubmissions**	The College of Science and Engineering Concessions sub-Committee have raised a concern regarding students being given multiple resubmission attempts for PGT dissertations or research projects where they have repeated or chronic Exceptional Circumstances. Under the terms of TAR 58.2, students who have been permitted resubmission due to Exceptional Circumstances remain entitled to a further resubmission due to marginal failure (i.e. in the absence of Exceptional Circumstances).

	There are cases of students who have failed the dissertation at the first attempt being granted a resubmission due to Exceptional Circumstances, where they also receive a fail mark at resubmission but have Exceptional Circumstances again. In this scenario, there is therefore a chance that the student may be eligible to submit the dissertation at least four times, but potentially an unlimited number of times. CSE raised concerns not only about the administrative challenge posed by a potentially "endless loop" of resubmission, but also the potential that students gain an unfair advantage by receiving multiple rounds of additional feedback on their dissertation, in line with the expectations of TAR 58. It may therefore be worth considering an overall limit on the number of submissions a student can make for the dissertation or research project, e.g. of three (including resubmission due to Exceptional Circumstances and resubmission due to marginal failure).
58 Resubmission of postgraduate dissertations or research projects - **Academic misconduct**	The School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures have requested an amendment to TAR 58.5, which currently states: "Students who achieve a mark of 45 to 49% for the dissertation or research project at the first attempt as a result of a marking penalty, either for late submission or for academic misconduct, are entitled to one resubmission, in line with this regulation." The amendment requested would state that, **where a student received a mark of 45 to 49% for their dissertation or research project at the first attempt due to a marking penalty for academic misconduct, they would not be automatically entitled to resubmit**. The exception to this would be where they have had an Exceptional Circumstances application accepted, and resubmission is offered as an outcome on that basis.

Resource implications

6. APRC is not being asked to approve any changes to policy at this time. Any resource implications associated with the proposed amendments will be considered in the event that approval of a change to policy is requested.

Risk management

7. APRC is not being asked to approve any changes to policy at this time. Any risks associated with the proposed amendments will be considered in the event that approval of a change to policy is requested.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

8. APRC is not being asked to approve any changes to policy at this time. Any implications associated with the proposed amendments will be considered in the event that approval of a change to policy is requested.

Equality & diversity

9. APRC is not being asked to approve any changes to policy at this time. Any equality and diversity implications associated with the proposed amendments will be considered in the event that approval of a change to policy is requested.

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

10. Academic Quality and Standards will formulate any final proposals for amendment to the regulations based on the discussion at the meeting. These will be presented for approval at the May meeting of APRC. Consideration will be given to where additional consultation may be required in relation to proposed amendments, including with Senate, as appropriate.

Author
Dr Adam Bunni
Academic Policy Manager
Academic Quality and Standards

Presenter
Adam Bunni

Freedom of Information Open

February 2025, Academic Quality and Standards

Capping of resit marks – initial consultation regarding proposed change to regulation

During the annual review of the Taught Assessment Regulations (TAR), the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences have proposed a change in approach to resit assessment.

1. Current approach to marking of resit assessment

Students are entitled to resit assessment for courses in the pre-Honours stages of undergraduate programmes (Years 1 and 2), and on General and Ordinary degree programmes. Some professional programmes offer resit assessment at Honours and postgraduate taught level.[1]

TAR 27.14 states that "**the full range of marks offered by the relevant Common Marking Scheme is available at resit assessment. Resit marks are not capped.**"

2. Proposed change to regulation

It has been proposed that the regulations should be changed so that **marks for resit assessment would be capped at 40% for undergraduate courses** (50% for postgraduate taught courses, where relevant). **Any cap would not apply to resits offered as a "first attempt" following a null sit due to Exceptional Circumstances.**

The perceived potential benefits of this approach include:

- Increased incentives for students to pass at the first attempt, thereby reducing the burden of resit assessment;
- Removing unfairness, where students can achieve higher marks at the second attempt than their peers achieved at the first attempt;
- Potentially offering greater flexibility to use different approaches to setting and marking resit assessment, which may be less labour-intensive.

3. Capping of marks at course Vs component level

There is the option to cap the overall course result following resit, or to cap the result for individual assessment components. Capping at component level offers the benefit of allowing students to retain marks for components in which they have performed well at the first attempt. This may not be compatible with the approach to resit assessment in many subject areas, however, where individual components are replaced with a single assessment component covering all learning outcomes at resit. As such, it is likely that any cap used would be applied to the **overall course result**.

4. Sector approach

An initial survey found that 21 of 22 responding higher education institutions cap marks for resit assessment. 18 of those 21 apply the cap to the course/module result, with the other 3 applying the cap to individual components of assessment.

5. Response requested

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) will have an initial discussion about the proposal at its meeting on 20th March, with a decision regarding any changes to regulations due to be taken in late May. **Schools are requested to share initial views on the proposal with Colleges ahead of the discussion at the March APRC.**

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[1] Where resits are offered at Honours or postgraduate taught level for professional purposes, the resit mark is not capped, but the mark for the first attempt at assessment is used for classification.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

20 March 2025

Committee Priorities 2025/26

Description of paper

1. The paper asks the Committee to discuss proposed priorities for academic year 2025/26.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is asked to discuss the proposed priorities for 2025/26, outlining areas of focus and objectives.

Background and context

3. In semester two of each academic year, Senate Standing Committees discuss and agree priorities to focus on throughout the following academic year. The process for development and agreement of committee priorities has been further enhanced this year to include a specific request for contributions from Senate. Senate was invited to propose potential priorities for the Senate Committees at its February meeting. No specific suggestions were made for APRC priorities.

4. The following have been taken into consideration when proposing priorities across the Standing Committees:

   - Committee remits
   - Feedback from Senate and standing committees
   - University strategic priorities
   - External and regulatory requirements
   - Outcomes of quality processes, including external review

5. Member input (including from the constituencies they represent) is critical to shaping the proposed priorities and the associated areas of focus and objectives. Members are therefore invited to shape the draft priorities below or to suggest additional priorities to reach agreement on a set of proposed priorities which are relevant to the committee remit and the University's strategic priorities, and are achievable within resources. As such, members are asked to consider SMART criteria when discussing and agreeing the proposed priorities. Ideally, the objectives of the priorities should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

6. The timeline for discussion and agreement of standing committee priorities is as follows:

	Mid-year reflection update + input to priorities	Mid-year reflection + priorities discussion	Agree priorities (standing committees)	Senate notes agreed standing committee priorities
SEC	5 Feb	27 Feb	1 May	20 May

APRC	5 Feb	20 March	By electronic business (by end April)	20 May
SQAC	5 Feb	20 Feb	3 April	20 May

Discussion

7. The Committee is invited to propose and discuss potential priorities for APRC for 2025/26. Two suggested priorities have been drafted below, focusing on business arising from Curriculum Transformation, and the routine review of policies. Members may also want to consider, amongst other potential suggestions, the following issues:

- Recommendations for policy changes arising from the Board of Examiners Review being conducted by Registry Services;
- Recommendations for changes to regulations and policy relating to moderation of assessed work, arising from discussion of moderation at Senate Education Committee, and the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group;
- Recommendations for changes to regulations and policy arising from the Bristol Case Working Group (e.g. regarding the approach to reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities).

DRAFT Committee priorities 2025/26

Proposed priority	Curriculum Transformation
Rationale and fit with remit	The Curriculum Transformation Programme is a major University strategic priority which aligns to Strategy 2030. It is also relevant to the committee remit: 2.1 Oversee the development, maintenance and implementation of an academic regulatory framework which effectively supports and underpins the University's educational activities. 2.2 Ensure that the academic regulatory framework continues to evolve in order to meet organisational needs and is responsive to changes in University strategy, and in the internal and external environments.
Area of focus and objectives	• Consider regulatory implications of elements of the PGT curriculum, including progression points, awarding criteria, programme length, pass marks, and Recognition of Prior Learning; • Consider and approve where relevant policies to articulate the PGT programme archetypes (contingent on approval of the archetypes by Senate).

Regulatory/external requirement?	No

Proposed priority	Scheduled review of policies
Rationale and fit with remit	APRC revised the schedule of reviews for policies in March 2023 to group these more thematically and address a backlog in reviews generated during the pandemic period. The review of some policies scheduled for 2024/25 has been postponed to 2025/26. Maintenance of the framework of policies and regulations is central to APRC's remit: 2.1 Oversee the development, maintenance and implementation of an academic regulatory framework which effectively supports and underpins the University's educational activities.
Area of focus and objectives	Policies scheduled for review during 2025/26 include the following: • Code of Student Conduct • Dual, Double and Multiple Awards Policy • Various documents relating to PGR assessment
Regulatory/external requirement?	Yes. Regular review of core practices as enshrined in policy is an expectation under the QAA UK Quality Code.

Resource implications

8. Standing Committees' work has implications not only for Registry Services, but also for the membership and stakeholders the Committee may need to consult and work with in relation to a particular priority including in relation to implementation and evaluation. Resource implications should be outlined and considered on an ongoing basis as work on priorities progresses.

Risk management

9. Work on priorities is vital to the Committee fulfilling its remit. Failure to fulfil its remit raises potential risks associated with the University's framework of academic policy and regulations and the student experience.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

10. This paper does not respond to the climate emergency or contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Equality & diversity

11. Equality and diversity implications should be outlined and considered on an ongoing basis as work on priorities progresses.

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

12. The discussion at the meeting will be used to finalise the proposed priorities.

Author
Academic Quality and Standards
10 March 2025

Presenter
Prof Patrick Hadoke
Convener of APRC
Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM)

Freedom of Information Open

H/02/27/02

APRC 24/25 4H

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

20 March 2025

CMVM Programmes with Non-Standard Academic years 2025/6

Description of paper

1. This paper proposes an updated list of CMVM programmes which do not follow standard semester dates and diverge from the standard academic year, and updated dates for the MVM online blocks on EUCLID for 2025/6.

Fit with remit

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee	**Y/N**
Oversee the development, maintenance and implementation of an academic regulatory framework which effectively supports and underpins the University's educational activities.	**Y**
Ensure that the academic regulatory framework continues to evolve in order to meet organisational needs and is responsive to changes in University strategy, and in the internal and external environments.	**Y**
In taking forward its remit, the Committee will seek consistency and common approaches while supporting and encouraging variation where this is beneficial, particularly if it is in the best interests of students.	**Y**

Action requested / recommendation

2. Appendices 1 and 2 were approved by CMVM College Education Committee 6 March. APRC are asked to approve the updated list of programmes, as shown as track changes in red, Appendix 1, and to approve the change of dates for the MVM online blocks on EUCLID for 2025/6, Appendix 2.

Background and context

3. Programmes with non-standard semester dates are published on the University website, non-standard-academic-year. Programmes that do not follow the standard must be approved at College and then by Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC).

4. **Discussion**
   CMVM have had some changes to programmes that do not follow the standard Academic year, Appendix 1. Some of the programmes on the list are closing and are no longer admitting new students. These will be closed when all on programme students complete. However, as part of the College Modernisation we plan that in the future all of our Online PGT programmes will move to the standard Academic Year delivery. This will make it easier for the sharing of courses not only across our College, but across the University.

5. **Resource implications**
   The non-standard model is the prevailing model for ODL PGT, and UG Professional programmes in CMVM, so approval does not carry any resource implications.

6. **Risk management**
This does not introduce new risks because it is established practice for many programmes within CMVM.

7. **Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**
N/A

8. **Equality & diversity**
The structures have been designed to meet the needs of working professionals in the relevant disciplines and are not otherwise detrimental from an EDI point of view.

9. **Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed**
N/A

Author
Isabel Lavers
7/3/25

Presenter
Isabel Lavers

Freedom of Information
Open

APRC 24/25 4H

Appendix 1

CMVM Programmes with Non-Standard Academic years

Edinburgh Medical School: Medical Education
Undergraduate
MBChB Medicine (6 year programme)
HCP- Medicine for Healthcare Professionals (MBChB)

Postgraduate online learning
Clinical Education (Online Learning) (MSc)
Simulation Based Clinical Education (Online Learning) (PgCert)

Edinburgh Medical School: Biomedical Sciences
Undergraduate
Biomedical ~~Laboratory~~ Science (Professional Practice) (Part-time) (BSc)
Integrative Biomedical Sciences (Zhejiang University) (BSc)
Biomedical Informatics (Zhejiang University) (BSc)

Postgraduate
MScR in Biomedical Sciences (Life Sciences)
MScR in Integrative Neuroscience

Postgraduate online learning
Anatomical Sciences (Online Learning) (PgDip)
Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health (Online Learning) (MSc)
Cancer Biology and Precision Oncology (Online Learning) (MSc)
Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (Online Learning) (MSc)
Global Health and Infectious Diseases (Online Learning) (MSc)
Global Health Studies (Online Learning) (PgCert)
International Animal Health (Online Learning) (MSc)
Science Communication and Public Engagement (Online Learning) (MSc)

Edinburgh Medical School: Deanery of Clinical Sciences
Undergraduate
Oral Health Sciences (BSc)

Postgraduate
Endodontology (DClinDent)
Orthodontics Dentistry (DClinDent)
Paediatric Dentistry (DClinDent)
Prosthodontics Dentistry (DClinDent)

Postgraduate online learning
~~Applied Medical Image Analysis (Online Learning) (PG Cert)~~
Clinical Management of Pain (Online Learning) (MSc)
Clinical Ophthalmology (Online Learning) (ChM)
Critical Care (Online Learning) (MSc)
General Surgery (Online Learning) (ChM)
~~Imaging (Online Learning) (MSc)~~
Internal Medicine (Online Learning) (MSc)
~~Neuroimaging for Research (Online Learning) (MSc)~~
Paediatric Emergency Medicine (Online Learning) (MSc)
Patient Safety and Clinical Human Factors (Online Learning) (MSc)
~~PET-MR Principles and Applications (Online Learning) (PG Cert)~~
Primary Care Ophthalmology (Online Learning) (MSc)
Restorative Dentistry (Online Learning) (MSc)
Stem Cells and Translational Neurology (Online Learning) (MSc)
Surgical Sciences (Online Learning) (MSc)
Surgical Writing and Evidence Based Practice (Online Learning) (PgCert)
Trauma and Orthopaedics (Online Learning) (ChM)
Urology (Online Learning) (ChM)
Vascular and Endovascular Surgery (Online Learning) (ChM)

Edinburgh Medical School: Deanery of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences
Postgraduate online learning
Clinical Trials (Online Learning) (MSc)
Data Science, Health and Social Care (Online Learning) (MSc)
Epidemiology (Online Learning) (MSc)
Family Medicine (Online Learning) (MFM)
Global Health Challenges (Online Learning) (PgCert)
Leading Digital Transformation for Health and Social Care (MSc)
Public Health (Online Learning) (MPH)

Commented [IL1]: The FT OL MPH Public Health should be deleted from the University non-standard dates listing

Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies
Undergraduate
BVM&S Veterinary Medicine (5 year programme)
BVM&S Veterinary Medicine (Graduate Entry Programme – 4 year programme)

Postgraduate online learning
Advanced Clinical Practice (Online Learning) (MVetSci~~, PgDip, PgCert~~)
Advanced Veterinary Practice (Online Learning) (RCVS Certificate)
Applied Conservation Genetics with Wildlife Forensics (Online Learning) (MSc)
Applied Poultry Science (Online Learning) (MSc)
Clinical Animal Behaviour (Online Learning) (MSc)

Conservation Medicine (Online Learning) (MVetSci)
Data Driven Breeding and Genetics (Online Learning) (MSc)
Data Driven Sustainability (PG Cert)
Equine Science (Online Learning) (MSc)
Food Safety (Online Learning) (MSc)
Global Food Security and Nutrition (Online Learning) (MSc)
International Animal Welfare, Ethics and Law (Online Learning) (MSc)
One Health (Online Learning) (MSc)
Veterinary Anaesthesia and Analgesia (Online Learning) (MSc)

Appendix 2

CMVM Online Programme Teaching dates

The dates for 2025/2026 are proposed:

H/02/27/02

APRC 24/25 4H

	CMVM OL Teaching weeks	2025-26	University On campus Teaching Weeks
	Welcome week	**08/09/2025 - 12/09/2025**	Welcome week
	Weeks 1-6	15/09/2025 - 24/10/2025	Weeks 1-6
Term 1	Weeks 7-12	27/10/2025 - 5/12/2025	Weeks 7-12
	Winter break	**08/12/2025 - 02/01/2026**	Weeks 13-16
	Weeks 1-6	05/01/2026 - 13/02/2026	Weeks 17-22
Term 2	Weeks 7-12	16/02/2026 - 27/03/2026	Weeks 23 -28
	Spring break	**30/03/2026 - 03/04/2026**	Week 29
	Weeks 1-6	06/04/2026 - 15/05/2026	Weeks 30-35
Term 3	Weeks 7-12	18/05/2026 - 26/06/2026	Weeks 36-41
	Summer break	**from 29/06/2026**	Weeks 42-52

At present the MVM online blocks on EUCLID are set for 2025/6:

2025/6 MVO1 MVM Online Learning Block 1 15-Sep-25 30-Nov-25
2025/6 MVO2 MVM Online Learning Block 2 12-Jan-26 05-Apr-26
2025/6 MVO3 MVM Online Learning Block 3 13-Apr-26 28-Jun-26

We would like to request these are changed to:

2025/6 MVO1 MVM Online Learning Block 1 15-Sep-25 7 Dec 25
2025/6 MVO2 MVM Online Learning Block 2 5-Jan-26 29 Mar 26
2025/6 MVO3 MVM Online Learning Block 3 6 Apr-26 28-Jun-26

Senate Academic and Policy Regulations Committee

Thursday 20th March 2025

Update on Regulations Work Associated with Curriculum Transformation Project (PGT)

Description of paper

1. This paper provides an update on work being undertaken by the Curriculum Transformation Project (CTP) with regards to regulatory changes that would be needed to support the implementation of the proposed PGT Curriculum Framework.

2. Curriculum Transformation contributes to Strategy 2030 outcomes ii, v, vi, and ix, and is relevant to other outcomes including iv, x and xiii.

Fit with remit

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee	**Y/N**
Oversee the development, maintenance and implementation of an academic regulatory framework which effectively supports and underpins the University's educational activities.	**Y**
Ensure that the academic regulatory framework continues to evolve in order to meet organisational needs and is responsive to changes in University strategy, and in the internal and external environments.	**Y**
Scrutinise and approve proposals for new or revised academic policy or regulation, ensuring that policy and regulation is only introduced where it is necessary, and that all policy and regulation is suitably accessible to its intended audience.	**Y**
In taking forward its remit, the Committee will seek consistency and common approaches while supporting and encouraging variation where this is beneficial, particularly if it is in the best interests of students.	**Y**
Consider the implications of the Committee's work and its decisions in the context of external initiatives and compliance and legal frameworks, particularly in relation to equality and diversity.	**Y**

Action requested / recommendation

3. None. This paper is provided for information ahead of detailed discussions at future APRC meetings. Questions, or comments, may be sent directly to the paper author.

Background and context

4. At their November 2025 meeting, APRC received an update on ongoing work looking at what regulatory changes might be required to support the

implementation of the PGT Curriculum Framework, proposed by CTP. In response to questions posed in that paper, and as a result of a wider discussion, APRC provided guidance on several issues which has helped shape subsequent work

5. Building on previous discussions with APRC, the CTP team have continued to develop more detailed proposals for the regulatory implementation of the proposed PGT Curriculum Framework.

6. Since the original business case associated with implementing the CTP PGT Curriculum Framework was approved, there has been a growing understanding of the financial sustainability challenges faced by the University. This has resulted in the University Initiatives and Projects Board (UIPB), who oversee the funding and scope of large-scale projects within the University, reviewing all projects for which they are responsible. This includes reviewing CTP.

7. While the UIPB review is ongoing, all indications are that the implementation of the proposed PGT framework remains an institutional priority. Therefore, in the short-term, work is focused on the regulatory, process and system enablers needed to fully support each of the archetypes proposed in the PGT Curriculum Framework.

8. The on-going UIPB review, along with more restrictive processes around recruitment, mean that a dedicated Academic Policy Manager (based within the Quality and Standards Team), intended to help with the detailed policy work required to operationalise the PGT Curriculum Framework, is yet to be appointed.

Discussion

9. In light of the above context, short-term work is focused on those regulatory issues immediately relevant to implementing the proposed PGT Curriculum Framework.

Regulations Around MSc Progression and Award

10. In discussions, across the University, it has become apparent that there is already considerable variation in Masters awarding criteria; with exceptions to the single criteria in the University's Taught Assessment Regulations (TAR) being handled through APRC approved opt-outs. Any awarding criteria intended to cover multiple degree archetypes will likely appear more complex than the current single position currently in TAR. However, the expectation is that this work will remove the need for (most) existing opt-outs. This could be expected to simplify operations, with appropriate regulations -supported by agreed processes - reducing the need for specific programmes to develop their own mechanisms for degree calculations.

11. Following discussion with APRC in November, the CTP team have developed several alternative sets of possible progression and awarding regulations covering the different archetypes included in the proposed PGT Curriculum Framework.

12. These initial ideas were presented, for comment, in several forums (including College committees, discussions with College Deans and members of the University's Quality and Standards Team).

13. This work has highlighted a range of issues requiring further consideration. In particular, a wide range of views have been expressed around the trade-off between the complexity of any regulations and the flexibility needed to support a range of different programmes.

14. In view of feedback received so far, a workshop is currently being planned to try establish agreed principles for any revised progression and awarding rules. It is expected this workshop will take place in April 2025.

15. One issue that continues to be raised with regards to Masters progression and award regulations is the difference between the pass mark for Level 11 courses (40), and the grade required to be awarded an MSc (typically based on marks of 50+). In order to further inform this discussion, initial work has been done to understand how moving the course pass mark to 50 might impact awards (assuming no change in marker behaviour). Based on data from Academic Year 23/24 (972 awards), around 1 in 5 PGCert and PGDip awards would not have been made if marks of 50+ had been required for award.

Pathway Based MSc Degrees

16. In light of Portfolio Reviews undertaken by the respective College Offices, and as a result of schools looking for efficiencies around their teaching in the current financial climate, CTP colleagues have noted a growth in interest in the “Pathway based Masters” archetype (where a cohort of students study a common core of courses, before developing a speciality through their later course choices, with the speciality reflected in their final degree award). In light of increased interest, CTP colleagues are working to develop this archetype as a priority.

17. Prior to undertaking any detailed regulation work associated with this archetype, there are a range of pedagogical issues that need to be addressed, for instance, how many pathway specific credits are required to justify the award of a named degree?

18. PGT focused colleagues within CTP are planning a series of events (over the coming weeks) to try and establish which degree structure(s) might be most useful to schools wishing to offer pathway-based programmes. The outputs from this work are expected to lead to an initial draft of a relevant regulatory framework. This

draft framework will form the basis of wider consultation with Schools and relevant colleagues (ideally over summer 2025 and early Academic Year 25/26).

Publication of Degree Programme Specifications

19. Work is underway to establish the extent to which the current publication of Degree Programme Specifications (DPS) meet the University's requirements for external publication.

20. The initial timeline (report to APRC during the current semester) has slipped slightly due to the delay in staff recruitment outlined above. However, it is hoped to provide APRC with an update on the status of DPS for the start of Academic Year 25/26.

Publication of Degree Specific Regulations (PGT)

21. Following the November meeting of APRC, a process has been developed for establishing whether existing degree specific regulations need to be maintained (in many cases it is expected previous opt-outs would will be covered by the increased flexibility proposed in the PGT Curriculum Framework).

22. College Offices indicated a wish to be involved in this process, although it is expected that CTP colleagues will take the lead in meeting specific programme teams.

23. A template, to consistently record, the outcomes of meeting with specific programmes, has been developed (covering whether the opt-out remains relevant, the extent to which it might be addressed through the CTP PGT Curriculum Framework, any work needed to update the current wording, and how the opt-out is communicated to students).

24. Programme specific meetings are likely to take place later this academic year, subject to consultation with College Offices.

Resource implications

25. The programme resources to date have included programme team staff time to support the development of the PGT curriculum framework and associated work concerning the development of new regulations, processes and systems.

26. A Full Business Case for the PGT aspect of CTP was approved by the University Initiatives Portfolio Board (UIPB) and University Executive in July 2024. The PGT Full Business Case covered four academic years from AY24/25 to AY27/28, and incorporated investment for Schools & Colleges; Regulatory, Process & System enhancements & implementation; together with support for course & programme design (including thematic priorities). As discussed above, UIPB are reviewing previously agreed funding, and, if required, the scope of the above work will be reprofiled to reflect changes proposed by UIPB.

27. Work arising from CTP is reflected within APRC's priorities for Academic Year 24/25, and so it is expected that the committee's time can be managed on that basis.

Risk management

28. The programme team maintain a risk register which is reviewed, presented and discussed at the Curriculum Transformation Programme Board in addition to follow up actions with the risk owners and those responsible for taking any actions set out to mitigate the risks. The implementation timetable presented to Senate identified specific stage gates where progress required to implement the PGT Curriculum Framework (including associated regulations will work) will be formally assessed. It is expected that the above will be revised following any decision from UIPB concerning the future scope and timelines for CTP.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

29. Curriculum Transformation will support a positive contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the University. Objectives around inclusive and equitable access to education (SDG4), wellbeing (SDG3) and gender equality (SDG5) align with the purpose of Curriculum Transformation and the prototype Curriculum Design Principles. SDG13 (action to combat climate change and its impact) features directly in the Edinburgh Student Vision and through consideration by a Climate and Sustainability working group.

Equality & diversity

30. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for the overall approach to Curriculum Transformation, the organisation and management of the Curriculum Transformation Programme was completed in November 2022. Further EqIA will be undertaken as part of the development and implementation phases of Curriculum Transformation.

31. Work is underway, based on discussions with the Curriculum Transformation Board, the University Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee and other stakeholders, on the development of an Equality Impact Assessment for the proposed Curriculum Framework. The approach being taken is to identify opportunities to design in positive action and support for equity, diversity and inclusion, and to identify risks and amelioration around roll out and adoption. This will be discussed by the Board and with Senate Quality Assurance Committee.

32. Equality Impact Assessments for specific policy changes will be completed as required.

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

33. It is expected that APRC will receive a further update at their meeting scheduled for May 2025.

34. As outlined above, a series of meeting/workshops with relevant colleagues are expected to take place over the coming weeks. It is expected that a period of consultation with schools and colleges will occur ahead of academic year 2025/26. These consultations are expected to result in detailed proposals for consideration by APRC in early Academic Year 2025/26.

Author

Paul Norris (CTP Secondee) P.Norris@ed.ac.uk

10th March 2025

Presenter

N/A – comments or questions are welcome to the paper author by email

Freedom of Information Open

APRC 24/25 4J

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

20th March 2025

Update on Lecture Recording and Captioning

Description of paper

1. This paper provides an update to APRC on findings of a service review completed for the Lecture Recording Service, after concerns were raised about uptake of the service by the 'Watch that Gap' project.

2. It also gives an update on the Captioning Service Project currently underway in ISG and what changes have been made to lecture recording to improve the accessibility of media (including lecture recordings).

3. In terms of Strategy 2030, this paper reports on actions that improve the student experience by making it more inclusive and accessible, and that improve the excellence of our teaching.

Fit with remit

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee	Y/N
In taking forward its remit, the Committee will seek consistency and common approaches while supporting and encouraging variation where this is beneficial, particularly if it is in the best interests of students.	**Y**
Consider the implications of the Committee's work and its decisions in the context of external initiatives and compliance and legal frameworks, particularly in relation to equality and diversity.	**Y**

Action requested / recommendation

4. No action is required, this paper is for information only.

Background and context

5. In academic year 2023/24, over 37,000 lectures and other teaching activities were recorded using Media Hopper Replay, with well over a million views of these recordings.

6. Recording facilities are available in more than 300 teaching rooms across our campuses. All lectures in these rooms are recorded by default unless staff specifically opt-out of recording. Other activities are not recorded by default but staff can opt-in to record non-lecture activities.

7. Lecture recording facilities are available across general teaching spaces in the places where most lecturing happens. As a result of this coverage we estimate that around 97% of undergraduate lectures could be being recorded.

8. Staff can opt-out of lecture recording at course, schedule (a group of lectures in a course, for example all Tuesdays at 11am) or individual lecture level.

9. The University's Lecture Recording Policy states that '[lecturers] will inform the relevant School of any full lectures they decide not to record, along with the reason.' And also that 'Schools will notify students which of their lectures will be recorded or not by the start of the Course, including reasons for not recording.'

Discussion

10. In 23/24:
    a. Around 2500 courses had lectures in rooms where lecture recording was possible. There were 60 courses fully opted-out of lecture recording. There were 127 schedule level (i.e. 'Tuesday at 11am') opt outs which impacted 36 different courses, and 71 individual lectures opted out of across 32 different courses. In total, 128 courses had some sort of recording opt out (around 5%).
    b. A reason can be provided for opt-out within the Media Hopper Replay scheduler system – but this isn't mandatory for individual lecture opt out. Reasons can be recorded as pedagogical, personal, ethical or that the recording will be initiated manually by the lecturer using the ad-hoc recording option. Some Schools have higher numbers of opt-outs than others.
        i. For course level opt outs, the biggest reason by far given was pedagogical, counting for 63% of opt outs.
        ii. For schedule level opt out, there was more of a spread with 35% being for ad-hoc recording, 31% being for pedagogical and the same for ethical.
        iii. For individual lecture level opt out, 48% of opt outs had no reason given and 42% cited pedagogic reasons.

11. At the APRC meeting in March 2024, a paper was tabled covering the 'Watch that Gap' student experience project and discussion was had about the experience of students who had caring responsibilities, including ways it could be improved. It was reported at that meeting that students had complained about issues with lecture recordings not being available or being of poor quality. EUSA have also in the past asserted that lecture recording coverage or quality has not always been adequate.

12. In summer 2024, the Lecture Recording service team in ISG embarked on a project to review the service with the aim of developing recommendations that would improve the student experience of the service going forward.

13. Data was collected and analysed through the summer of 2024 by a small team of interns.

14. They reviewed just over 250 courses, looking at 4 recordings (where those existed) for each course. Where recordings existed, they skipped through the full recording to ensure consistency of quality throughout the recording. More than 1000 recordings were checked in total.

15. The review found that almost 21% of recordings had some sort of non-technical issue:
    c. 85 recordings of **empty rooms** and blank screens (8%). Although the timeline coincided with strike action, we believe less than 10 lecture recordings were impacted by this. The others we believe were a mixture of cancelled classes, room bookings for lectures which were no longer needed and full course cancellations which still had room bookings in the Timetabling system and therefore still had lecture recordings scheduled. These won't have impacted the student experience because there were no students enrolled on the courses but flags an issue for Timetabling given demand on teaching space during the academic year.
    d. 110 recordings had **no audio** (11%) – where it looked like in a majority of cases the lapel microphone in the room hadn't been worn (the microphone wasn't attached to the speaker when looking at the speaker in the video stream in most cases) or the microphone hadn't been unmuted. Twenty one of the 250 courses (8.4%) seemed to have a recurring issue with the microphone not being switched on, that is, more than half the recordings reviewed in those courses had no audio.
    e. Thirty-five recordings had been **stopped near the start** (around 3.5%) with a press of the pause button in the room. In total, 14.5% of recordings were unusable due to no audio or the recording being stopped early on.
    f. Just over 7% of recordings had issues with no audience microphone being used or **not all speakers using the microphone**.

16. Only fifteen recordings had technical issues with audio (1.5%)

17. The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy states 'All teaching staff shall ensure that microphones are worn and used in all lectures regardless of the perceived need to wear them.' (point 7).

18. ISG began a Captioning Service Project in summer 2022. This project is a five-year project, with a particular focus on the media in Media Hopper Create and Media Hopper Replay, and has 2 main aims:
    g. To provide resource for human corrected captions for prioritised media to improve their accuracy;
    h. To investigate what may be done to improve automated captioning quality in the future.

19. ISG employ a team of paid student interns who work part-time during term time to correct the captions on content when requested. As it takes a significant amount of time to correct captions, requests are prioritised to ensure the highest priority media is corrected as quickly as possible. In doing

this work the students develop a high level of skill in correcting and annotating, and working with AI generated content. Read more about the service on the ISG website (https://edin.ac/captions).

20. In Media Hopper Replay, transcripts have been automatically generated for recordings for a number of years. However, until December 2024, a staff member would have to press a button, for each recording, to turn transcripts into captions. Switching that captions on by default has saved an extra task for the lecturer as well as provided useful captions for the student.

21. In Summer 2024, the lecture recording service team discovered during the service review that very few lecture recordings had their transcripts converted into captions during the preceding academic year (around 99% of lecture recordings had no captions) and it was agreed by the Captioning Service project board, IT Committee and Knowledge Strategy Committee during summer 2024 that the captions should be automatically generated with no manual intervention. This was switched on in our lecture recording service (Replay) in December 2024.

22. Automated captions can vary in quality depending on audio quality in media, complexity of terminology and voice/accent of speaker(s). However, the Project Board agreed that, for the vast majority of recordings, automated captions would be helpful for students.

23. Automated captions being on by default makes it easier for the intern team responding to human correction requests.

24. In the coming months, the service team are embarking on a number of projects to improve the student experience with the help of Schools:
    i. An email has been sent from the Vice Principal Students and the Chief Information Officer to Heads of School to ask them to remind staff of the opt-out process for lecture recording and to wear a microphone.
    j. ISG will embark on a communications campaign to remind staff to wear microphones in lectures and turn them on/unmute. This will include reminders by email and also advertising within the rooms themselves by way of a poster campaign. Students will be encouraged to help remind staff that microphones are required. Wearing a microphone is not only crucial for lecture recording but is essential for those in the room, particularly those with hearing disabilities.
    k. Data about lecture recording for each School will be added into the Accessibility Report the School is provided by LTW on an annual basis. This will include opt-out data and any data we have collected about issues with the use of the service in the School. We hope his will prompt Schools to encourage a change in behaviour where necessary.
    l. Our larger teaching rooms feature newer touch panel systems that use the Lecture Recording device API to display live capture information, including audio levels. There are currently no warnings to tell the user when no audio is detected.

No. of rooms currently with live audio visualiser	23
No. of rooms planned by end of year (2026)	75

Technical options for implementing additional audio level indicators as a standard feature are only available as part of a lecture recording replacement solution (road mapped for 2026-9) or by securing further funding. Implementing a change in behaviour would be a more efficient and cost-effective approach to ensure a higher number of lectures are recorded accurately.

Resource implications

25. Any dynamic hardware solution to this issue will be expensive and will require a cost-benefit analysis as well as various costed options.

Risk management

26. This paper makes recommendations to reduce risk by providing captions for students with disabilities/adjustments and improving the student experience in general.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

27. This paper responds to UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by improving the student experience for all students but in particular those who have a disability or for whom English is a second language.

Equality & diversity

28. This paper makes recommendations to support equality and diversity by improving the student experience for all students but in particular those who have a disability or for whom English is a second language.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action

This paper is for information only.

Author

Name: Karen Howie, Head of Digital Learning Applications and Media
Date: February 2025

Presenter

For information only

Freedom of Information Open

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

20 March 2025

Implementation of Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020

Description of paper

1. This paper presents the implementation of the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 which comes into force on 1 April 2025 and details how the University will comply with this change.

Fit with remit

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee	Y/N
Oversee the development, maintenance and implementation of an academic regulatory framework which effectively supports and underpins the University's educational activities.	Y
Ensure that the academic regulatory framework continues to evolve in order to meet organisational needs and is responsive to changes in University strategy, and in the internal and external environments.	Y
Scrutinise and approve proposals for new or revised academic policy or regulation, ensuring that policy and regulation is only introduced where it is necessary, and that all policy and regulation is suitably accessible to its intended audience.	Y
Consider the implications of the Committee's work and its decisions in the context of external initiatives and compliance and legal frameworks, particularly in relation to equality and diversity.	Y

Action requested/Recommendation

2. APRC is asked to note the updated policy: Protection of Vulnerable Groups. This was approved at University Executive as approving body on 11 March 2025.

Background and context

3. The Protection of Children and Protected Adults Policy applies to all members of the 'University Community': staff, students, contractors, visitors working with children or protected adults in the course of activities undertaken on behalf of the University. This will be renamed Protection of Vulnerable Groups Policy.

4. The change in Government has delayed the publication of the usual associated code of practice which has resulted in delays to the University proposal being developed. This proposal is based on published legislation and understanding, following legal advice, of what is likely to be required to comply.

5. The system of disclosure of criminal records in Scotland and the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme are administered by Disclosure Scotland. A Disclosure is a criminal record check. The Act will make the following significant changes to the criminal record checks regime and the PVG Scheme in Scotland which will impact the University:
   The types of disclosures (levels of reporting) will change from 4 main levels: basic, standard and enhanced disclosures, PVG scheme to 2 main levels:

a. Level 1 disclosures will replace a basic disclosure which shows any unspent convictions. Basic checks are conducted by the University on an ad-hoc basis. An example is a Technician carrying out work with Schedule 5 material which is pathogens and toxins under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act.

b. Level 2 disclosures include “Level 2”, “Level 2 with barred check list” and “PVG Scheme”. These will replace the current standard and enhanced disclosures and PVG Scheme. All Level 2 checks can disclose information such as spent convictions and cautions.

   i. “Level 2” checks may be carried out where permitted, under The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Further information is covered in Section 22 of the revised policy. The University commonly conducts this level of check on veterinary surgeons and employment concerned with the provision of health services that does not meet criteria for PVG.
   ii. The “PVG scheme” applies to regulated roles with children or protected adults (detailed further below) such as a practising as a registered medical practitioner, or coaching children in relation to sports or physical activity. Further information is available at Disclosure Scotland

c. From 1 April 2025, membership of the PVG Scheme will be mandatory for those working with children and protected adults in "regulated roles". The Act will change the terminology from “regulated work” to “regulated roles”. The current PVG 2007 Act defines “regulated work” with children and adults by reference to: the activities that a person does; the establishments in which a person works; the position held; or the people for whom they have day to day supervision or management responsibility. “Regulated roles” is defined in the 2020 Act as what is already included in the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 plus some new (regulated) roles that do not currently qualify for PVG checks. Further guidance on such regulated roles is covered under Section 12 of the revised policy. Examples will also be published in the aforementioned code.

d. From 1 April 2026, lifetime PVG scheme membership will end. This will be replaced with a 5-year time limited membership. This will be implemented within policy and processes effective 1 April 2026.

Discussion

6. Appendix 1 details information about the legal requirements to the implementation of the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020. A review of the policy has been carried out to ensure it is compliant with the new legislation. A light touch policy review was also conducted to update current processes, practices and University terminology.

7. With the new legislation, it is a criminal offence for an individual to commence a regulated role without first having a satisfactory check in place.

8. It is yet to be fully scoped, but there may be an initial increase in individuals who require PVG membership (e.g. those roles who fall under the category as carrying out ‘regulated roles’).

9. Disclosure Scotland has granted a 3-month grace period for registration after the PVG scheme becomes a legal requirement on 1 April 2025. For example, it is permissible if an individual is carrying out a regulated role and has, before 1 July 2025, made an application to join the PVG Scheme but is awaiting the result from Disclosure Scotland.

10. A project working group has been established to review the legislative implications and implement the required actions. This includes amendments to the policy and other internal collateral documentation and webpages. Representatives from the project group are devising a communications plan to cascade across UoE. The plan will aim to ensure managers and colleagues, particularly those who may be impacted or have to take necessary actions, are fully informed of the changes.

Resource implications

11. There is a requirement for people resource to review several recruitment and student admission or placement processes to identify current and future 'regulated roles' which will require a PVG check. It is anticipated that resource can be met within existing budgets.

Risk Management

12. It is an offence for the University to employ an individual to carry out a regulated role unless they have a satisfactory check. There is a risk that managers, students and other colleagues are not prepared for the changes in processes. This is being mitigated through a comms plan to include guidance for managers and staff and supportive materials and training will be published.

13. Following the change of Government, we are still waiting for the publication of the Code of Practice which will accompany the Act. Whilst we have taken internal legal advice and updated the policy and processes from the Act, there is a possibility that the new Code will impact policy and/or processes. This will be mitigated with a full review of the Code against the policy and processes, once published.

Equality & Diversity

14. An EQIA has been conducted and will be published alongside the new policy.

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

15. Working with CAM, staff communications are being managed by HR. Further work will be needed on this project as Disclosure Scotland release more information.

Further information

16. *Author*
Jo Roger,
Director HR Partnering
Adapted by Rebecca Shade
Senior Policy & Projects Adviser,
Students

Presenter
n/a

Freedom of Information
Open

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

APPENDIX 1 - DRAFT - Protection of Vulnerable Groups Policy

1. Overview

1.1 The University is committed to ensuring that Children and Protected Adults (both as defined in section 3 below) are safe whilst engaging with the University community and enjoying opportunities to develop their full academic, social and emotional potential.

1.2 The University has therefore developed the procedures and guidance within this policy to allow the University to:

- establish standards of behaviour for working with Children or Protected Adults;
- assess the risks of working with Children and Protected Adults;
- manage membership of the mandatory Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (the PVG Scheme") introduced by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007(the "2007 Act Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act "(as supplemented and amended by the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 (the "20202020 Act") (the 2007 Act and the 2020 Acts together, the "Acts");
- assess the suitability of applicants for employment at the University where they possess a relevant criminal conviction; and
- report and manage concerns that arise while working with Children and Protected Adults.
- Section 1: The University Community and Interaction with Children and Protected Adults sets out procedures for ensuring the safety of Children and Protected Adults when engaging with the University.
- Section 2: The Mandatory PVG Scheme and Employee Vetting sets out the procedures and guidelines that apply to the University's obligations under the Acts and in respect of ongoing vetting of employees.

2 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all members of the University community. The scope of this policy is to protect Children and Protected Adults. However, the University recognises the need to take particular care to protect Children under 16 years of age. This policy therefore includes provisions both to protect all Children and particular provisions for the protection of Children under 16 years of age.

2.2 Edinburgh University Students' Association may have its own protection of Children and Protected Adults policy in place from time to time. Where possible the Students' Association

and the University will work together to ensure a consistent approach to the protection of Children and Protected Adults.

3 Definitions

3.1 "Adults' List" means the list of individuals maintained by Disclosure Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Ministers as being barred from undertaking a "regulated role with adults" (as defined below) under Section 1 of the 2007 Act.

3.2 "Child" means any person under the age of 18 years, and "Children" shall be construed accordingly.

3.3 "Children's List" means the list of individuals maintained by Disclosure Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Ministers as being barred from undertaking "a regulated role with children" (as defined below) under Section 1 of the 2007 Act.

3.4 "Listed individual" means an individual listed on either the Adults' List or the Children's List.

3.5 "Lists" means the Adults' List and Children's List.

3.6 "Protected Adult" means an individual aged 18 or over who, by reason of physical or mental disability, illness, infirmity or ageing (i) has an impaired ability to protect themself from physical or psychological harm, or (ii) requires assistance with the activities of daily living, or (iii) is otherwise defined as a protected adult by Section 94 of the 2007 Act (as amended by the 2020 Act).

3.7 "Regulated Role" has the same meaning as provided by Section 91 of the 2007 Act and "regulated role with children" and "regulated role with adults" are the roles described by Schedules 2 and 3 to the 2007 Act respectively, and as further defined in Section 12 below.

3.8 "University community" means all University staff, students, contractors or visitors to the University working with Children or Protected Adults in the course of activities undertaken on behalf of the University.

Section 1: The University Community and Interaction with Children and Protected Adults

4 Standards of Behaviour

4.1 The University expects the highest standards of behaviour from the University community when working with Children and Protected Adults. In particular, the University expects the University community to adhere to the following standards:

- Treat all Children and Protected Adults with fairness, dignity, equality and respect.
- Be sensitive to Children or Protected Adults' appearance, race, culture, religion and/or belief, sexual orientation, gender or disability.
- Respect a Child or Protected Adult's right to privacy.
- Always work in an open environment, and where possible avoid situations where you are alone with a Child or a Protected Adult[1]. If it is necessary to hold a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting, these should be conducted in a room where the exit is clearly visible and, where possible and appropriate, the door to the room is left open.
- Maintain a safe and professional distance in relationships with Children and Protected Adults. You should not share your personal telephone number, personal email or home address, and you should not connect with them over social media except where that is specifically related to the relevant University activity.
- When in a position of trust do not engage in sexual relationships with Children and/or Protected Adults. This is an abuse of a position of trust and a criminal offence.
- Avoid rough, physical or sexually provocative conduct with Children or Protected Adults.
- Do not provide Children or Protected Adults with access to alcohol (where that would be unlawful or inappropriate) or banned substances.
- Be a good role model to Children or Protected Adults. This includes avoiding the use of inappropriate language (including sexually suggestive comments), and challenging any unacceptable behaviour.
- Where appropriate ensure you have written consent before taking photographs or making video or audio recordings[2] of Children or Protected Adults.
- If you are required to administer first aid to a Child or Protected Adult you should ensure, wherever possible, that another employee is present, especially if you are concerned that necessary physical conduct may be misconstrued.

4.2 The University expects members of the University community to comply with these standards of behaviour so far as is reasonably practicable. However, the University accepts

[1] This does not apply to situations where one-to-one meetings are the agreed University approach, for example a meeting between a Student Adviser and student, or a meeting with a research supervisor.
[2] This does not apply to recording of lectures, tutorials etc which are a routine part of course delivery or which are covered by the University's Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy: http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/accessible_and_inclusive_learning_policy.pdf or Lecture Recording Policy https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/learning-technology/media-hopper-replay/help-and-support/frequently-asked-questions/lecture-recording-policy (as applicable)

that there may be occasions on which compliance with some of these standards of behaviour will not be possible or appropriate, for example, in an emergency. The University will apply this policy in a reasonable and proportionate manner.

5 Reporting

5.1 Reports of a breach of this policy should be made to the Designated Officer, who is described in section 6 below. A report to the Designated Officer must be made where:

- a Child or Protected Adult discloses abuse;
- a person makes an allegation of abuse of a Child or Protected Adult by a member of the University community;
- there are suspicions or indicators that a Child or Protected Adult is being abused; for example, where there are observable changes in a Child or Protected Adult's behaviour that may be related to abuse; or
- the behaviour of any person towards a Child or Protected Adult causes concern or there is suspicion that a Child or Protected Adult is being harmed.

5.2 Guidance as to what may constitute abuse is provided at section 7 below.

5.3 In all other circumstances members of the University community should use their discretion when deciding to make a report to the Designated Officer for a breach of this policy. The University would not normally expect a report to be made in the event of minor breaches of this policy, unless such a breach forms part of a persistent pattern of behaviour which places a Child or protected adult at risk of harm.

6 Designated Officer

6.1 The overall responsibility for implementing this policy lies with the University Court. The University Court has designated responsibility for implementing, promoting and maintaining oversight of this policy to the University Secretary as the Designated Officer. In addition to the implementation, promotion and maintenance of this policy, the Designated Officer will also be responsible for:

6.1.1 ensuring that appropriate information, advice and training on handling Children and Protected Adults is available to the University community;

6.1.2 being the contact point for allegations or concerns about the treatment of Children or Protected Adults;

6.1.3 maintaining confidential records of allegations of abuse of Children or Protected Adults and actions taken; and

6.1.4 establishing and maintaining contacts with external organisations (e.g. the police, social services).

6.2 The University Secretary may delegate the role of Designated Officer to an appropriate employee within the University. The Director of Student Wellbeing and the Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions may act on behalf of the University Secretary as Designated Officer. The Designated Officer is supported in this role by the Deputy Secretary Students and three College Deans of Students, for matters involving students, and by the Director of Human Resources where employees are involved.

6.3 Where a complaint of abuse is reported the Designated Officer will investigate the allegation. The Designated Officer may delegate any investigation to an appropriate employee within the University.

6.4 Once an allegation has been investigated the Designated Officer may, depending on the outcome of that investigation:

- take no further action;
- put in place measures to ensure the safety of the Child(ren)/Protected Adult(s);
- refer the matter to be dealt with under the relevant internal procedure, including but not limited to the Code of Student Conduct, and/or Employee Disciplinary Procedures;
- make a referral to a relevant external agency e.g. police/social services;
- refer an individual to Disclosure Scotland for consideration for inclusion on the Children's List and/or Adults' List; or
- take any such further action as is necessary in the circumstances.

6.5 The Designated Officer will keep records of complaints or allegations and their outcomes. Records shall be held securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and in line with the University's Records Retention Schedule.

6.6 When the University is asked to provide information about an allegation in respect of a Child or Protected Adult any information must be shared in a manner consistent with the Data Protection Act 2018. The Designated Officer should be consulted before any such information is provided to an external organisation.

7 Types of abuse

7.1 A non-exhaustive list of types of abuse (which in many instances also constitutes a criminal offence) are included below and have been produced from external guidelines[3]. Definitions of abuse include, but are not limited to:

- **Abuse** – is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights and may be a single or repeated act. Abuse may be physical, verbal, psychological, financial or sexual. Abuse can be an act of neglect or omission to act, or be the unintended result of a person's actions.

- **Physical Abuse**: may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm, including by fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing ill-health.

- **Emotional or Psychological Abuse**: is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a Child or Protected Adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the Child and/or Protected Adult's emotional development. This may include threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, demeaning and denigrating remarks, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

- **Sexual Abuse:** involves the actual or likely sexual exploitation of a Child/Vulnerable Adult and, in the case of a Protected Adult, to which the Protected Adult has not or could not consent and/or was pressured into. The child/protected adult may be dependent and/or developmentally immature.

- **Neglect:** is the persistent failure to meet a Child or Protected Adults basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of health and development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or failure to respond to, a child's basic emotional needs.

8 Risk Assessment

8.1 The University recognises that a robust assessment is one of the most effective ways of mitigating risks to Children and Protected Adults.

8.2 The University of Edinburgh Health and Safety Department provide generic risk assessment templates, and guidance on how to carry out a risk assessment. These can be found on the University website: Risk Assessments | Health and Safety Department

[3] national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021-updated-2023.pdf

8.3 In addition, the Health and Safety Department provide guidance and advice on what to consider if young persons are on campus for study or work related activities, at Student/Young Persons webpage (Students / Young Persons | Health and Safety Department)

9. Risk management plans - students who are Children under 16 or Vulnerable Adults

9.1 The University's policy is to prepare a risk management plan in respect of all students who are: (i) admitted whilst under the age of 16; or (ii) Protected Adults. A risk management plan will not normally be prepared for students that are 16 or 17 years old. A risk management plan should be prepared by the relevant School and should include the following:

- An identification of the roles and responsibilities of members of the University staff in respect of the student whilst on campus.
- Identification of any medical or behavioural issues pertaining to the student.
- An emergency plan including the contact details of first aiders and the student's next of kin and/or parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Any other relevant safeguarding arrangements taking into account the particular circumstances of the student.

10. Risk management plans - activities

10.1 There are a wide range of activities taking place across the University, or which are organised by the University off-campus which involve the known participation of Children under 16 and Protected Adults. These include, but are not limited to:

- recruitment and widening access events;
- outreach activities undertaken in schools and other venues away from University premises;
- mentoring;
- academic study on undergraduate or continuing education programmes;
- short term work placements;
- participation in research studies;
- sports activities; and
- planned external organised events involving residence in University accommodation.

10.2 Each School and department must review their own range of activities to ensure they prepare a risk management plan where appropriate. This should include:

- Clarity about if and when the University will take supervisory responsibility for the Children or Protected Adults attending the activity or event.
- Clear arrangements for supervision of the Children or Protected Adults during the activity, which set out the roles and responsibilities of University staff and those of any accompanying adults e.g. teachers visiting with school pupils.
- Identification of any problems which are likely to occur during the activity, the steps which will be taken to reduce the risk of these occurring, and who is responsible for each action.
- An emergency plan including the contact details of first aiders, the University security service, the local police service and any other relevant services.
- Any other relevant safeguarding arrangements taking into account the particular circumstances of the Children and/or Protected Adults involved.

10.3 A risk management plan does not require to be completed prior to normal academic activities such as lectures, seminars or mentoring for current students.

Section 2: The Mandatory PVG Scheme and Employee Vetting

11 Mandatory PVG Scheme

11.1 It is mandatory for any person carrying out a Regulated Work role, with Children and/or Protected Adults, under the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 to be a member of the PVG Scheme.

11.2 Appendix 1 sets out the roles and responsibilities of specific positions in relation to the University's operation of the PVG Scheme.

12 Regulated Roles

12.1 As provided in the definitions above, there are two types of Regulated Roles: regulated roles with children and regulated roles with adults.

12.2 The 2020 Act sets out in detail what roles are captured by these terms and full explanatory notes can be found here.

12.3 In brief, a Regulated Role is defined in the Acts by reference to whether an individual:

- is doing an activity mentioned in schedules 2 and 3 of the 2007 Act; and
- is carrying out those activities in Scotland as a necessary part of their role and has contact with Children and/or Protected Adults (where contact can be physical, written, verbal or otherwise exercising power or influence over those persons).

12.4 The University is not a specified establishment under the 2020 Act and in most cases the incidental exception under the 2020 Act applies. This is because the University is a higher education establishment whose target audience is adults. A small number of students are under 18 and some students are Protected Adults. Accordingly, contact by staff members with students under the age of 18 or Protected Adults are likely to be incidental to the main duties of the University community.

13 Principles

13.1 The University will carry out its obligations under the Acts in accordance with the following principles:

13.1.1 The University will carry out checks only where they are necessary and mandatory under the law.

13.1.2 Processes will be workable, proportionate and consistent.

13.1.3 Information will be processed and handled sensitively and confidentially and in full compliance with data protection legislation.

13.1.4 In carrying out its obligations under the Acts, the University will adhere to the any relevant codes of practice issued by the Scottish Ministers (or their representatives, including Disclosure Scotland) from time to time.

13.1.5 Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent employment with the University. This will depend upon the nature of the position in question, together with the circumstances surrounding and background to the offences committed.

14 Regulated roles and University posts

14.1 University individuals will only be required to become PVG Scheme members where they will be undertaking a Regulated Role with Children and/or Protected Adults as part of their normal duties. Where the University is advertising a vacancy, the job description should state whether PVG Scheme membership is required. Where an offer of employment is made for such posts, as a condition of offer, the individual will be required to become a member of the PVG Scheme. An individual must not start work prior to receiving a satisfactory check.

15 PVG and Disclosure Application Process

15.1 Once an individual has accepted an offer of employment, the Recruiting Manager must submit the Disclosure and PVG request form and any necessary documentation to Human Resources. An individual must not commence employment without a satisfactory PVG membership.

15.2 Further guidance and information on Disclosure and PVG Checks can be found on the Human Resources webpages or you can refer to the HR Helpline if support is required.

16 Sharing Disclosure Records

16.1 Employees of the University will only share an individual's PVG Scheme Record with other employees of the University for the purposes of enabling the University to determine suitability for a Regulated Role.

16.2 The University will not share an individual's PVG Scheme Record outwith the University except where required to by law. In all other circumstances, the University will only share an individual's PVG Scheme Record outwith the University with the consent of the individual.

17 Effect of listing or consideration for listing

17.1 Where the University is advised by Disclosure Scotland that an individual who has been offered a position or is being considered for a position by the University requiring PVG Scheme membership, but has not yet commenced employment, is a listed individual, the University will withdraw their conditional offer of employment. In such instances the University reserves the right, but shall not be obliged, to offer the individual alternative employment which does not involve a Regulated Role.

17.2 Where the University is advised by Disclosure Scotland that an individual who has been offered a position or is being considered for a position by the University requiring PVG Scheme membership is being considered for listing on either of the Lists, the University may withdraw their conditional offer of employment or make their offer conditional upon the individual not becoming a listed individual. In such instances the University reserves the right, but shall not be obliged, to offer the individual alternative employment which does not involve a Regulated Role.

18 Pre-Employment Assessment Panel

18.1 If a PVG Scheme Record or update, or disclosure check in relation to an individual who has received a conditional offer of employment with the University confirms a relevant criminal conviction, and, where the post requires PVG Scheme membership, the individual is not a listed individual, the PVG Countersignatory should make an initial assessment of whether the information provided has any potential relevance to the post. If there is clearly no potential relevance the individual will be sent a letter confirming appointment.

18.2 The PVG Countersignatory may seek additional details from the individual regarding the information contained in the PVG Scheme Record or Update or disclosure check, and shall be obliged to do so where the PVG Countersignatory is considering referral to an

Assessment Panel. Generally this detail will include a written account from the individual and, in some cases, they may be asked to produce additional information, for example from probation officers or social workers involved in the case. The individual may ask for up to two character references to be considered, and must provide contact details for the referees.

18.3 If the check confirms an individual has a relevant criminal conviction which has potential relevance to the post, the case will be referred by the PVG Countersignatory to an Assessment Panel. The PVG Countersignatory will also refer any information received from the individual.

18.4 The Assessment Panel will comprise the Chair of the applicant's interview panel, and a local HR Partner. Should the offer of employment include an honorary NHS contract, the panel will comprise a representative of the NHS.

18.5 The Assessment Panel will meet with the individual concerned. The aim is to achieve a structured, open and honest discussion between all parties.

18.6 The following factors shall be taken into account by the Assessment Panel in reaching its decision:

18.6.1 The seriousness of the offence and its relevance to the safety of other employees, students, research subjects and members of the public.

18.6.2 The length of time since the offence occurred.

18.6.3 Any relevant information offered by the applicant about the circumstances of the offence.

18.6.4 Whether the applicant has history or pattern of behaviour or offending.

18.6.5 The country or state in which the offence was committed.

18.6.6 Whether the offence has been decriminalised since the applicant committed the offence.

18.6.7 The degree of remorse, or otherwise, expressed by the applicant for the offence.

18.7 The Assessment Panel will then take a decision as to whether the applicant should be appointed and the applicant formally informed of the decision. In reaching its decision, the Assessment Panel must consider each of the above criteria.

18.8 The decisions available to the Assessment Panel are to:

18.8.1 uphold the individual's offer of employment without imposing any conditions;

18.8.2 uphold the individual's offer of employment subject to specific conditions to be determined by the Assessment Panel, which may include alterations to the individual's employment roles or duties; or

18.8.3 withdraw the individual's offer of employment.

18.9 If the decision is to withdraw the individual's offer of employment, a letter should be sent to the applicant confirming the reasons and withdrawing any offer made.

18.10 Where applicable, and in line with data protection legislation, the Assessment Panel may seek further advice from relevant professional bodies.

18.11 All information received by Assessment Panel members will be treated confidentially and in accordance with Appendix 2, and the Data Protection Act 2018.

18.12 It is anticipated that the Scottish Government will, in early 2025, issue further guidance which may affect the processes referred to in this Section 18. This guidance should be taken into account by the Assessment Panel and all other relevant University staff.

19 **On-going vetting**

19.1 After an individual has commenced employment with the University and joined the PVG Scheme, Disclosure Scotland will continuously update their vetting information. Any new vetting information will be assessed by Disclosure Scotland. If such information suggests that the employee may have become unsuitable for carrying out Regulated Work with Children and/or Protected Adults, they will be placed under consideration for listing and the employee and the University, as an organisation with an interest in the employee, will be informed.

19.2 The outcome of Disclosure Scotland's considerations may result in the employee being barred from carrying out Regulated Work. In this instance, the employee will be unable to undertake further placements involving Regulated Work and may, therefore, be unable to undertake their duties of employment.

19.3 Where the employee has become a listed individual, the University shall remove the employee from any Regulated Work and reserves the right to take further disciplinary action. Such a decision will be taken by the employee's line manager with support from the local HR Partner.

19.4 Where the employee is under consideration for listing or where vetting information on the employee's PVG Scheme Record indicates that the employee may have become unsuitable for carrying out Regulated Work with Children and/or Protected Adults, the University may remove the employee from any Regulated Work, and reserves the right to take further disciplinary action. Such a decision will be taken by the employee's line manager with support from the local HR Partner.

Where the University becomes aware that an employee has received a relevant criminal conviction in accordance with Section 22 of this policy, the employee's line manager, with support from the local HR Partner, will assess whether the employee should be subject to the University's employee disciplinary procedures.

19.5 Where the employee has undertaken the activities referred to in section 20.1 and this information has come to the attention of the University, the employee's line manager will assess, with support from the local HR Partner, whether the employee should be subject to the University's employee disciplinary procedures and what action should be taken in respect of the employee's current duties of employment.

20 Referrals to Disclosure Scotland

20.1 The PVG Act aims to provide a robust system by which unsuitable people are prevented from undertaking regulated work with Children or Protected Adults and by which people who become unsuitable are identified. The process of providing such information to Disclosure Scotland is called "making a referral" and is based on the 'grounds' and the, 'when'. The University will refer individuals to Disclosure Scotland for consideration for inclusion on the Children's List and/or Adults' List in line with Scottish Government guidance: When to make a referral - mygov.scot.

20.2 The University has a legal duty to report any harmful behaviour that may affect whether the individual is allowed to work with Children or Protected Adults. If the University becomes aware that a member of the University community has met one of the referral grounds:

20.2.1 harmed a Child or Protected Adult;

20.2.2 placed a Child or Protected Adult at risk of harm;

20.2.3 engaged in inappropriate conduct involving pornography;

20.2.4 engaged in inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature involving a Child or Protected Adult;

20.2.5 given inappropriate medical treatment to a Child or Protected Adult;

20.2.6 been dismissed from employment as a result of harmful behaviour;

20.2.7 A referral must be made when an individual's harmful behaviour (i.e. any of the grounds within 20.2.1 to 20.2.6) meant that the individual involved:

- was dismissed as a result or;
- would have been dismissed but left before they could be or
- was transferred permanently away from work with Children or Protected adults

20.2.8 If both criteria ('grounds' and 'when') are met, a referral to Disclosure Scotland will be made by the Designated Officer.

20.2.9 It is an offence for the University not to make a referral within 3 months of the criteria for referral being met.

21 Other types of check

21.1 For non-Regulated Roles, the University may require the individuals to obtain a Level 1 or Level 2 Disclosure from Disclosure Scotland.

22 Disclosure Information

22.1 The University recognises that in some instances, an individual applying for a post at the University will not be a listed individual, but may otherwise hold a criminal record which the University requires to investigate before it can be satisfied that the individual is suitable to work with Children and Protected Adults.

22.2 Spent convictions as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 should not be taken into account (except where the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exclusions and Exceptions) (Scotland) Order 2013 applies) and current convictions only if they are relevant to the work to be undertaken in line with any University policy or policy statement from time to time on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders.

22.3 Employment or programmes which involve Regulated Roles are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and any criminal convictions, including sentences and cautions (including verbal cautions), reprimands and bind-over orders, are considered relevant.

22.4 Sanctions which are regarded as 'relevant criminal convictions' for the purposes of this policy include offences in respect of which sentences are imposed by a court of law, cautions, admonitions, reprimands, final warnings, bind over orders or similar received in the UK, or equivalent convictions received in any other country; in relation to one or more of the following non-exhaustive lists of relevant offences:

22.4.1 Any kind of violence including (but not limited to) threatening behaviour, offences concerning the intention to harm or offences which resulted in actual bodily harm.

22.4.2 Offences listed in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 or the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009.

22.4.3 The unlawful supply of controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking (drug offences only involving possession and not leading to a custodial sentence are not relevant offences).

22.4.4 Offences involving firearms.

22.4.5 Offences involving arson.

22.4.6 Offences listed in the Terrorism Act 2006.

22.4.7 Offences listed in Schedule 1 to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 (as amended by the Disclosure Scotland Act 2020).

22.4.8 Where not otherwise listed above, convictions listed within Schedules A1 and B1 to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exclusions and Exceptions) (Scotland) Order 2013.

22.5 Warnings, penalty notices for disorder (PNDs), anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs), Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) or violent offender orders (VOOs) are not classed as relevant convictions, unless an applicant has a contested PND or has breached the terms of an ASBO, FPN or VOO and this has resulted in a criminal conviction for a relevant offence.

22.6 Any conviction involving an offence similar to those set out above, made by a court outside the UK, which would not be considered as spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, is considered to be a relevant criminal conviction.

Appendix 1 PVG Roles and Responsibilities

1. Recruiting Managers (for paid or unpaid work) alongside the relevant Heads of School/Professional Services Groups or School and Department Administrators are responsible for:

- ensuring the necessary disclosure checks and mandatory PVG Scheme membership applications or updates are undertaken for all new relevant appointees where necessary;
- ensuring disclosure checks or PVG Scheme membership applications or updates are carried on existing staff who are transferring into a post requiring a disclosure check or PVG Scheme membership where necessary;
- identifying posts and job content that may constitute Regulated Roles;
- ensuring job descriptions fully reflect the duties of the role as it relates to Regulated Roles;
- ensuring no Regulated Role is undertaken by an individual before PVG Scheme membership in respect of that individual is obtained or an existing PVG Scheme membership is updated;
- commencing checks at the application and interview stage and obtaining the necessary information to allow the full application to be processed; and
- keeping themselves up to date with policy and guidance under the Acts, including seeking guidance and support from the local HR Partner where appropriate.

2. HR Partners are responsible for:

- ensuring that the processes and procedures in relation to the protection of Children and Protected Adults within their areas are robust and meet the requirements of the 2020 Act and relevant statutory guidance;
- ensuring that the unconditional employment contract is not released before employees start employment in relevant posts .;
- ensuring that appropriate records in relation to individual PVG Scheme memberships and updates are maintained;
- giving appropriate guidance and support to their local/school department;
- keeping up to date with legal and statutory matters in relation to the 2020 Act and its associated guidance and secondary legislation, Disclosure Scotland and in particular the Code of Practice.

Appendix 2 – Processing and Handling of Disclosure Information

1. General Principles

1.1. The University recognises that criminal record checks and PVG Scheme Records contain sensitive personal information and must be handled responsibly and in a sensitive manner.

1.2. The University complies fully with the Code of Practice issued by the Scottish Ministers under Section 55 of the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 (the "Code of Practice") regarding the correct handling, holding and destruction of information provided by Disclosure Scotland. It also complies fully with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of special category personal data.

2. Usage

2.1. Information received in connection with a PVG Scheme Record/Update or disclosure checks will only be used for the purpose for which it has been provided. The information provided by an individual for a position within the University of Edinburgh will not be used or disclosed in a manner incompatible with the purpose for which it has been provided.

3. Handling

3.1. The University recognises that it is a criminal offence to disclose information received in connection with a PVG Scheme Record/Update or disclosure check to any unauthorised person. It is, therefore, only passed to those who are authorised to see it in the course of their duties.

3.2. It is not an offence if the written consent of the subject of the PVG Scheme Record/ Update or disclosure check has been obtained to allow the information to be shared with third parties. The 2020 Act prevents third parties who are not directly employing, or considering employing somebody undertaking a Regulated Role, from asking a PVG Scheme member for sight of their disclosure record.

4. Processing Disclosure Information

4.1. The counter signatory or nominated person must be the person who checks all the proof of identification. The counter signatory completes the counter signatory page after the applicant has completed the relevant sections. They must comply with the conditions of the Code of Practice.

5. Access and Storage

5.1. PVG Scheme or disclosure information must be stored in secure conditions. Documents should be kept in lockable, non-portable storage units (e.g. filing cabinets). Access must be strictly controlled and restricted to named individuals, who are entitled to handle such information in the course of their duties. PVG Scheme or disclosure information should not be kept on an employee's personnel file and no photocopies should be taken of the disclosure form.

6. Retention

6.1. PVG Scheme or disclosure information must not be retained for longer than is relevant for its needs. This is in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 which requires that personal information only be kept for as long as it is required for the purposes for which it was obtained. For PVG Scheme Records this may be the date that an individual ceases to carry out a Regulated Role for the University.

6.2. Although the PVG Scheme Record or disclosure form itself is destroyed, a record must be kept of the date of issue of the disclosure, the name of the subject, the disclosure type, the position for which the disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the disclosure and details of the recruitment decision taken. It is also recommended that a written record is kept of all those to whom disclosure information is passed for audit purposes.

7. Disposal

7.1. The destruction of all types of disclosure information should be by suitable means, for example, shredding, pulping or burning. It should not be kept in any insecure receptacle, such as a waste bin or confidential waste sack, whilst awaiting destruction. No photocopy or other image of the disclosure information may be retained.