

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**Thursday 22 May 2025 at 2:00pm****Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House / Teams****AGENDA**

1.	Welcome and apologies	
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting To approve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 March 2025 	APRC 24/25 5A
3.	3.1 Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convener's communications Actions log 3.2 Report of Convener's Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of approved concessions 	Verbal Update
4. SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS		
4.1	Taught Assessment Regulations 2025/26 To approve	APRC 24/25 5B and 5B Appendix 1
4.2	Postgraduate Research Assessment Regulations 2025/26 To approve	APRC 24/25 5C and 5C Appendix 1
4.3	Updated Support for Study Policy To approve	APRC 24/25 5D and 5D Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4
BREAK		
4.4	APRC Convener and Vice-Convener 2025/26 To approve	Verbal Update
4.5	Regulatory Framework for Award of Masters with Pathway Specialism To approve	APRC 24/25 5E
4.6	Updates to the Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure To approve	APRC 24/25 5F and 5F Appendices 1 and 2
4.7	Proposed Minor Amendments to Student Appeal Regulations To approve	APRC 24/25 5G and 5G Appendix 1

4.8	Expected Behaviour Policy To approve	APRC 24/25 5H and 5H Appendix 1
4.9	Updates to the Policy Review Schedule To approve	APRC 24/25 5I
4.10	Non-standard programme end dates for the Online MBA To approve	APRC 24/25 5J
4.11	Student Discipline Committee Membership To approve	APRC 24/25 5K CLOSED
5. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NOTING		
5.1	Membership and Terms of Reference 2025/26 To comment	APRC 24/25 5L
5.2	Senate and Standing Committees Annual Internal Effectiveness Review To note	APRC 24/25 5M
6.	Any Other Business	
Dates of meetings in 2025/26 Thursday 18 September 2025, 2-5pm Thursday 20 November 2025, 2-5pm Thursday 22 January 2025, 2-5pm Thursday 19 March 2025, 2-5pm Thursday 21 May 2025, 2-5pm		

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

Thursday 20 March 2025 at 2:00pm

Teams

DRAFT MINUTES

<p>Present: Professor Gill Aitken Sarah Barnard (Secretary) Dr Matt Bell Victoria Buchanan Dr Adam Bunni</p> <p>Professor Jeremy Crang Lisa Dawson Dr Murray Earle Amanda Fegan</p> <p>Dr Valentina Ferlito Professor Mohini Gray Professor Patrick Hadoke (Convener)</p> <p>Karen Howie</p> <p>Professor Linda Kirstein Isabel Lavers Charlotte Macdonald Katy McPhail Catriona Morley</p> <p>Dr Donna Murray Callum Paterson</p> <p>Dr Emily Taylor (Vice-Convener)</p> <p>Professor Stephen Warrington Dylan Walch Kirsty Woomble</p> <p>Apologies: Lucy Evans Clair Halliday</p>	<p>Dean of Education (CMVM) Academic Policy Officer, Registry Services Senate representative (CSE) Director, Disability and Learning Support Service Head of Academic Policy and Regulation, Registry Services</p> <p>Dean of Students (CAHSS) Academic Registrar, Registry Services Senate representative (CAHSS) Head of Postgraduate Research Student Administration (CSE)</p> <p>Senate representative (CMVM) Dean of Students and Alumni (CMVM) Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM)</p> <p>Head of Digital Learning Applications and Media, Information Services Dean of Education (CSE) Academic Administration Manager (CMVM) Manager, The Advice Place Head of Taught Student Administration (CSE) Head of Taught Student Administration & Support (CAHSS)</p> <p>Head of Taught Student Development (IAD) Academic Engagement Coordinator, Students' Association (Co-opted member) Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Validation (CAHSS)</p> <p>Dean of Student Experience (CSE) Vice President Education, Students' Association Head of Postgraduate Research Student Office (CAHSS)</p> <p>Deputy Secretary, Students Deputy Manager, The Advice Place</p>
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1.	<p>Welcome and apologies</p> <p>The Convener welcomed all members to the meeting, and thanked members for noting the change of circumstances which had led to the meeting being held online, rather than in Charles Stewart House.</p>
2.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting (Paper 2A) To approve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 January 2025 <p>An amendment was requested under section 4.1, under bullet 5 of the Return to study discussion, removing the clause “it is often challenging to engage these students in this process”.</p> <p>The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting subject to this amendment.</p>
3.	<p>3.1 Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convener’s Communications <p>The Convener commented on the February e-business of approving the inclusion of two exam slots in May 2025. The Committee’s capacity for discussion was constrained by time sensitivity and practicalities in this instance. It was noted that any more general discussion regarding the approach to assessment and examinations is outside APRC’s remit and would be done through SEC and/or Senate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions Log <p>The Head of Academic Policy and Regulation updated members on development around moderation advice from the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group, which is a subgroup of SEC. The Group expressed an appetite for more guidance, which was echoed by Committee members. Caution was expressed around the capacity of Schools to engage with any requested changes to regulations before May’s meeting of APRC.</p> <p>3.2 Report of Convener’s Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of Approved Concessions <p>Since the last meeting (January 2025): Number of individual student concessions approved: 6 (5 PGR, 1 PGT) Number of cohort concessions approved: 0</p> <p>The most common type of approved concession request (5 out of 6) was for extensions, predominantly due to health reasons.</p>
<p>4. SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS</p>	
4.1	<p>Undergraduate Degree Regulations 2025/26 To comment and recommend to Court</p> <p>The paper was presented by Dr Adam Bunni, Head of Academic Policy and Regulation.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the proposed amendments, with the following points raised in the discussion:</p> <p>26 Leave of Absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed wording in the paper appeared to preclude study at partner institutions. A further amendment was proposed to clarify that activity undertaken must be required for a

	<p>student's studies, and to introduce clarity between permanent study and long-term study, the latter of which can be built into programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Not appropriate" to be amended to "not permitted" in both sets of regulations. • Members reported that Leave of Absence is sometimes misused in place of Authorised Interruption of Studies, and noted that while this would not appropriately be covered by the regulations, it should be clearly articulated in any accompanying guidance. • Recommendations were sought on cases where students are effectively undertaking distance-learning but are not enrolled on distance-learning programmes, as these programmes have not yet been created. On a case-by-case basis, depending on visa requirements, it would be reasonable to make a concession request to APRC. • The importance of the University's sponsor licence was remarked upon, alongside acknowledgement of the difficulty of compliance-driven policy development. The Academic Registrar offered to update APRC with a summary of Home Office changes. <p>The Committee approved the amendments to regulation 26.</p> <p>28 Optional Study Abroad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "At the end of Semester 2" to be added as alternative wording for the publication deadline for continuing student results, to avoid misunderstandings where students assume credits ratified and published in August via alternative assessments will suffice to progress and meet Optional Study Abroad selection criteria. <p>33 Withdrawal and Exclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request to specify that the requirements which must be met are the progression requirements, to make explicit the connection between the DRPS and Taught Assessment Regulations. • The wording regarding the period of time permitted between withdrawal and readmission to study was queried, with some members suggesting the requirement should refer to recency of study rather than time elapsed from withdrawal. However, with readmission permitted at the discretion of College, rather than an entitlement, it was felt that the current wording struck an appropriate balance. <p>43, 44 Progression and Permissible Credit Loads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A suggested amendment disambiguating optional credit and retaken credit will be removed, as it is seen as insufficiently clear, and unlikely to occur at undergraduate level in any case. • Student Adviser to be removed as a suggested delegated nominee of the Director of Teaching. <p>78 CMVM Degree Specific Regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor typographical amendments proposed. <p>The Committee agreed to recommend the Undergraduate Degree Regulations to University Court, subject to the additional revisions noted above being made.</p>
4.2	<p>Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2025/26 To comment and recommend to Court</p> <p>The paper was presented by Dr Adam Bunni, Head of Academic Policy and Regulation.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the proposed amendments, with the following points raised in the discussion:</p> <p>20 Permissible Credit Loads</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request to retain the 40 additional credit limit, with resulting proposed amendment to grant College the licence to approve credit loads above this, as it occurs comparatively rarely and APRC scrutiny does not add significant value. <p>30 Leave of Absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be amended in line with agreed amendments to the UG DRPS 26. <p>60 Application for Associated Postgraduate Diploma or Masters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification added that the requirements to be met by students applying for readmission are progression requirements, in line with agreed amendment to the UG DRPS 33. <p>The Committee agreed to recommend the Postgraduate Degree Regulations to University Court, subject to the additional revisions noted above being made.</p>
4.3	<p>Exam Delivery – Two Session Day Proposal To approve</p> <p>The paper was presented by Lisa Dawson, Academic Registrar.</p> <p>The proposal is to move to a two-session exam day from academic year 2025/26. Point 2 recognises additional cost of moving to two sessions a day, and if growth continues this will need to be discussed with the relevant budget holders.</p> <p>It was flagged that many students would prefer two sessions across the board and including Saturday exams, if this would facilitate avoiding a clash. EUSA suggested trying not to fill slots to capacity, which should mean clashes are less likely.</p> <p>Currently, it is not always feasible to prevent students with adjustments from being scheduled for consecutive exams. In the May exam period, ten students are affected by this issue. In such cases, DLSS requests that the School offer alternative assessments, which may not always be possible. It was suggested that it would be beneficial to audit the practices of different Schools where they have deemed it appropriate to provide alternative assessments, as this may provide an indication of where alternative forms of assessment may be appropriate more generally. This suggestion was supported by the Convener.</p> <p>It was noted that, if it cannot be guaranteed that students will not have two exams in a single day, then it must be accepted that having two exams in a single day is considered reasonable. This necessarily precludes the pre-emptive application of Exceptional Circumstances, as suggested. Despite access to improved data, clashes, and instances where students have two exams in one day, are unavoidable unless the volume of exams changes. It was reiterated that it is not for the exams service to interrogate exams as a method of assessment.</p> <p>The new timetabling software has improved functionality and will yield better data for this Committee. However, efforts to reduce clashes and instances where students have two exams in one day would have to be balanced with the demand from students to have their exam timetable earlier.</p> <p>Noting some reservations and practical concerns, the Committee nonetheless agreed to approve the proposal.</p>
4.4	<p>Special Arrangement Exams Extra Time To approve</p> <p>The paper was presented by Lisa Dawson, Academic Registrar.</p>

	<p>During the pandemic, extra time in exams was a blanket one hour. The proposal looks to return to percentage-based extra time, with adjustments based on DLSS-assessed need. It was noted that 2,800 students will receive less extra time, and that this will require careful communications with students, some of whom will be towards their final years of study.</p> <p>Members were supportive of the return to needs-based support. The staffing implications for professional services colleagues were noted, but the lead time and consultation were sufficient that colleagues felt this was manageable.</p> <p>In the discussion, the possibility was raised of gradually implementing changes so that students accustomed to the current system could complete their degrees under the same conditions. However, introducing such an adjustment could be manually intensive and prone to errors. A mixed adjustment system would also create extra work for teaching office staff. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) mentions reassessing students and adjusting their allowances. The Committee acknowledged the complexities of changing students' perceptions and the potential for increased complaints or unintentional harm from excess additional exam time.</p> <p>DLSS will coordinate closely with the Advice Place and EUSA to ensure effective communication regarding these changes. The Convener confirmed that it would be useful for the Committee to have sight of the communications before issue.</p> <p>ACTION: DLSS to circulate these draft comms to members electronically for comment</p> <p>The Committee agreed to approve the paper.</p>
4.5	<p>Taught Assessment Regulations – Initial discussion of proposed amendments</p> <p>To comment</p> <p>The paper was presented by Dr Adam Bunni, Head of Academic Policy and Regulation.</p> <p>This paper highlights a small number of proposals for amendments to the Taught Assessment Regulations for the 2025/26 session. The following points were raised in the discussion:</p> <p>17 Assessment deadlines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caution was expressed about delegating authority to Colleges without published guidelines. In particular, it was noted that students with electives or joint programmes might find a “free-for-all” challenging to navigate. • Support was expressed for allowing deadlines to be set locally at programme-level. The current constraints put pressure on staff and students around marking. • Current practice includes deadlines being set during the Easter period, meaning the regulations should either clarify to allow, or clarify to prohibit. The pressures around feedback turnaround encourage staggering of deadlines, with not many other levers to pull. <p>The Committee would not feel comfortable banning this without extensive consultation with the Colleges and broader understanding of the reasons for its use and its impact. Therefore, the question is whether to keep the wording vague or make it more explicit. The Head of Academic Policy and Regulation agreed to look at the wording on basis of this discussion and come back to APRC in May.</p> <p>27 Resit assessment</p> <p>A consultation document was circulated among Colleges, Schools and EUSA regarding this proposal, based on capping of marks at 40. An alternative option would be to use pass/fail.</p>

	<p>Potential benefits of the proposal included the potential to make greater use of resubmission as a method of reassessment for failed coursework.</p> <p>Various committees and groups, including the CMVM education committee and CAHSS Senior TO managers, had discussed the proposal. There was some support in principle, along with recognition of the need for change, but concerns were expressed regarding the implementation details, particularly the idea of capping at the course level rather than component level.</p> <p>From a QA perspective, it was noted that the University was an outlier in its current practice. It was suggested that current practices might not be the most equitable, and that better data would be required to challenge assumptions about which students might be disadvantaged by any change in policy, particularly in relation to widening participation students. Concerns also included the potential for increased stress among students due to the punitive nature of the system, challenges in processing results within existing timeframes, and inadvertent increases in exceptional circumstances submissions.</p> <p>The Committee was in favour of a reconsideration of the broader approach to reassessment and resubmission, ensuring any changes are carefully considered and data-informed. However, the Committee agreed that a specific change to regulation to move towards capping of marks for resit assessment should not proceed at this time.</p> <p>58 Resubmission of postgraduate dissertations or research projects – Academic misconduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some members were supportive, but noted that most academic misconduct is unintentional and minor. It was queried why a PGT dissertation would be treated differently to other kinds of resit. If a student receives a mark of 45 to 49% even after an academic misconduct penalty, the offence might not be severe, suggesting that allowing them to resubmit might be reasonable as the penalty was not substantial. <p>Consensus was towards maintaining the current stance, acknowledging that changes would only affect a narrow set of circumstances.</p> <p>58 Resubmission of postgraduate dissertations or research projects – Permitted number of resubmissions</p> <p>The Committee expressed strong support for the proposal to limit resubmissions to two, noting that APRC could allow for concessions to this, where individual circumstances warranted additional flexibility.</p>
4.6	<p>Committee Priorities 2025/26</p> <p>To comment</p> <p>The paper was presented by the Convener.</p> <p>Each year, in the second semester, Standing Committees discuss and set priorities for the following year. APRC is guided by the need to comply with scheduled reviews of policies and regulatory requirements, such as the QAA quality code.</p> <p>Additional suggestions from members included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resit and resubmission policies as a priority, suggesting that Senate Education Committee (SEC) should handle this initially. Moderation processes, which would start with SEC and then be brought to this committee for any relevant changes to regulations.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers and quotas of exams as a broad issue that needs attention in Senate discussions. <p>The Convener confirmed that “Watch that Gap” would likely return to this committee, with ongoing work regarding the Bristol case also expected to return for discussion.</p> <p>ACTION: Secretary to request LD to bring an update regarding “Watch that Gap” to the May meeting.</p> <p>Timing of the academic year was noted as a potential topic for SEC.</p>
4.7	<p>CMVM Programmes with Non-Standard Academic Years 2025/26 To approve</p> <p>The paper was presented by Isabel Lavers, Academic Administration Manager, CMVM.</p> <p>It was noted that some undergraduate programmes start earlier in the year and the online programmes have distinct schedules. The aim going forward was to align the online programmes’ non-standard schedules, which are largely historical, more closely with the rest of the University of Edinburgh’s standard academic calendar. The Committee looked forward to better alignment in the following year.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to approve the proposed changes to the terms for these programmes.</p>
5. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION / NOTING	
5.1	<p>Update on Regulations Work Associated with Curriculum Transformation Project (PGT) To note</p> <p>The Committee noted the paper.</p>
5.2	<p>Update on Lecture Recording and Captioning To note</p> <p>The Committee felt that it would be beneficial to make the policy language more prescriptive and define what “pedagogical” means in terms of opting out of lecture recordings, in a context where lecture recording has shifted from being recommended to expected. It was acknowledged that navigating this change is challenging due to strong and varied views among staff, and additionally that primary challenges stem from inadequate execution of the policy (e.g. failure to wear a microphone) rather than an excess of opt-outs.</p> <p>ACTION: KH to also share lecture recording and captioning data with Colleges.</p>
5.3	<p>Implementation of Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 To note</p> <p>The Committee noted the paper.</p>
6.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Committee thanked Stephen Warrington for his contributions to APRC over the years.</p>
<p>Date of next meeting Thursday 22 May 2025, 2-5pm, Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House / Microsoft Teams</p>	

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DRAFT

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**22 May 2025****Taught Assessment Regulations 2025/26****Description of paper**

1. This paper contains the draft Taught Assessment 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. The Committee is requested to approve the proposed Taught Assessment Regulations for 2025/26.

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 Taught Assessment 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. In December 2024, all Colleges were invited to consult Schools and Deaneries regarding proposals for changes to the 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 Taught Assessment Regulations 2024/25

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
4 Convener of the Board of Examiners: appointment and throughout	Amended throughout to clarify in line with changes to Handbook for Boards of Examiners that expressly includes UG Progression Boards within the definition of Boards of Examiners.
17.3 Assessment deadlines	<p>Amended to state that assessment deadlines may be set in spring vacation period and revision periods, but not during the winter vacation. 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. Feedback from Schools indicated that setting coursework deadlines during the spring vacation is relatively common, and prohibiting this would make the timelines for Boards of Examiners and the publication of marks more challenging. However, it is proposed to prohibit the setting of assessment deadlines in the winter vacation, as the University's winter shutdown significantly limits student access to support from University staff during this period.</p> <p>With regard to deadlines during revision periods, it is generally advisable to avoid this as they could coincide with scheduled exams. However, some students, especially at PGT level, may not have any scheduled exams during the revision period. It was therefore deemed unreasonably restrictive to prevent the setting of deadlines during this period, considering the previously mentioned challenges to maintaining timely processes.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that this amendment should lead to significant change in practice within Schools, but should provide greater clarity regarding expectations.</p>
20.3 Language of assessment: languages other than English or Gaelic	Amended to bring in line with Regulation 21, giving a suggested 1,500 word count for the dissertation summary in English. The previous wording stipulated that this summary should be "substantial" but did not quantify this.
25.2 Examination timetable	Clarification added that Registry Services are only involved in considering requests for flexibility around religious observance/elite-level sport where it relates to a centrally-scheduled examination, and that it is the relevant College Dean who should be involved in considering these cases where locally scheduled exams and assessments are impacted. This does not represent a change in policy or practice.
27.5 Resit assessment	Amended to remove reference to the resit diet, in order to allow first resit to take place earlier than August diet, where appropriate. Some subject areas already offer resit assessment earlier than the resit diet. The amendment to

	the regulation is permissive, rather than requiring a change in practice in any area.
27.6 Resit assessment	Added to clarify that assessment attempts must take place across no more than two consecutive academic sessions. This clarification means that students returning from an Authorised Interruption of Study (AIS) are not automatically eligible to resit assessments under Regulation 27. To resit assessments under these circumstances, students must receive a College exemption. This ensures that due consideration is given as to whether an additional assessment attempt is available and appropriate, taking into account the recency of the student's studies. This does not represent a change in policy, but eliminates the ambiguity in the present wording of the policy.
27.9 Resit assessment	Added clarification in line with Regulation 27.5 to include resit offers to those with null sits. This revision makes it clear that students granted a null sit are entitled to another chance to complete the assessment within the same academic year. This reflects and reinforces the existing expectation.
27.17 Resit assessment	A new regulation has been added, stating that COL Access Programme students are entitled to two assessment attempts for SCQF 7 courses.
28.1 Late submission of coursework	Wording clarified from "5% of the maximum obtainable mark" to "5 marks", as all Schools should be marking using a 0-100 scale.
28.3 Late submission of coursework	Amended to reflect existing practice and accompanying guidance to students, that those students who receive an extension for group assessments are responsible for informing their group members themselves; the responsibility does not fall on Schools.
34.2 Legibility and accessibility of assessed work	Wording clarified to indicate that electronic submission is now the norm, rather than the exception as implied by previous wording.
46.3 Release of marks	Amended to clarify and to reflect the position in the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities that feedback on all assessed work shall be returned within three weeks of submission.
55.6 Undergraduate degree classification	The BA Fine Art has been added as a further exception to the Art and Design classification rules, joining the existing exception for the MA Fine Art.
56 Postgraduate assessment progression	Wording clarified to specify that eligibility for credit on aggregate is contingent on achieving marks of at least 40% in at least 80 credits. This change avoids any ambiguity as to what is meant by a PASS mark.

56.1 Postgraduate assessment progression	The regulation has been clarified to remove the reference to a process whereby provisional progression may be permitted due to "extenuating circumstances". Such cases will be handled in line with the Exceptional Circumstances Policy.
58 Resubmission of postgraduate dissertations or research projects	<p>Amended to limit the number of permitted submission opportunities for dissertations to three (one initial submission and two resubmissions), even when students have exceptional circumstances. This amendment prevents scenarios where students with repeated Exceptional Circumstances could be granted an indefinite number of resubmission opportunities, without a foreseeable prospect of completing their dissertation and programme. This includes situations where students do not submit work at all. Additionally, according to TAR 58.1, students are entitled to feedback from the Board of Examiners on their submissions. Schools expressed concerns that students caught in this cycle could receive more feedback on their dissertation or project than their peers, potentially giving them an unfair advantage.</p> <p>The potential equality impacts of this change have been considered, recognising that it may disproportionately affect students possessing protected characteristics, including those with health conditions or disabilities. The University's approach to providing reasonable adjustments to students with disabilities is via Schedules of Adjustments, developed in collaboration between the Disability and Learning Support Service and the student, rather than by offering concessions such as resubmission via the Exceptional Circumstances process. As discussed above, the "endless loop" of resubmission attempts currently permitted can have an adverse impact on the wellbeing of affected students. By clarifying the regulation, we also aim to minimise the possibility of inconsistent application. Where Schools encounter situations where a fourth submission attempt may be proportionate due to the nature of a student's circumstances, and the prospect of completion at the next attempt, there remains the option to request a concession from APRC via their College.</p>
61.1 Award of credit from other universities	Removed reference to recognising RPL at the point of admission, as external learning while on programme cannot be done at the point of admission.
64.4 Status of decisions	Amended to clarify following consultation with Student Conduct. The previous wording implied a process for handling cases of "Substantial and significant copying, plagiarism, or other fraud" involving graduates of the University which appeared to be separate from the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures. Such cases are explicitly covered by the Academic Misconduct

	Investigation Procedures and pursued under those Procedures.
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Resource implications

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

Risk management

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

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

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

Equality & diversity

9. 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

10. 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

Sarah Barnard and Dr Adam Bunni
Academic Quality and Standards

Presenter

Adam Bunni

Freedom of Information Open

Taught Assessment Regulations Academic Year 2024/25



Additional guidance

Members of staff who need additional guidance may consult their Head of College or their nominee, their College Office, Academic Services, or **Registry Services**. **Registry Services** oversees the procedure relating to the provision of question papers, registration for degree examinations, the receipt and notification of results, examination timetabling and the provision of examination accommodation.

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Regulation 4 Convener of the Board of Examiners: appointment

The Head of School that owns the programme or course has responsibility for appointing the Convener of the Board of Examiners **(including Undergraduate Progression Boards)**, and the Convener of the Exceptional Circumstances Committee. More information about the appointment of key office holders involved in Boards of Examiners is provided in the [Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes](#).

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Regulation 7 Examiners and markers: responsibilities

Examiners and markers **must** meet the responsibilities set out in the assessment and degree regulations and comply with quality and standards requirements.
www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

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Regulation 17 Assessment deadlines: student responsibilities

It is a student's responsibility to ascertain and meet their assessment deadlines, including examination times and locations.

Application of the regulation

17.1 The examination timetable is based on students' course choices. To avoid examination timetabling clashes, it is students' responsibility to ensure that their record of courses is accurate by the end of week 3 of each semester.

17.2 Students who have a clash in their examination timetable need to contact the Examination Office, **Registry Services**, through their Student Adviser or Student Support Team, as soon as possible to allow alternative arrangements to be put in place.

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17.3 As examinations may be scheduled at any time during the semester, it is students' responsibility to be available throughout the semester, including the whole of the revision period, examination diet and the resit diet, if the student has scheduled examinations. Examinations **will not be scheduled during winter or spring vacations. Coursework deadlines may be set during the spring vacation period, but**

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Taught Assessment Regulations Academic Year 2024/25



not during the winter vacation. Coursework deadlines may also be set during periods designated for revision, where this will not lead to an unreasonable assessment burden for individual students. Occasionally assessments may need to be rescheduled with very little notice. If exceptional circumstances mean that a student is unavailable for the rescheduled assessment, Boards of Examiners may consider using an alternative method to assess the relevant learning outcomes.

Regulation 19 Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments will be made to assessments for disabled students.

Application of the regulation

- 19.1 Reasonable adjustments must be determined in advance by the Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS). They are recorded in the student's Schedule of Adjustments by the DLSS, which communicates the Schedule of Adjustments to the student, the student's Student Adviser, the School's Coordinator of Adjustments, relevant Course Organisers, and Registry Services (if examination adjustments are recommended) and other relevant areas.
- 19.2 The School's Coordinator of Adjustments (CoA) has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Schedule of Adjustments, in conjunction with Course Organisers. The Coordinator of Adjustments will liaise with academic colleagues who are responsible for putting the adjustments in place in the School.

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Regulation 20 Language of assessment: languages other than English or Gaelic

The English language is the usual medium of teaching and assessment at the University of Edinburgh. All work submitted for assessment must be written in the English language, with the following exceptions: dissertations may be submitted in Gaelic (see regulation 21); dissertations and other assessed work may be submitted in the language which is being studied where the relevant course or programme handbook specifies that this is allowable.

Application of the regulation

- 20.1 Quotations may be given in the language in which they were written.
- 20.2 In very exceptional circumstances, a candidate may be granted permission to submit a dissertation written in a language other than English, where this is not specified by the relevant course or programme handbook. Approval will only be given in cases where the nature of the research is such that presentation of the

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research results in the language(s) of the materials under analysis confers significant intellectual advantage to the community of scholars who are expected to comprise the primary audience of the research. Approval to do so must be sought either at the time of admission to the University or no later than by the end of the first year of study, and will not be normally be granted retrospectively. Approval must be given by the appropriate College Committee, which must be satisfied that there are sound academic reasons for the request, and that appropriate arrangements can be made for supervision and examination, including the availability of both internal and external examiners suitably qualified to read and examine the thesis or dissertation in the proposed language of submission.

- 20.3 Where such approval is given, in addition to the standard requirements, the dissertation should also include a summary (of approximately 1500 words) written in English, summarising the main arguments, and an abstract in English must also be produced. Where Examiners' reports are completed in a language other than English, these must be translated into English before submission to the Board of Examiners. Any costs associated with this should be borne by the relevant School.

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Regulation 25 Examination timetable

Students are only permitted to sit examinations at the times and in the venues that are detailed on the relevant examination timetable.

Application of the regulation

- 25.1 Examinations may be scheduled outside normal University teaching hours.
- 25.2 Students who believe that religious reasons or participation in elite-level sport prevent them from completing an assessment (including examinations) at the scheduled time or venue should contact their Student Adviser and Student Support Team. Their case is considered by the relevant College Dean (and Registry Services where it relates to a centrally-scheduled examination) in consultation with the Convener of the Board of Examiners. Further information regarding flexibility which may be offered to students taking part in elite-level sport is provided in the [Performance Sport Policy](#).
- 25.3 A student who is permitted to appear for examination at a time other than that prescribed may have to sit a specially prepared examination paper or alternative method of assessment.

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25.4 If examinations are disrupted, for example due to adverse weather conditions, then Boards of Examiners may decide to use an alternative assessment method, rather than rescheduled examinations, to assess the learning outcomes.

25.5 Other than online assessment and assessment opportunities offered via [Registry Services](#), students are not allowed to sit examinations away from Edinburgh.

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Regulation 26 Conduct of examinations

Examinations scheduled by [Registry Services](#) are conducted in an invigilated environment in accordance with Examination Hall Regulations, which are publicised to students annually.

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Application of the regulation

26.1 [Registry Services](#) has responsibility for the effective operation of examinations in accordance with the [Examination Hall Regulations](#).

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26.2 All examinations which are in [Registry Services](#)'s scheduled examination diet will be invigilated by authorised staff appointed by [Registry Services](#). The Invigilator ensures compliance with the Taught Assessment Regulations in accordance with Invigilation Guidance: [Information for Examination Invigilators](#)

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26.3 Examinations that contain practical, oral or performance elements are invigilated by members of academic staff and may be conducted jointly with an External Examiner.

26.4 Take-home examinations and online examinations are subject to the provisions of the Taught Assessment Regulations which are related to examinations but are not subject to the Examination Hall Regulations. Take-home and online examinations are not assessed coursework, and are therefore not subject to extensions, although additional time may be offered to individual students in line with a Schedule of Adjustments.

Regulation 27 Resit assessment

Application of the regulation

27.1 Boards of Examiners must publish the requirements for resits for those courses that they are responsible for. Boards must take the same approach to resits for all

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students on a particular course, except where a student's previous attempt is a null sit.

- 27.2 Boards of Examiners must set requirements at resit that are as demanding as those made of students at the first attempt.
- 27.3 Boards of Examiners will inform students who are required to undertake resit assessment of the format of their resit assessment. Resit methods need not be the same as those used to assess the learning outcomes at the first attempt, but all relevant learning outcomes must be assessed. Resit arrangements must give students a genuine opportunity to pass the course. Boards of Examiners choose between two options to achieve this:
- (a) Carry forward any component of assessment (coursework or examination) that has been passed already and require the student to retake the failed element;
 - (b) Set an assessment covering all learning outcomes for the course, and weight this as 100% of the course result.
- 27.4 Students are not allowed to resit a course or components of a course that they have passed, unless the relevant Board of Examiners has permitted this under exceptional circumstances by granting a null sit for the attempt that the student has passed (see 27.9).
- 27.5 Where students (including visiting students) are entitled to more than one assessment attempt, these will consist of the initial assessment attempt and a further assessment attempt in the same academic session, followed where required by a further two assessment attempts in the next academic session. Where a student is undertaking a resit attempt in the year following the one in which they initially took the course, their School will determine whether they undertake the course on an assessment-only basis, or with attendance. There may be PSRB requirements which mean that fewer than four assessment attempts are permitted.
- 27.6 The first sitting and any subsequent attempts must take place over no more than two consecutive academic sessions, unless the relevant College grants an exemption.
- 27.7 Non-attendance or non-submission is considered an assessment attempt.
- 27.8 Some Honours programmes require students to pass specified courses at the first attempt in the first or second year in order to progress to Junior Honours. Any such

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requirements will be specified in the Degree Programme Table or Programme Handbook for the relevant programme.

- 27.9 Where an assessment attempt has been affected by Exceptional Circumstances, a Board of Examiners may declare this attempt a null sit. Null sits do not count towards the maximum number of permitted attempts. In line with 27.5, where a null sit has been declared for an initial assessment attempt, a further assessment attempt must be offered during the same academic session. Where a student receives a lower mark in a subsequent assessment attempt than that achieved in the attempt declared as a null sit, they will be awarded the higher mark for the relevant assessment.
- 27.10 Re-assessment attempts are not generally permitted for courses at SQCF level 9 and above for Honours and taught postgraduate students since Honours and taught postgraduate programmes permit the award of credit on aggregate (see Taught Assessment Regulations 52, 54, 56, 57). Where resits are permitted for Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements, any classification decision must use the result obtained on the first attempt.
- 27.11 The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee decides whether a programme may offer resits which are required for Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements for courses at SCQF level 9 and above for Honours and taught postgraduate students. This decision is based on a case proposed by the relevant College.
- 27.12 Students who are subject to immigration control have restrictions on their entitlement to resit as a result of being in the UK on a Student visa. Students on a Student visa can only take a fourth assessment attempt where they have valid exceptional circumstances (in line with the Exceptional Circumstances Policy), and specific additional conditions are met (as outlined below).

If a student on a Student visa does seek a fourth assessment attempt, they should apply for this via the exceptional circumstances process. Where the student has valid exceptional circumstances, the relevant Board of Examiners will determine what action to take. Where the Board of Examiners decides to award the student a null sit for the affected assessment attempt, this will not count as one of the four assessment attempts; null sits for any previous attempts are also not counted towards the total permitted attempts. Where the Board does not award a null sit, but wishes to offer the student a fourth assessment attempt, they may only do so where:

- i) the student has provided satisfactory independent evidence of their circumstances;

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ii) the circumstances that had disrupted the student's previous attempt(s) have been mitigated or no longer apply.

The Student Immigration Service provides advice and guidance to students and staff in relation to the immigration regulations. It is able to support students on Student visas should permission to undertake a fourth assessment attempt affect their visa status (for example, by requiring an extension), and can also support students to understand their immigration status in the event that they are not granted a fourth assessment attempt.

27.13 If repetition of the in-course assessed work is not possible outwith semester time, the student, with the permission of the relevant Head of School, may be allowed to repeat any coursework on its own in the following year. Students who do not receive such permission may be permitted by the relevant Head of School to repeat the course, including examination, in the following year.

27.14 The full range of marks offered by the relevant Common Marking Scheme is available at resit assessment. Resit marks are not capped.

27.15 Where a degree programme's Honours classification is based on the final year only, students are permitted four assessment attempts for courses in non-final years.

27.16 In the case of collaborative degrees, where not otherwise stipulated in the collaborative agreement, any permitted resit attempt must be within two years of the first attempt.

27.17 Students on the Access Programme in the Centre for Open Learning are entitled to two assessment attempts for courses at SCQF level 7.

Regulation 28 Late submission of coursework

Students need to submit assessed coursework (including research projects and dissertations) by the published deadline. Where a student submits work late, this will lead to a marking penalty being applied. Under the Exceptional Circumstances policy, students meeting certain criteria may be granted an extension to the submission deadline for a coursework assessment.

[Exceptional Circumstances Policy](#)

Application of the regulation

28.1 If assessed coursework is submitted after the relevant deadline (including a deadline adjusted by a coursework extension), it will be recorded as late and a

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penalty will be applied by the School. The penalty applied is a reduction of the mark by 5 marks per calendar day (e.g. a mark of 65% on the Common Marking Scheme scale would be reduced to 60% up to 24 hours later). This applies for up to seven calendar days (or to the time when feedback is given, if this is sooner), after which a mark of zero will be given. The original unreduced mark will be recorded by the School and the student informed of it.

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28.2 Schools may choose not to permit the submission of late work for particular components of assessment where the specific assessment and feedback arrangements make it impractical or unfair to other students to do so. If Schools do not permit the submission of late work for particular components of assessment, they must publicise this to students on the relevant course.

28.3 Where an individual student is granted an extension under the Exceptional Circumstances Policy to a deadline for a coursework assessment which consists of a single submission by a group of students, the revised deadline will apply to the submission for all students in the group, except where the student offered the extension is given an alternative form of assessment. When a student is granted an extension for a group assessment, they receive a notification asking them to inform the other students in the group of the revised deadline.

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Regulation 34 Legibility and accessibility of assessed work

It is a student's responsibility to ensure that their submitted assessed work is legible and accessible.

Application of the regulation

- 34.1 If markers consider a significant proportion of a student's assessed work to be so illegible that they cannot reach a robust mark they must consult the Convener of the Board of Examiners.
- (a) Where the Convener suspects that disability has impaired the student's ability to write legibly, the Convener, in consultation with the Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS), can decide whether the work should be marked normally or whether the disability justifies transcription. If transcription is not justified and the work is completely illegible, a zero will be awarded. If it is partially legible then the legible part will be marked.
 - (b) Where there are no issues of disability, the Convener should ensure that the legible part of the work is marked normally. If the work is completely illegible, a zero will be awarded.

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All such cases need to be drawn to the attention of the relevant Dean and the External Examiner and feedback needs to be given to the student.

- 34.2 Schools are responsible for informing students of the format in which assessed work must be submitted, and (where appropriate) the platform through which it must be submitted.

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Section D. Operation of Boards of Examiners

Regulation 40 Undergraduate Progression Board meetings

Meetings of Undergraduate Progression Boards are held to reach progression decisions. Each undergraduate student's progression status needs to be decided and recorded at least once each year by a Progression Board which is the responsibility of the School that has responsibility for the student's degree programme.

Application of the regulation

- 40.1 The status, governance, and decision making and reporting responsibilities, of Undergraduate Progression Boards are provided in the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes.

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- 40.2 College Progression Boards make decisions on the credit obtained by students who have optional periods of study abroad.

Deleted: 40.2 The [Policy on Undergraduate Progression Boards](#) sets out the role of the External Examiner; the quorum; the role of the Exceptional Circumstances Committee; student anonymity in discussions and the role of the Convener of the Board, for example for ensuring the accurate recording, minuting and reporting of decisions of the Board.¶

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Regulation 44 Borderlines

Boards of Examiners must consider students whose marks are borderline for progression, award or classification purposes. Boards of Examiners can also consider students whose marks are borderline for passing a course, where exceptional circumstances apply. Borderline marks are defined as marks from two percentage points below the class or grade boundary up to the boundary itself, e.g. 58.00% to 59.99% for an undergraduate 2.1 classification or 38% to 39% for a pass in a course. Boards of Examiners must use the University borderline definition and must not set and use a different definition.

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Regulation 46 Release of marks

Students are informed of marks or grades for each discretely identified unit of assessment used by the Board in reaching its final mark for the course or its progression or award decision.

Application of the regulation

- 46.1 Marks and grades are made available to the student, together with guidance on their meaning.
- 46.2 Boards of Examiners are not obliged to provide this information if the request is made more than one year after the date of the assessment.
- 46.3 Assessed coursework marks which contribute to the overall result for a course are provided to students within three weeks of the relevant submission date for the assessment, as a guide to each student's performance, together with guidance on the meaning of the marks.
- 46.4 Throughout the year, before consideration by a Board of Examiners, marks for examinations and assessed coursework are provisional and have no status until they are approved or modified by the Board. If such marks are released before confirmation by the Board of Examiners, students must be advised that the marks are provisional and may be modified when considered at the Board of Examiners meeting.
- 46.5 **Undergraduate non-honours degree examination marks; and professional degree examination marks or grades in Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (other than final professional degree examination marks): Overall marks:** The final overall mark agreed by Boards of Examiners for diets of examinations for graduating courses of study will be made available to the student via EUCLID Student View.
- 46.6 **Undergraduate Honours degree examination marks; and final professional degree examination marks in Medicine and Veterinary Medicine: Overall classification:** The final overall classification of honours degrees will be communicated to students via EUCLID Student View. The professional degrees may be awarded with honours in Medicine, or with distinction in Veterinary Medicine, for students who matriculated in or prior to the 2022/23 academic year, but are not otherwise classified.

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Regulation 47 Publication of results

Students will be notified of their assessment results and their progression status. Students have the right to exclude their name and/or final award results from being publicly announced.

Application of the regulation

- 47.1 Concessions from the following application of the regulation on Publication of results require the approval of the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) based on a case presented by the relevant College.
- 47.2 Students are officially notified of their results (including course marks, progression and programme outcomes or awards) via EUCLID Student View. This may be supplemented by the communication of assessment component results via virtual learning environments. Results are entered on to students' records by the relevant School.
- 47.3 The host School of the degree programme is responsible for overseeing the communication of all undergraduate award and final programme results and all taught progression decisions. The host School of the course is responsible for overseeing the communication of all final course results to the students on the course. Students will be notified in advance of the date on which they can expect to hear their results.
- 47.4 Students' results (including assessment component and course marks, programme and progression outcomes) may not be released over the telephone or informally via email. Students only receive their results via formal communication channels.
- 47.5 There should be no public display in any media of any formative or summative assessment results from any course or programme.
- 47.6 The host School will communicate a clear plan of action to each student when the student has failed an assessment that is required. This applies to final course results and some "in course" assessments where a pass is required. The communication is to take account of the student's progression and/or award status.
- 47.7 Each School will provide a general statement on their website describing their local process, indicating to their students how they should proceed in the event of failure.
- 47.8 Where a student has failed a summative assessment (either "in course" or "final") and a resubmission or retake is required and permitted, the host School ensures

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that the student is provided with timely academic feedback, guidance and support prior to their re-assessment.

47.9 The Head of the host School, or their designated representative, has responsibility for ensuring that, where a student has failed their programme of study at the final stage, the student is supported in a timely and personal manner. If appropriate, an offer of a private consultation may be made.

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47.10 Once a final award, final degree programme or final course result and progression decision has been agreed by the Board of Examiners and other relevant bodies, then Schools may contact students who have failed before the decision is published in EUCLID Student View. Schools should not give informal indications about the final award, final degree programme or final course result or progression decision in advance of the decision of the Board of Examiners and/or other relevant bodies. See regulation 46.4 for the release of provisional marks.

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47.11 Where there is a requirement to confirm pass lists to a Professional, Statutory and/or Regulatory Body (PSRB), the assessment results should not be collated and sent until the results of individual assessments have been made available to the student.

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47.12 If students attend the graduation ceremony their names and degrees are included in the graduation programme. The Registry Services team is responsible for the final award listing in the graduation ceremony programme (if the student registers their intention to graduate in person) and the listing in the press (students may opt out of this listing).

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Regulation 53 Award of undergraduate Ordinary and General degrees

Students registered for an Ordinary or General (non-Honours) degree may be awarded the degree if they satisfy the requirements in the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study.

Application of the regulation

53.1 The Board of Examiners (including Undergraduate Progression Boards) may propose the award of an Ordinary or General degree to those students who have met the requirements of one of these degrees but who do not satisfy the honours degree requirements.

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53.2 The Board of Examiners (including Undergraduate Progression Boards) should take account of the recommendations of the Exceptional Circumstances Committee and

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the student's general academic record when determining the award of a degree. However, it is not within the power of a Board of Examiners ~~to recommend the~~ award of a degree without substantial evidence of attainment to at least the lowest level required for the award of that qualification. Boards of Examiners ~~may not be~~ generous in cases of failure other than within the limits already set out in these regulations.

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Regulation 55 Undergraduate degree classification

The Board of Examiners for assessment of students in their final year is responsible for deriving the classification for award of an honours degree. Degree classification is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Exceptions are outlined in the guidance on the regulation.

Application of the regulation

55.6 Honours degree programmes in the Art and Design subject areas (except the MA Fine Art ~~and the BA Fine Art~~) within Edinburgh College of Art calculate classification based solely on performance the final honours year.

Regulation 56 Postgraduate assessment progression

For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project or dissertation component, students must pass the assessment requirements of the taught stage at an appropriate level at the first attempt before progression to the dissertation. In order to progress to the masters dissertation students must:

- (a) pass at least 80 credits 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 of study examined at the point of decision for progression; and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the masters degree programme, that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.

When all the marks for the taught components of the programme (120 credits) are available, if the student has achieved ~~marks of at least 40%~~ in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses. For students who have failed to meet the criteria for progression, the award of credit on aggregate can facilitate the award of a certificate or diploma.

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For programmes where the taught and project or dissertation components are taken in parallel, or where there are not identifiable taught and research project or dissertation components, the requirements for progression are determined at programme level, stated in the Programme Handbook.

Application of the regulation

- 56.1 For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project / dissertation component (e.g. 120 credits of taught courses in semesters 1 and 2, followed by a 60 credit project / dissertation component):
- (a) Postgraduate Boards of Examiners are normally convened at least twice during the year for full-time students. The initial meeting to decide matters relating to progression (to masters), or failure, is held at the end of the coursework component. A second meeting to consider the dissertation results and the final award of degrees (or diplomas) is held soon after completion of the programme. Both meetings are equally important.
 - (b) The Postgraduate Board of Examiners has the responsibility to decide which students can progress to the dissertation required for candidature for the award of a masters degree; or, in the case of other awards, exit either directly or following satisfaction of any outstanding requirement.
 - (c) Where a student who has not met the requirements for progression to the dissertation component has been granted null sits for courses in the taught component due to Exceptional Circumstances, they may be allowed to progress to the dissertation stage on a provisional basis. In the event that the student has still not met the requirements for progression following repeat assessment for the taught component, their dissertation will be set aside.
- 56.2 For MFA programmes (240 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to masters dissertation/project the student must pass at least 120 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the 180 credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression to dissertation/project, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above.
- 56.3 For postgraduate taught programmes involving 360 credits, information regarding progression requirements is included in the relevant programme handbook.
- 56.4 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are

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excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.

- 56.5 In general failed courses are not included in the student's transcript, but any failed course for which the student has been awarded credits on aggregate must be shown in the transcript as a fail but with credit on aggregate. In reporting course marks, Schools are required to upload a fail but with credit on aggregate outcome on to the student record system, along with other final course marks.
- 56.6 In Regulation 56(a) above, where some of the 80 credits are pass/fail courses, then where these courses are passed, they can be included in the 80 credit total. However, pass/fail courses are excluded from the calculation under Regulation 56(b).
www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme
- 56.7 PASS marks are defined in the "PASS" section (A1 to PS) of "Recording of Course Assessment Results within EUCLID"
[Recording of course assessment results within EUCLID](#) | [Registry Services](#)
- 56.8 In line with 56(c), Boards of Examiners must publish in advance information about any courses which must be passed, and for which credit cannot be awarded on aggregate.
- 56.9 For MBA programmes (180 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to the Capstone Project the student must pass at least 110 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56(c) above. If the student does not meet the progression criteria above, but is in a position to be able to meet the criteria based on the outcome of the outstanding credits, the progression decision will be deferred until the result of the outstanding credits are known.
- 56.10 For the EMBA programme and Online MBA programmes (180 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to the 40 credit Capstone project the student must pass at least 100 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above. In order to progress to the 30 credit Capstone project, the student must pass at least 110 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision

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for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above. If the student does not meet the progression criteria above, but is in a position to be able to meet the criteria based on the outcome of outstanding credits, the progression decision will be deferred until the result of the outstanding credits are known.

Regulation 58 Resubmission of postgraduate dissertations or research projects

Students may be permitted to resubmit the dissertation or research project in line with the provisions of the Exceptional Circumstances Policy where a student's performance in assessment has been affected by illness, accident or circumstances beyond their control (58.1-58.2).

Students are also entitled to one resubmission of the dissertation or research project for postgraduate Masters programmes where the student has achieved a mark of 45 to 49% at the first attempt (58.3-58.9). Where the dissertation or research project consists of more than one assessment component, students are entitled to resubmit where the overall course result is 45% to 49% (see 58.6 for further information).

Students will not be permitted the opportunity to resubmit their dissertation or research project more than twice (i.e. a total of three submission opportunities, including the initial submission), even where Exceptional Circumstances have been accepted.

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Application of the regulation

- 58.1 Where a student is granted the opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project due to exceptional circumstances, the Board of Examiners will be responsible for providing the student with a statement which outlines the deficiencies in their original submission, and agreeing an appropriate deadline and appropriate supervision. The student will be granted a null sit for their first attempt, and the recorded mark for their revised dissertation or project will not be capped. Paragraphs 58.3 to 58.8 do not apply to students granted the opportunity to resubmit their dissertation or research project due to exceptional circumstances.
- 58.2 Students who have been granted an opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project due to exceptional circumstances will be permitted one further resubmission under this regulation (with reference to paragraphs 58.3 to 58.9), provided they meet the eligibility requirements.
- 58.3 Where a student receives 48 or 49% for the dissertation or research project at the first attempt, they may be considered as a borderline candidate for the award of the

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Master's degree, in line with published information regarding consideration of borderline cases (see Regulation 44.1).

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- 58.4 Since the concept of borderlines (see Regulation 44) does not apply to the threshold for entitlement to resubmit a dissertation or research project, Boards of Examiners are not able to permit students with marks of 43 or 44% at the first attempt to resubmit their dissertation or project unless exceptional circumstances apply.
- 58.5 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.
- 58.6 Where the dissertation or research projects consists of more than one component of assessment, and the overall course mark is 45-49%, the Board of Examiners will determine which components of assessments must be resubmitted.
- 58.7 The relevant Board of Examiners will provide a student permitted to submit a revised dissertation or research project with a statement which outlines the deficiencies in their original submission. The student is also entitled to receive further written advice from their dissertation or research project supervisor on one occasion before resubmission. The student must include with their revised dissertation a statement outlining the changes made to the previous submission. This statement will not be marked.
- 58.8 The Board of Examiners will advise the student of the deadline for submission of their revised dissertation or research project, which will be three months from the date of the student receiving notification of their original result. Extension requests and exceptional circumstances submissions in relation to this deadline will be handled in line with provisions outlined within the Taught Assessment Regulations and the Exceptional Circumstances Policy. Where exceptional circumstances affect the resubmission, Boards of Examiners are permitted to offer a further resubmission under the Exceptional Circumstances Policy, if they consider this appropriate. The mark for a dissertation resubmitted under these circumstances will be capped at 50%, in line with Regulation 58.9.
- 58.9 Where a student declines the opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project, or fails to submit by the stated deadline, the mark they had received for their first attempt will be treated as final and they will be considered for a relevant exit award.
- 58.10 If the Board of Examiners agrees that the revised dissertation or research project meets the requirements for a pass at Masters level, the student will be awarded the

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Masters degree. The recorded mark for the revised dissertation or research project will be capped at 50%.

- 58.11 For MBA programmes students are entitled to one resubmission of the Capstone Project where the student has achieved a mark of 40 to 49% at the first attempt. The Board of Examiners will advise the student of the deadline for submission of their revised Capstone Project, which will be two months from the first meeting meeting/communication with the supervisor to complete the work. Since the concept of borderlines (see Regulation 44) does not apply to the threshold for entitlement to resubmit a Capstone Project, Boards of Examiners are not able to permit students with marks of 38 or 39% at the first attempt to resubmit their Capstone Project unless exceptional circumstances apply. Regulations 58.1-3 and 58.5-9 also apply.

Regulation 59 Award of postgraduate merit

Taught postgraduate degrees may be awarded with merit. To achieve a merit, a student typically must meet the following criteria: they must be awarded at least 60% on the University's Postgraduate Common Marking Scheme for the dissertation, if the programme has a dissertation element, and must achieve an average of at least 60% in the remaining elements. Where the student's dissertation mark or overall course average falls within a borderline range, the Boards of Examiners must consider if a merit can still be awarded (see Regulation 44).

Deleted: Borderlines, for both the dissertation and course average elements, are considered for merits.

Application of the regulation

- 59.1 Merit may be awarded for postgraduate taught masters, diplomas and certificates.
- 59.2 Where a student has been permitted to resubmit their dissertation or research project in line with Regulation 58 (except where Exceptional Circumstances apply), they are not eligible for the award of the degree with merit.
- 59.3 For degrees which use letter grades in addition to numerical marks, the award of merit will be made where the student meets the above criteria using the numerical mark.
- 59.4 For MFA, the award of merit relates only to grades obtained at stages 3 and 4 (Year 2).
- 59.5 Borderline marks are defined as marks from two percentage points below the boundary up to the boundary itself, e.g. 58.00% to 59.99% for the dissertation

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and for the average of other courses. See also taught assessment regulation 44 above.

59.6 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.

59.7 The Postgraduate Common Marking Scheme can be found at:
www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme

Regulation 60 Award of postgraduate distinction

Taught postgraduate degrees may be awarded with distinction. To achieve a distinction, a student typically must meet the following criteria: they must be awarded at least 70% on the University's Postgraduate Common Marking Scheme for the dissertation, if the programme has a dissertation element, and must achieve an average of at least 70% in the remaining elements. Where the student's dissertation mark or overall course average falls within a borderline range, the Boards of Examiners must consider if a distinction can still be awarded (see Regulation 44).

Deleted: Borderlines, for both the dissertation and course average elements, are considered for distinctions.

Application of the regulation

- 60.1 Distinctions may be awarded for postgraduate taught masters, diplomas and certificates.
- 60.2 Where a student has been permitted to resubmit their dissertation or research project in line with Regulation 58 (except where Exceptional Circumstances apply), they are not eligible for the award of the degree with distinction.
- 60.3 For degree programmes which use letter grades in addition to numerical marks, the award of distinction will be made where the student meets the above criteria using the numerical mark.
- 60.4 For MFA, the award of distinction relates only to grades obtained at stages 3 and 4 (Year 2).
- 60.5 Borderline marks are defined as marks from two percentage points below boundary up to the boundary itself, e.g. 68.00% to 69.99% for the dissertation and for the average of other courses. See also taught assessment regulation 44 above.

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60.6 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.

60.7 The Postgraduate Common Marking Scheme can be found at:
www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme

Regulation 61 Award of credit from other universities

Boards of Examiners confirm the award of credit from other universities which is used in the award of a University of Edinburgh degree.

Application of the regulation

61.1 There are two types of credit from external bodies: recognition of prior credit at admission, determined by Colleges against published criteria; and recognition of external learning whilst on programme. Information about recognition of prior learning is provided in the Degree Regulations.

Deleted: In both cases recognition of prior learning is recorded on admission.[¶]
www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

Regulation 62 Minuting of decisions of Boards of Examiners

The internal and External Examiners must concur in the mark and grade to be awarded to each student and in the classification and award of degree to be made. Boards of Examiners must record all decisions in the minutes of the meeting.

Application of the regulation

62.1 Once the Board of Examiners has decided on the final marks, grades and if appropriate, class of degree and award for each student, the students' names must then be made visible to the Board of Examiners. There must then be a final check of the results before the list is agreed and recorded in the minutes. Only in the event of detection of an error, which was not detectable when examination numbers were used, can changes be made to the marks, grades or class of degree at this stage. Any such change should be recorded in the minutes.
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners

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- 62.2 The Convener receives and is responsible for ensuring that the minutes of the Board of Examiners' meetings are an accurate record of the meeting and of the approved results.
- 62.3 Minutes should include:
- (a) a record of the names of the examiners and those in attendance at the meeting;
 - (b) relevant information considered at the meeting or by the Exceptional Circumstances Committee, and outcomes from this;
 - (c) discussion and outcomes of borderline cases;
 - (d) details of any modification of marks, grades or classification, and the reasons for these; and
 - (e) comments by the External Examiner(s) about the examination of the course, the performance of the students in general, and their approval of results agreed by the Board of Examiners.
- 62.4 The minute is a confidential document, although information on a particular student may need to be disclosed to that student under the Data Protection Act and generic information may need to be disclosed under Freedom of Information. Further information is available in the [Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes](#).
- 62.5 If agreement cannot be reached on concurrence of decisions then the issue is referred to the Head of College.

Regulation 63 Board of Examiners: return of marks

Assessment and course results, degree classification and awards agreed by the Board of Examiners and confirmed by the External Examiner(s) must be recorded on the student record system as the final official results of the University.

Application of the regulation

- 63.1 Schools have responsibility for ensuring that final results are displayed accurately in the student record system. More than one person should be involved in checking their accuracy.
- 63.2 When marks for courses are finalised (and not before then), they must be rounded to an integer, i.e. with no decimal places. Any mark which is xx.50 or above is rounded up and any mark which is xx.49 or below is rounded down, e.g. 59.50% is rounded to 60%, 59.49% is rounded to 59%. Individual course marks must be

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rounded before they are released to students and the rounded marks must be used in calculating the overall mean mark. The overall mean mark is to be used in Honours classification, progression, and award decisions. The overall mean mark is not rounded.

- 63.3 Schools have responsibility for uploading course results and final award outcomes in line with the deadlines published each year by Student Systems.

[Key Dates](#) | [Registry Services](#)

Deleted: [Student Administration](#)

- 63.4 In the case of August undergraduate examinations, results should be submitted as soon as possible and not later than 10 days before the start of the next semester.

- 63.5 Provisional marks for components of assessment may also be released to students via the student record system (see regulation 36).

Regulation 64 Status of decisions

Decisions by a Board of Examiners, once certified in writing, are final. In exceptional circumstances a Convener of the Board of Examiners can reconvene the Board to review a decision.

Application of the regulation

- 64.1 A Board of Examiners may, at the request of any of its members or member of the Exceptional Circumstances Committee, review a decision if significant information relevant to that decision, which was unavailable at the time the decision was made, comes to light, or if any error having a material bearing on that decision, or an error in the written certification of that decision, has been made. A member of the Board may request a review but it is the Convener who must review the decision in the light of any new significant information or error. Therefore it is the Convener, and not a member of the Board, who decides whether to reconvene the Board. Where the significant information presented would constitute exceptional circumstances under the Exceptional Circumstances Policy, the Board of Examiners should only consider this information where it believes that there is a good reason why the student did not make the information available in advance of the Board's original decision. Requests for review of decisions that are more than two years after the publication of the decision of the Board will not be accepted.
- 64.2 If the Board is satisfied that there are grounds for varying the decision, the Board shall report its decision to Student Systems.

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64.3 Where an error is discovered in the assessment or marking of any examination or any component of an examination or in the calculation, recording or notification of the result of any examination or any component thereof or in the classification or result of any degree or in any process connected with any of these matters, the University shall correct that error and amend its records to show the correct result or classification and that whether or not the result or classification has been published or otherwise notified to the student. The University shall notify the student of the corrected result or classification as soon as practicable and shall also correct any reference or statement which may have been provided by the University whether to the student or to a third party. Where such an error affects degree award or classification, the School should contact the relevant College and Academic Services for approval before notifying the student of any change. Having been notified of the corrected result or classification the student shall return to the University any documentation which may have been issued to the student notifying the original result or classification which has been corrected. The student shall have no claim against the University for any loss or damage which may have been incurred by the student as a result of any error which may have been made.

64.4 Where an investigation under the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures has found evidence of misconduct in the assessed work of a student following graduation and a penalty has been applied under the Code of Student Conduct, the Senatus has the power to reduce the classification of, or to revoke, any degree it has already awarded, and to require the degree, diploma or certificate scroll to be returned, in accordance with the penalty applied.

64.5 Any member of Senatus may request Senatus to refer for investigation any matter concerning examinations.

Deleted: In proved cases of substantial and significant copying, plagiarism or other fraud

Regulation 65 Convener's Action

The Convener of the Board of Examiners (including Undergraduate Progression Boards), or Exceptional Circumstances Committee may take decisions by Convener's Action.

Deleted: , Progression Board

Application of the regulation

65.1 This may occur when the Board of Examiners takes a decision in principle but needs confirmation or further information, or when the Board, or Exceptional Circumstances Committee considers the possible outcomes and authorises the Convener, once relevant information is known, to apply the appropriate option. Convener's Action may also be appropriate when the decision to be made follows an existing precedent.

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65.2 Decisions made by Convener's Action should be recorded and reported to the relevant Board or Committee.

Regulation 66 Failure to complete all the assessment requirements of a degree programme

When a student fails to complete all the assessment requirements of a degree programme the Board of Examiners (including Undergraduate Progression Boards) will investigate the case. If there is no satisfactory reason then Taught Assessment Regulation 67 on unsatisfactory progress applies. If the Exceptional Circumstances Committee for the relevant Board of Examiners is given sufficient evidence that the performance of a student has been affected for reasons of illness, accident or other circumstances beyond the student's control, the University's [Exceptional Circumstances Policy](#) applies.

Deleted: or Undergraduate Progression Board

Deleted: (including Progression Boards)

Regulation 68 Academic Appeal

Students have the right of academic appeal against the decisions of Boards of Examiners (including Undergraduate Progression Boards) on specific grounds, which are set out in the University's Student Appeal Regulations.
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/appeals

Deleted: or Progression Boards

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**22 May 2025****Postgraduate Research Assessment Regulations 2025/26****Description of paper**

1. This paper contains the draft Postgraduate Research Assessment 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. The Committee is requested to approve the proposed Postgraduate Research Assessment Regulations for 2025/26.

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 Research Assessment 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. In December 2024, all Colleges were invited to consult Schools and Deaneries regarding proposals for changes to the 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 Postgraduate Research Assessment Regulations 2024/25

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
22 PhD by Research and other Doctorates: examiner recommendation	Reference to the student's apparent capability to revise the thesis removed. The examiner's recommendation to the College Postgraduate Committee should be based upon assessment of the thesis, rather than the student. Clarifying this in the regulation helps mitigate the risk of detrimental treatment of students based on protected characteristics, (such as disability, pregnancy and maternity) influencing the examiner's recommendations.
23 PhD by Research Publications: examiner recommendation	Amended in line with Regulation 22 above.
24 MPhil: examiner recommendation	Amended in line with Regulation 22 above.
42.1 Status of Decisions	Amended to align with Taught Assessment Regulation 64.1, clarifying the process by which the College Postgraduate Committee is reconvened to review a decision.

Resource implications

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

Risk management

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

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

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

Equality & diversity

9. 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

10. 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

Sarah Barnard and Dr Adam Bunni
Academic Quality and Standards

Presenter

Adam Bunni

Freedom of Information Open

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Regulation 22 PhD by Research and other Doctorates: examiner recommendation

After the oral examination, the examiners must make one of the following recommendations to the College Postgraduate Committee:

- (a) **Award PhD/Doctorate.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the doctoral degree as laid down in the University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (see www.drps.ed.ac.uk/) as appropriate. No further changes can be made to the thesis after examination; or
- (b) **Minor Corrections Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the degree except that editorial corrections are required or stated minor weaknesses, as identified by the examiners, must be remedied. In the opinion of the examiners, the student will be able to remedy these without undertaking any further original research. The corrections to the thesis must be completed within three months and are subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or
- (c) **Additional Oral Examination Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree, or satisfies the requirements except for stated minor weaknesses, but the student's oral defence of the thesis has been inadequate in specified respects. The student is required to undergo further assessment, written, oral or practical, and make any corrections to the thesis within a specified period of not more than four months. The degree is awarded subject to the student achieving a satisfactory standard in the further oral examination and subject to certification of the corrections by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests); or
- (d) **Additional Work on Thesis Needed - No Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for PhD/Doctorate.** The thesis needs work above and beyond editorial corrections or minor weaknesses in order to meet one or more of the requirements for the degree, and this work may require further supervision. The revised thesis must be completed within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, and which must not exceed six months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 12 months with permission from the College. In these cases College may also recategorise the recommendation to (e) – see below. The thesis is subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner(s) (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or
- (e) **Substantial Work on Thesis and Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for PhD/Doctorate.** The thesis is substantially inadequate in

Deleted: However, the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements.

Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees Academic Year 2024/25



one or more of the requirements for the degree. The student ought therefore to be invited to resubmit the thesis for oral examination in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, which must not exceed 12 months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 24 months with permission from the College; or

Deleted: , but the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements

- (f) **Award MPhil.** The thesis is substantially deficient in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements; but the thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree of MPhil; or
- (g) **Award MPhil following Minor Corrections.** The thesis is substantially deficient in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements. However, the thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree of MPhil except for stated minor corrections in the thesis. The student should be invited to carry out the specified minor corrections as indicated by the examiners. The corrections to the thesis must be completed within three months and are subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or
- (h) **Substantial Work on Thesis Needed before Resubmission and oral examination for MPhil.** The thesis is substantially inadequate in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements. However, the thesis may satisfy the requirements for the degree of MPhil if stated deficiencies in the thesis are remedied. Accordingly, the student should be invited to resubmit the thesis in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners for the degree of MPhil. The revisions should be completed within a further period which must not exceed 12 months; or
- (i) **Award MSc by Research.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements or the requirements of the MPhil. However, the work is of sufficient quality to merit the award of MSc by Research; or
- (j) **Fail.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these or any other research degree requirements.

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Regulation 23 PhD by Research Publications: examiner recommendation

After the oral examination, the examiners must make one of the following recommendations to the College Postgraduate Committee:

- (a) **Award PhD/Doctorate.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the doctoral degree as laid down in the University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (see www.drps.ed.ac.uk/) as appropriate. No further changes can be made to the thesis after examination; or
- (b) **Minor Corrections Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the degree except that editorial corrections are required or stated minor weaknesses as identified by the examiners must be remedied. Examiners may only request corrections to the critical review. In the opinion of the examiners, the student will be able to remedy these without undertaking any further original research. The corrections to the thesis must be completed within three months and are subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or
- (c) **Additional Oral Examination Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree, or satisfies the requirements except for stated minor weaknesses, but the student's oral defence of the thesis has been inadequate in specified respects. The student is required to undergo further assessment, written, oral or practical, and make any corrections to the thesis within a specified period of not more than four months. Examiners may only request corrections to the critical review. The degree is awarded subject to the student achieving a satisfactory standard in the further oral examination and subject to certification of the corrections by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests); or
- (d) **Additional Work on Thesis Needed - No Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for PhD by Research Publications.** The thesis needs significant work in order to meet one or more of the requirements for the degree. Examiners may only request revisions to the critical review. The revised thesis must be completed within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, and which must not exceed six months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 12 months with permission from the College. In these cases College may also recategorise the recommendation to (e) – see below. The thesis is subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or

Deleted: , but the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements

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- (e) **Substantial Work on Thesis and Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for PhD by Research Publications.** The thesis is substantially inadequate in one or more of the requirements for the degree. Examiners may only request revisions to the critical review. The student ought therefore to be invited to resubmit the thesis for oral examination in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, which must not exceed 12 months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 24 months with permission from the College; or
- (f) **Fail.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these or any other research degree.

Deleted: , but the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy them

Regulation 24 MPhil: examiner recommendation

After the oral examination, the examiners must make one of the following recommendations to the College Postgraduate Committee:

- (a) **Award MPhil.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the degree of MPhil as laid down in the University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (see www.drps.ed.ac.uk/) as appropriate. No further changes can be made to the thesis after examination; or
- (b) **Minor Corrections Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree except that editorial corrections are required or stated minor weaknesses as identified by the examiners must be remedied. In the opinion of the examiners, the student will be able to remedy these without undertaking any further original research. These corrections to the thesis must be completed within a specified period of not more than three months and are, subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or
- (c) **Additional Oral Examination Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree, or satisfies the requirements except for stated minor weaknesses, but the student's oral defence of the thesis has been inadequate in specified respects. The student is required to undergo further assessment, written, oral or practical, and make any corrections to the thesis within a specified period of not more than four months. The degree is awarded subject to the student achieving a satisfactory standard in the further oral examination and subject to certification of the corrections by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests); or

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- (d) **Additional Work on Thesis Needed - No Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for MPhil.** The thesis needs significant work in order to meet one or more of the requirements for the degree. The revised thesis must be completed within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, and which must not exceed six months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 12 months with permission from the College. In these cases College may also recategorise the recommendation to (e) – see below. The thesis is subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or
- (e) **Substantial Work on Thesis and Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for MPhil.** The thesis is substantially inadequate in one or more of the requirements for the degree. The student ought therefore to be invited to resubmit the thesis for oral examination in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, which must not exceed 12 months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 24 months with permission from the College; or
- (f) **Award MSc by Research.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the MPhil and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements. However, the work is of sufficient quality to merit the award of MSc by Research; or
- (g) **Fail.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these or any other research degree.

Deleted: , but the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements

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Regulation 42 Status of Decisions

Decisions by a College Postgraduate Committee, once certified in writing are final. In exceptional cases the College Postgraduate Committee can review its decision.

Application of the regulation

- 42.1 A College Postgraduate Committee may review a decision if significant information relevant to that decision, which was unavailable at the time the decision was made, comes to light or if any error having a material bearing on that decision or an error in the written certification of that decision has been made. A member of the Committee may request a review but it is the Convener who must review the decision in the light of any new significant information or error. Therefore, it is the Convener, and not a member of the Committee, who decides whether to reconvene

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the Committee. Requests for review of decisions that are more than 2 years after the publication of the decision of the Committee will not be accepted.

- 42.2 If the Committee is satisfied that there are grounds for changing its decision it will report its decision to Student Systems.
- 42.3 Where an error is discovered in the assessment or marking of any examination or any component of an assessment or in the calculation, recording or notification of the result of any assessment or any component thereof or in the classification or result of any degree or in any process connected with any of these matters, the University shall forthwith correct that error and amend its records to show the correct result or classification and whether or not the result or classification has been published or otherwise notified to the student. The University shall notify the student of the corrected result or classification as soon as practicable and shall also correct any reference or statement which may have been provided by the University whether to the student or to a third party. Having been notified of the corrected result or classification the student shall return to the University any documentation which may have been issued to the student notifying the original result or classification which has been corrected. The student shall have no claim against the University for any loss or damage which may have been incurred by the student as a result of any error which may have been made.
- 42.4 In proved cases of substantial and significant copying, plagiarism or other fraud, the Senatus has the power to reduce the classification of, or to revoke, any degree it has already awarded, and to require the degree, diploma or certificate scroll to be returned.
- 42.5 Any member of Senatus may request Senatus to refer for investigation any matter concerning assessment.

SENATE ACADEMIC POLICY AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE**22 May 2025****UPDATED SUPPORT FOR STUDY POLICY****Description of paper**

1. The paper proposes amendments to the Support for Study policy for all students. These amendments are based on feedback of the direct experience of staff and students on application of the current policy. The revised policy has been through extensive consultation over more than a year with Colleges, Services, EUSA and sector benchmarking.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. APRC is asked to approve the updated policy, with its accompanying EQIA and, workflow. Staff guidance and student web page information is also available for perusal.

Background and context

3. The implementation of the Support for Study policy has been challenging on occasion. This is partly subject to differing interpretations of its application when navigating the individual nature of complex student cases. This updated policy and guidance for staff responds to that feedback, to better reflect current working practices, and has added a number of outcomes at Stage 3. The overarching approach is designed to be supportive for the student and enable staff to navigate these cases.

Discussion

4. This revised policy is presented based on requests from Colleges and Residence Life who use the policy in practice and their suggestions on how this can be improved to assist staff with its effective application. Furthermore, the policy needs to reflect the new student support model.

5. The revised policy has been discussed in detail taking on board feedback from academic and professional services colleagues in Colleges and Schools, EUSA sabbatical officers and staff, Legal Services, Residence Life and staff across Student Experience departments.

6. As well as feedback from colleagues, the revised policy has been reviewed in line with the majority in the sector, learnings from discussing with sector colleagues, and Universities UK guidance has been followed.

7. The revisions demonstrate that considerable support can be given before engagement with the policy and we should seek informal responses to all but the most challenging of cases. Where these cases become more challenging, this policy provides staff and students with a transparent framework around which support can be managed and responded to, to the benefit of the impacted student and staff and the wider University community.

8. The intention is for the policy to be reworded to reflect the supportive intention of the process, as reflected in the majority of cases. Cases considered by this policy, especially Stage 2 and 3, are inevitably complex and as such, the policy cannot be overly prescriptive in how it is applied. This policy will provide a framework but case by case application will need continue within this framework and learnings captured for further iterations.

9. The pressure in these situations is most acutely felt in University-managed accommodation and in Schools, and staff agreed that we have a responsibility to look after other students and staff - who work in this environment.

10. The role of the university as an academic institution has been reflected in the extension of scope to include the impact the student's behaviour is having on their own studies and chances of academic success was requested by staff.

11. The revised policy presents greater clarity on the boundaries of our support in student cases. Reaching stage 3 is unusual but is necessary in some cases and continues to be supportive.

12. The outcomes of stage 3 are the decision of the Panel and in detailed discussion with colleagues, including those in wellbeing. Any decision of exclusion would be extremely rare but have been raised through very extreme case reviews as a result (i.e. Student Case Review) and would have to be in the interests of the student and extensively discussed should this be of consideration.

Resource implications

13. There are no current resource implications from the proposed changes.

Risk Management

14. The risks associated with the updated policy involve student and staff experience. The built-in checks and involvement of staff across the institution are to mitigate this. There is a risk that this policy remains out of date with current practice and do not provide the support to our staff leading in these areas if the amendments were not to be approved.

Equality & Diversity

15. An Equality Impact Assessment for the policy is provided.

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

16. Colleges and Student Experience Services will create a series of Support for Study discussion meetings in local areas to discuss the policy in practice, case studies at each stage and will edit the referral forms to a standard process. We will continue to work with EUSA on communications with our students so they can best support them through the process where the student requests this.

Further information

17. Author
Rebecca Shade

Presenter
Rebecca Shade

Senior Policy & Projects Adviser,
Students
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Senior Policy & Projects Adviser,
Students
Student Experience Services

Freedom of Information

Open

H/02/27/02

APRC 24/25 5D Appendix 1

Support for Study Policy

Purpose of Policy

The Support for Study Policy outlines the University's approach to supporting students who may be struggling with their studies due to health issues.

Overview

The University of Edinburgh is committed to supporting the wellbeing of students and staff and to providing an environment that is safe and conducive to study and allows students to fulfill their potential. The University recognizes that students may experience a range of difficulties throughout their studies.

This includes students who have temporary or long-term physical or mental health conditions which may have an adverse impact on their ability to study and/or live as a member of the University community.

The University will seek to engage with students who are experiencing health concerns in a positive and constructive manner. However, there may be circumstances where the behaviour of a student is having an adverse impact on the health, safety, wellbeing and academic progress of others. Students in such circumstances will be encouraged to engage with support or may be required to do so. This policy is to be followed by staff where a student is giving significant cause for concern.

This policy will seek to provide a supportive framework for a student to be able to manage any associated behaviours in a way that they are able to study and live as part of the University community. This policy is intended to be supportive rather than disciplinary.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

The policy applies to all students of the University and is used by staff to provide a supportive framework where behaviours are affecting the student's ability to study and/or live as a member of the University community and this is having an adverse impact on others. Specific roles are outlined for Support for Study in each College.

Contact

Area
Student Experience
Services

Document control

Dates	Approved: 30.5.19	Starts:	Equality impact assessment: 2016: June 2019; March 2023; April 2025	Amendments: January 2022 March 2023	Next Review: 2026/27
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Approving authority

Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

Consultation undertaken

This policy update has been taken in consultation with College offices: Deans of Students; University Wellbeing representatives and with Edinburgh University Students' Association.

Section responsible for policy maintenance & review

Deputy Secretary, Students

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

Code of Student Conduct:
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline>

UK Quality Code

n/a

Policies superseded by this policy

n/a

Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 650 2138

Deleted: welcomes a diverse student body and aims to support all students throughout their studies. This includes students who have temporary or long-term physical or mental health conditions which may have an adverse impact on their ability to study.

Deleted: The University takes seriously its duty of care to all members of the University community. This policy and procedures are to be followed by staff where the behaviour of a student is giving cause for concern, and where it is believed this may be caused by a mental health problem. The Support for Study Policy applies to all students and to all aspects of University life.¶

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1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 The University of Edinburgh welcomes a diverse student body and aims to support all students (regardless of level of study) throughout their studies in line with its commitments under the Equality Act (2010) and in its own Equality and Diversity Strategy to developing a positive culture, where all staff and students are able to develop to their full potential.

1.2

The University will seek to engage with students who are experiencing health concerns in a positive and constructive manner. However, there may be circumstances where the behaviour of a student is having an adverse impact on the health, safety, wellbeing and/or academic progress of others. Students in such circumstances will be encouraged to engage with support or may be required to do so. This policy is to be followed by staff where a student is giving significant cause for concern.

Examples of such behaviour include but are not limited to:

- repeated correspondence invoking harmful language with no attempt to support themselves or make changes to their behaviour;
- behaviour which poses a direct risk to health and safety;
- behaviour which is having a detrimental impact on others and/or which is causing alarm or distress;
- making unsustainable support demands to members of the University community.

This policy is intended to provide an effective framework to support the student, other students and members of staff in these circumstances, where attempts to provide the student with support have been exhausted, or the action needed is more acute and/or immediate. The policy applies to all students (including those on online programmes, placements, field work and study/work abroad) and to all aspects of their university life.

Deleted: Occasionally, physical or mental ill-health (including a disability) may lead to a student behaving in a way which has an adverse impact on the health, wellbeing or safety of other members of the University community. This may include behaviour that poses a direct risk to health and safety, or making unreasonable support demands of other members of the University community. This policy is intended to provide an effective framework to support the student in question, other students and members of staff in these circumstances, where other means of providing student support, or student disciplinary or fitness to practice processes, are not the more appropriate way forward. The policy applies to all students and to all aspects of their University life.

2 UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 Students are responsible for the management of their own health and wellbeing. Staff are expected to support students who are struggling with health or wellbeing in a person-centred, respectful manner. In all situations, and at all stages of this policy, every effort should be made to address concerns with the full and informed agreement of the student in order to provide them with support in their student and university life. In extreme circumstances (e.g., where a student is showing serious and immediate risk of harm to self or others, where a student is unable or unwilling to cooperate in the management of their health and wellbeing, or its impact on others), this policy makes provision for proceeding without the consent of the student.

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- 2.2 Staff with responsibility for implementing the policy at any stage should do so in a manner that emphasises the aim of supporting students to succeed in their studies and/or ability to live as part of the University community, and which takes into consideration and seeks to minimise the stress and anxiety that engagement in any formal process may cause students. Students may request reasonable adjustments at each stage of the process, and staff involved should meet these as far as possible. These could include but are not limited to: agendas in advance of the meeting; meeting online or in specific buildings etc).

3 OVERVIEW OF THE POLICY

- 3.1 The University may use this policy in circumstances where a member of the University community raises concerns about the student's behaviour and its adverse impact on their ability to study and/or live as a member of the University community and its impact on others, and there are grounds for believing that this behaviour relates to the student's physical or mental health.

- 3.2 There are three stages to the policy. Under normal circumstances, staff should work sequentially through Stages 1 to 3, only going on to the next stage where the previous stages have not satisfactorily addressed the issues of concern.

- 3.3 Where the issues and their adverse impact are particularly severe, and the University has reasonable grounds to believe that earlier stages of the policy would not be effective in addressing these issues, or where the earlier stages have been previously undertaken, the University can proceed to a later stage of the policy without working sequentially through earlier stages.

- 3.4 When this happens, the Deputy Secretary Students should be given a detailed description of the situation, along with all relevant correspondence with the student.

4. INTERACTION WITH OTHER POLICIES

- 4.1 The University seeks to ensure that members of the University community are not subjected to unacceptable behaviour. The University will investigate any allegations of inappropriate behaviour under the Code of Student Conduct (www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline).

- 4.2 The Support for Study policy offers an alternative to the University's Code of Student Conduct when there are grounds for believing that a student's behaviour may relate to the student's physical or mental health.

- 4.3 Where a student's degree programme is subject to a professional body's Fitness to Practise requirements, the relevant College may follow its Fitness to Practise regulations or procedures when a student's behaviour raises issues regarding their fitness to practise.

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¶ The student's behaviour, while causing an adverse impact on other members of the University community, is unlikely to constitute an offence under the Code of Student Conduct; or

¶ Were the student found to have committed an offence under the Code, the most likely penalties that a Student Discipline Officer or Student Discipline Committee would apply would be unlikely to offer the most appropriate way to resolve the student's behaviour and / or any underlying health issues.

Deleted: A student under consideration through this policy nonetheless has the right to request that their case is considered under the Code of Student Conduct instead, for example if they feel that their behaviour is not caused by physical or mental ill health.



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The College can follow these regulations or procedures at the same time as the Support for Study Policy.

5. EMERGENCIES

- 5.1 Where a student's behaviour presents an immediate risk to themselves or others, the Emergency Services should be contacted by dialling 999 if in the UK. For matters arising on University premises, University Security should also be alerted by dialling 0131 650 2257.

5.2

- 5.2 Further information on handling emergencies, including those outside of the UK is available at:

- <https://www.ed.ac.uk/contacts/out-of-hours-support>
- <https://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/supporting-students/student-mental-health/helping-distressed-student>

6 SUPPORT FOR STUDY STAGE 1 – INITIAL LOW-MEDIUM RISK CONCERNS

- 6.1 When initial or low-medium risk concerns arise about a student's health and its adverse impact on other members of the University community, these should be dealt with locally by the appropriate member of staff e.g., Student Advisers, Wellbeing Advisers, Directors of Students or Research Supervisors under Stage 1. If concerns arise in the University's residential accommodation, the relevant member of staff in the Residence Life team should address them. This may involve discussing the issue with the student's School.

- 6.2 The appropriate member of staff should discuss their concerns with the student in an supportive manner, referring explicitly to stage 1 of this policy and give the student the opportunity to explain their perception of the matter. Example outcomes from such a discussion include but are not limited to:

- No follow-up action necessary;
- Supporting referral to appropriate student support service – e.g. University NHS Health Service or other GP practice, Student Counselling, Disability & Learning Support Service, Student Wellbeing Services, Residence Life Student Fees or Finance, etc;
- Supporting the student to apply for an appropriate change to their programme status – e.g., interruption of studies or a transfer to part-time study - with due consideration (taking advice as needed) as to how any interruption of studies or change in status might impact on the student (e.g. for accommodation, immigration or financial reasons);
- The student's agreement about changes to their behaviour and engagement, with a review period agreed, and a review undertaken by the Student Adviser/Supervisor, Director of Students and student support team or relevant Residence Life staff and relevant documentation to be shared with the student.

Deleted: There is no provision under this policy for students whose behaviour is a cause for concern to be immediately suspended from the University. If a member of staff thinks that it may be appropriate to immediately suspend a student for their or others' safety and wellbeing, they should contact the University Secretary or one of the Deputy Secretaries, who may be able to take action (in conjunction with a designated Vice-Principal) under the Code of Student Conduct. See: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline>

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- 6.3 The staff member responsible for handling the case at Support for Study Stage 1 is responsible for maintaining a secure record of the discussions and actions agreed, in line with defined retention periods. [studentretentionscheduleposteuclidv20.pdf](#)

7 SUPPORT FOR STUDY STAGE 2 – CONTINUING OR MORE SERIOUS CONCERNS

- 7.1 If the student is unable or unwilling to discuss the concerns at Stage 1, or there are continuing and / or more serious emerging concerns despite any actions agreed during Stage 1, the case may be referred to the College Dean of Students (or nominee) for consideration under Stage 2 of the policy. [Should there be a query about the need to refer, this should be discussed with the Dean.](#)

Any Stage 2 referral must be approved by one of: the Director of Students, a Student Support Manager or Head of Student Administration (or similar roles) or a Head of Residence Life.

When referring the case to the Dean, the referrer should set out their concerns regarding the student's health and behaviour, and the steps that staff have taken to support the student, including any reasonable adjustments made to date, and providing any supporting documentation [such as engagement records or incident reports](#) that they consider relevant.

- 7.2 It is recommended that relevant members of staff from the School, student support services, Residence Life if relevant, and College office hold a pre-meeting case conference to discuss steps to take with the student and the desired outcomes for the Support for Study meeting. At all stages consideration should be given to the process and whether the Code of Student Conduct should be consulted.

- 7.3 If the Dean is not satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to resolve concerns regarding the student's behaviour, [or can suggest alternative strategies to address this](#), they will refer the case back to the School/Residence Life and may meet with the representative to discuss further support and adjustments that could be implemented.

- 7.4 If, however, the Dean is satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to resolve concerns regarding the student's behaviour, that the conditions set out in 7.1 are met, and that no alternative process ([such as Code of Student Conduct or Fitness to Practice](#)) would be more appropriate, they will arrange a Stage 2 meeting.

- 7.5 The purpose of the meeting is to assess what further solutions, plans and interventions can be put in place to support the student to study and/or live as a member of the University community and address any adverse impact that their behaviour might be having on other members of the University community.

- 7.6 In advance of the Stage 2 student meeting, the Dean will contact the student:

- clearly explaining their reasons for holding the meeting;

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- inviting the student attend the meeting or to provide a written submission to consider in their absence;
- explicitly referencing that the meeting will be held under Stage 2 of this policy; referring back to the policy and associated website for further information.

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- 7.7 The invitation should ideally be sent at least 5 working days, or giving as much notice as possible in advance of the meeting in order that the student can seek support and prepare for the meeting. However, in urgent situations it may be necessary for the Dean to act sooner.

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- 7.8 The Dean will inform the student that they can submit any written representations at least 1 working day before the meeting. The Dean can proceed even if the student does not wish to attend and does not make any written representations.

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- 7.9 Where a student wishes to take part in the meeting, the Dean will inform them of the time and venue as soon as possible. It can be held online, in person or as a hybrid meeting.

- 7.10 The Dean will inform the student that they can be accompanied by a person who will provide support including a member of the Students' Association staff, a specialist provider of health or wellbeing support or a friend from the University community. They will inform the student that their supporter cannot represent the student at the meeting, and cannot attend if the student is not present. They will also inform the student that they can approach the Student's Association Advice Place for free and impartial advice on, and support with, their situation.

- 7.11 The Dean will chair the meeting and the following will usually be expected to attend:

- a representative from the student's School (for example the Student Adviser, Research Supervisor, Director of Students, Supervisor or Head of the Student Support Team);
- A representative from the relevant College office;
- Head of student support services (for example the Director of the Student Counselling Service or the Disability & Learning Support Service or Head of Student Wellbeing service or their nominee);
- Where appropriate, the Dean may also invite a representative of an appropriate student support service, Residence Life, or any other University service (e.g. DLSS mental health mentor or Wellbeing/Lead Wellbeing Adviser);
- A notetaker.

- 7.12 The Dean will provide all those attending the meeting with a copy of any written representations submitted by the student, along with all other documentation that the Dean considers relevant.

Attendees at the meeting should treat all documentation and all matters discussed as confidential, and should only share any information with other staff where there is a legitimate reason to do so and where this is consistent with the University's data protection



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policies and guidance (see <https://www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/policy/data-protection>)

- 7.13 As a result of the meeting, the Dean will either decide that no follow-up action is necessary or will agree a time-bound action plan. The attendees will, where possible, make their decision on a consensual and unanimous basis. However, where the meeting is not able to reach agreement, the Convenor will have a casting vote. Example elements of a plan might include:

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- a) Requiring the School / Residence Life team to introduce further adjustments to support the student (defining who is responsible for reviewing progress and on what timescales);
- b) Supporting the student to apply in the normal way for an appropriate change to their programme status – e.g. interruption of studies or a transfer to part-time study with due consideration (taking advice as needed) as to how any interruption of studies or change in status process might impact on the student (e.g. for immigration or financial reasons);
- c) A plan for the student to address specified aspects of their behaviour (defining who is responsible for reviewing progress and on what timescales), including assistance in accessing relevant services and, if relevant, external agencies;
- d) Further meetings with the student.

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- 7.14 The Dean will write to the student within 5 working days of the meeting, confirming the actions and/or further support that is proposed, together with details of how these proposals will be taken forward, by whom and by when. The Dean will also remind the student that if the concerns persist, their case may be escalated to Stage 3 of the policy.

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- 7.15 The Dean and School staff member are responsible for maintaining a record of the meeting (including all supporting documentation), in line with defined retention periods. studentretentionscheduleposteuclidv20.pdf

7.12

8 SUPPORT FOR STUDY STAGE 3 – PERSISTENT AND SERIOUS CONCERNS

- 8.1 If concerns persist following the end of any time-bound action plan agreed at Stage 2, or if the student does not engage with the recommendations arising from the meeting, or if more serious concerns emerge, the relevant Dean can refer the case to the Deputy Secretary Students. They should summarise the student's case and their reasons for seeking escalation to Stage 3, providing any supporting documentation that they consider relevant.

Deleted: The Support for Study Policy does not apply to staff. However, where the case under consideration involves a student who is also a member of staff, the Dean of Students (or nominee) should ensure that the relevant line manager is made aware of the concerns and actions being taken under the Support for Study policy.

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- 8.2 The Deputy Secretary Students will review the information in the referral, including evidence of actions taken to date if any. If the Deputy Secretary Students is not satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to resolve concerns regarding the student, they will refer the case back to the College with recommendations on further support and adjustments that could be implemented. At all stages, consideration should be given as to whether the Code of Student Conduct Process should be consulted.

Deleted: In a minority of cases, students may also be referred directly to stage 3 where there is a significant concern for the student or concern about their impact on others. When this happens, the Deputy Secretary (Students) should be given a detailed description of the situation, along with all relevant correspondence with the student.

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8.3 However, if the Deputy Secretary Students is satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to resolve concerns regarding the student, or that the concerns are significant enough to warrant escalation to Stage 3, they will ask the Director of Student Wellbeing (or nominated deputy) to prepare a formal risk assessment regarding the student and the wider University community. The student should be informed of indicative timescales for this.

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8.4 Following receipt of the risk assessment, if the Deputy Secretary Students concludes that the situation can be adequately managed or mitigated without further formal action, they will conclude the formal process under this policy, and they will refer the case to the Director of Student Wellbeing and ask them to consider whether the student's School/College or relevant support services should take any further steps.

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8.5 If the Deputy Secretary Students concludes that the risk assessment and other information provide evidence that the student is still struggling to study effective and/or live as part of the University community and/or that their behaviour is continuing to have an adverse impact on the health, wellbeing or safety of other members of the University community, they will convene a Stage 3 Panel meeting to consider the student's case. It can be held online, in person or as a hybrid meeting.

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Deleted: The Deputy Secretary (Students) is responsible for arranging a date, time and venue for the panel meeting, and for inviting panel members and other attendees to the meeting. The Panel may hold physical or virtual meetings including conducting by electronic business

8.6 In advance of the meeting, the Deputy Secretary Students will arrange for the collation of any further evidence e.g.,

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- the student's academic progression to date including a commentary from relevant staff in the School;

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- a summary of any impact on staff and/or other students involved;

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- a consideration of Fitness to Practice requirements if relevant;

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- and a summary of any academic and regulatory aspects of the student's programme of studies which may constrain the range of options for addressing the issues regarding the student's health and behaviours (including the academic consequences of an interruption of studies at this stage in the academic session).

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8.7 The Deputy Secretary Students will write to the student in advance of the meeting, covering the following points:

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- Summarising their reasons for holding the meeting and enclosing all documentation that the meeting will consider (including the risk assessment, and a summary of any other information gathered in advance of the meeting);

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- Inviting the student to attend the meeting or to make any written representations they wish the attendees to consider. The Deputy Secretary Students will inform the student that they can submit any written representations at least 2 working days before the meeting;

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- Informing the student that they have the right to be accompanied by a person who will provide support, including a member of the Students' Association staff, a specialist provider of health or wellbeing support or a friend from the University community. They will inform the student that their supporter cannot represent the student at the meeting, and cannot attend if the student is not present in person. They will also inform the student that they can

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request in addition to be accompanied by a specialist provider of health or wellbeing support.

- Reminding the student that they can approach the Students' Association Advice Place for free and impartial advice on, and support with their situation;
- Making clear reference to the relevant section of this policy with regards to the case.

8.8 The Deputy Secretary Students can proceed with the meeting even if the student does not make any written representations, or if the student is unable or unwilling to attend the meeting.

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8.9 The Membership of the Support for Study Stage 3 meeting is as follows:

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- Convened by the Deputy Secretary Students (or nominee)
- A Dean (or delegate) (not from the student's College);
- A Senior Leader with responsibilities in relation to student or learning and teaching matters' or in the case of PhD / research students, a Vice- or Assistant Principal with responsibilities in relation to research student matters;

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- A student sabbatical officer from the Students' Association or Sports Union;
- A member of staff from the student's School or College that attended the previous Stage 2 meeting if held;
- An external member of a specialist agency such as NHS if relevant
- Director of Student Wellbeing;
- Notetaker.

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8.10 While the Convener is responsible for inviting the full membership to attend, the meeting will be quorate as long as a minimum of three of its members are present.

8.11 The Convener will provide all those attending the meeting with a copy of:

Deleted: 8.11 In addition to the formal members, a representative from Student Experience Services will attend and act as the secretary to the meeting, and the Convener will also invite the Director of Student Wellbeing to attend

- The original referral from the College Dean, together with any background information;
- The information gathered in stage 8.3 (risk assessment) and 8.6 (additional information) above;
- Any written representations from the student.

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8.12 The Convener will summarise the case with, with particular reference to the main points from the risk assessment. Those present may ask to clarify any of this information.

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8.13 The Convenors will then provide the student (if attending) with an opportunity to present any further information relevant to the case. If the student has asked that a relevant

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professional who is involved in supporting the student attend the meeting, the Convenor will provide them with an opportunity to present any further information. The meeting attendees may ask the student and relevant professional to clarify any of the points they make.

- 8.14 The student / their supporter and the Director of Student Wellbeing will then withdraw from the meeting while the members discuss the case and make a decision on how to proceed. In doing so, the members must give careful consideration to:

- The extent to which support has been offered / taken up to date;
- Whether any reasonable adjustments might support the student's ability to continue with their studies;
- Relevant legislation and in particular the University's duties under the Equality Act;
- Medical and other evidence about the student's current health plus any advice about prognosis;
- Any evidence presented by the student, including any new medical evidence;
- The student's academic progress to date and likelihood of progressing to the next year of the programme;
- Any requirements of Fitness to Practice
- The impact of the student's behaviour on other members of the University community.
- The academic consequences of an interruption of studies at this stage in the academic session;
- The impact of an interruption of studies on the student, including careful consideration of their personal circumstances (including financial and immigration status).

- 8.15 The meeting attendees will either decide that no follow-up action is necessary or will agree one or more of the following where the wellbeing of the student is priority:

- Requiring the School or the Residence Life team to introduce further adjustments to support the student (defining who is responsible for reviewing progress and on what timescales);
- Support for the student to apply for an appropriate change to their programme status – e.g., interruption of studies or a transfer to part-time study with an appropriate support plan created;
- A plan for the student to address specified aspects of their behaviour (defining who is responsible in the School/Residence Life for reviewing progress and on what timescales), including assistance in accessing relevant services which may support the student in making these changes;
- A requirement that the student interrupt studies for a specified period that does not exceed 12 months, with a requirement to subsequently demonstrate that they are fit to return to their studies and an explanation of the consequences should the student not be fit to return to studies after 12 months;

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Support for Study Policy

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e) A recommendation to withdraw from studies; with the option to be reinstated at a later date to permit completion of a degree under the relevant study degree regulations (e.g., UG; PGT; PGR);

f) In very limited circumstances, a requirement for the student to leave University accommodation;

g) In exceptional circumstances, exclusion of the student by the University if it is considered to be in the best interests of the student and their ability to thrive in an academic environment and the reasonable adjustments or support the University can provide. In the case of this exclusion, all other options must have been exhausted or must not be feasible. The University will offer support during this transitional period such as support with accommodation or advice on visas and finances.

8.16 If the student has attended the meeting, the Convener will invite the student and their supporter (if relevant) along with the Director of Student Wellbeing to return to the meeting to hear the decision.

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8.17 The Convener will also write to the student within 2 working days of the meeting, setting out the decision and a summary of reasons, and highlighting any further support that may be relevant to the student at this point. The Convener will copy this communication to relevant contacts in the School including the Head of School and a Student Support lead contact, and relevant Dean.

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8.18 Where the participants in the meeting agree to require the student to interrupt their studies, the Director of Student Wellbeing will develop and send to the student a plan to support and advise the student during their period of interruption. This should be done if at all possible in collaboration with the student concerned.

While the University's policy on Authorised Interruption of Studies sets out the services that students can access while they interrupt their studies, this plan may include additional elements of support. The plan will include the following:

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- It will offer the student access to advice on and support with relevant welfare matters, on an ongoing basis during the interruption and prior to return to study, including but not limited to:

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- o finances, considering the different fee regimes at the University and the different financial impacts that may arise from a period of interruption;
- o accommodation;
- o immigration matters (for international students);
- o support may involve the Student Immigration Service; Student Funding team, Edinburgh Cares and limited access to Disability & Learning Support Service.

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- It will provide a case management approach, co-ordinated by the Director of Student Wellbeing (or nominee) while the student is on interruption to ensure:
 - o continuity;



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- periodic reviews of progress;
- planning and support for re-entry into studies;
- Continued support post re-entry to studies.

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8.19 A student who wishes to appeal the decision of the Panel should follow the process set out in the University's Student Appeal Regulations. The decision of the Appeal Committee is final and there is no further opportunity for appeal against that decision within the University. If an appeal is upheld then the Appeal Committee will refer the student case to the Support for Study Convenor to review its decision. Any decisions made by the Support for Study meeting remain in force while an appeal is underway and until the outcome of any review of the decision.

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8.20 Student Experience Services are responsible for maintaining a record of Stage 3 meetings (including all supporting documentation) and of relevant follow-up activities (including return to studies actions), in line with defined retention periods.

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8.21 The Support for Study policy does not apply to staff. However, where the case under consideration involves a student who is also a member of staff, the Dean should ensure that the relevant line manager is made aware of the concerns and actions being taken under the Support for Study policy.

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AUTHORISED INTERRUPTIONS OF STUDY

9.1 In cases where students will need exceptionally high levels of support upon returning to their studies. Schools should consider referring the student to the appropriate stage of the Support for Study policy in order to ensure that there is adequate support and monitoring in place to support the student in their studies.

10 STUDENTS DETAINED UNDER THE MENTAL HEALTH ACT

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10.1 For any student who is detained ('sectioned') under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 for longer than 72 hours and who is therefore unable to interact with the University in the management of their wellbeing, the student's College will put an appropriate interruption of studies in place. When a detention is less than 72 hours long, this should be reviewed with the Student Mental Health Coordinator in liaison with the NHS, and normally an interruption will not be enforced. This decision does not require a Risk Assessment as the risks to the student or others will be managed by NHS mental health services.

10.2 Where a student is detained in a different country (e.g., online student or student on placement) and the University is made aware of this, the relevant staff should commence the interruption process as soon as possible to protect the student from fee charges and engagement/assessment processes.



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10.3 The interruption in the first instance will normally be for a minimum of four weeks but may be for a shorter or longer period of time depending on the student and expected length of detention. It is important to note that periods of detention can range from very short to very long and so any initial interruption (e.g., of four weeks) should be reviewed regularly and shortened / extended as needed. The Student Immigration Service must be consulted where the student is studying on a sponsored visa. The student will not be expected to engage with studies during this interruption and a plan will need to be put in place with the student to manage their return to studies once they have been discharged from hospital. The student's ability to return to their studies at a particular time will be assessed depending on the amount of study and assessment they have missed.

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10.4 The University may be informed of the detention by the student, a relative/ friend or by the NHS or other health professional. When a staff member is informed, they should inform School staff such as a Manager of Student Support; local College office; Director of Student Counselling, Head Chaplain and Residence Life if relevant.

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Deleted: Disability and Learning Support Service or the Student Mental Health Coordinator)

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10.5 The student will be informed that a Support for Study meeting under Stage 2 will be convened on their return and steps above should be followed. Evidence may be sought regarding the student's fitness to return to study

10.6 It should be established by the Student Mental Health Coordinator or relevant School staff member if the student would like ongoing engagement with the University while in hospital and relevant staff such as Chaplaincy/Residence Life informed.

Deleted: Prior to the student's return to study, and in order to ensure appropriate support is in place, the case will be considered under Support for Study Stage 2, where further evidence may be sought regarding the student's fitness to return to study. The student should be notified of this as in stage two policy section above.

¶ 9.5 Information about student emergency contact is available here. <https://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/supporting-students/student-mental-health/guidance-communicating-student-emergency-contacts>

11 RETURN TO STUDY

11.1 Where the Stage 3 Support for Study meeting requires a student to interrupt their studies, the process will require the student to demonstrate their ability to return to study. The Convenor will ask the student to provide the Deputy Secretary Students with documentary evidence in the form of a letter from a qualified medical doctor, specifically addressing the issues identified by the Support for Study meeting, and confirming that in the view of the doctor, the student is:

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- well enough to return to study because these issues are in their opinion sufficiently under control, or;
- is likely to be able to return to study as long as certain other adjustments are in place on their return to study;
- those who have taken a reasonable interruption from their studies as a consequence of an eating disorder should provide medical evidence at least one month prior to their return to determine whether they are able to resume their studies.

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The letter must be provided by a specified date in advance of the planned return to their studies (which will be variable based on the length of the interruption and the student).

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- 1.1.2 The Deputy Secretary Students is responsible for assessing this evidence and deciding whether the student is fit to return to their studies, taking advice from the Director of Student Wellbeing or other relevant staff as needed. If the Deputy Secretary Students decides that the evidence does not demonstrate that the student is fit to return to their studies, they will constitute a Support for Study meeting (based on the membership set out in 8.9 above) and ask them to decide whether to require the student to interrupt their studies for a further period. The student has the right to appeal any further decision of the Support for Study panel as set out in 8.19 above.

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- 1.1.3 The Deputy Secretary Students will aim to inform the student whether they can return to their studies normally no later than 1 month prior to the date that the student plans to return to their studies. The Deputy Secretary will copy this communication to the student's relevant contacts in the School/Residence Life including the Head of School and a Student Support lead contact, and the College Dean. The Director of Student Wellbeing (or nominee) will work with the School to ensure that a plan is put in place by the School to support the student back into studies and post-entry with their studies.

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12 REPORTING AND RECORDING

- 12.1 The Deputy Secretary Students is responsible for ensuring that an annual report is provided to Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee summarising the number of cases referred for consideration at Support for Study stage 3, together with data on:

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- the number of students required to interrupt studies;
- the number of student excluded from studies;
- the number of appeals against decisions of the policy; and
- the outcome of these appeals.

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13 DATA PROTECTION

- 13.1 University staff are governed by the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which defines all data relating to a person's physical or mental health as special category data. Staff involved in the administration of the Support for Study policy must recognise that they may receive special category data of a confidential nature in respect of the student, at any stage of this policy, and they must therefore ensure that all such data is handled, processed and stored in accordance with the requirements set out in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

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Deleted: Student members of any panel at stage 3 of the policy will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to being appointed to a panel or receiving any information with regard to a Support for Study case.¶

Support for Study Policy



Policy

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THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

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:

EqlA [Guidance and Checklist](#)

EqlA [Policy Statement](#)

EqlA 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:	Support for Study Policy
General background/aims of policy/practice:	This policy outlines the University's approach to supporting students who may be struggling with their studies due to health issues and are having an adverse impact on others or raising unsustainable support demands.
School/Dept:	Student Experience Services
Assessed by: (name & job title)	Rebecca Shade, Senior Policy & Projects Adviser, Students
Sign off by: (name & job title)	Lucy Evans, Deputy Secretary Students
Sign off date:	May 2025
Review date:	August 2026

B. Reason for EqlA	(check one)
New policy/ practice is proposed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change to existing policy/practice is proposed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Other (describe in Section D below)	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

C. Who will most be 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	<input type="checkbox"/>	Race (including ethnicity and nationality)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marriage and civil partnership¹	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religion or belief (including no religion or belief)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other characteristics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

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

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.

The University will seek to engage with students who are experiencing health concerns in a positive and constructive manner. However, there may be circumstances where the behaviour of a student is having an adverse impact on the health, safety, wellbeing and/or academic progress of others. Students in such circumstances will be encouraged to engage with support or may be required to do so. This policy is to be followed by staff where a student is giving significant cause for concern. It seeks to benefit all students by providing a holistic aspect to support involving University services.

This policy is intended to provide an effective framework to support the student, other students and members of staff in these circumstances, where attempts to provide the student with support have been exhausted, or the action needed is more acute and/or immediate. The policy applies to all students and to all aspects of their university life. As this policy applies to all students, it can be reasonably expected that any member of the student population might fall under a protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act. When a student going through Support for Study has a schedule of adjustments, or a disability registered with DLSS, staff from this service are always in attendance at SfS meetings to support both the student and the staff with their specialist knowledge.

The policy presented has undergone numerous revisions in response to feedback in consultations with Colleges who are responsible for the bulk of the work at stage 2. All other services involved in the policy such as Student Counselling, Disability & Learning Support, Residence Life and Student Wellbeing Service have fed into the updated content. The Student's Association have provided feedback particularly around students with protected characteristics.

This revised policy should not lead to discrimination or create barriers and will also consider the anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments when possible. This policy does not limit or prejudice any student based on the protected characteristics. Any decisions made in meetings are made by a number of senior staff in collaboration to support the student through their studies, or to leave the University in a supported manner. Mitigating impacts of the policy are taken by working on action plans in collaboration with the student and various relevant professionals.

All relevant characteristics should be considered when working through this policy and their needs taken account of. Staff working on the policy are aware of these as part of their roles and undertake various ad-hoc training in the EDI awareness space, as well as DLSS and student mental health training.

The University has undertaken benchmarking of similar policies and other UK higher education institutions and incorporated guidance from the Universities UK work in this policy area. The policy is in line with the status quo in this field.

The policy is considered and approved by the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC). APRC membership includes representation of the Students' Association, The Advice Place, the three Colleges and Senate.

This revised policy will be published on student web pages, and in the policy repository. Guidance for students will also be published. Staff will receive a package of guidance including a workflow, case studies, templates of emails and in person awareness sessions with Colleges and The Advice Place.

The policy can be made available in alternative formats for all groups free of charge.

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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome 3: Continue the policy or practice despite the potential for adverse impact, and which can be justified.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome 4: Stop the policy or practice as there are adverse effects which cannot be prevented/mitigated/or justified.	<input type="checkbox"/>

F. Action and Monitoring Describe any actions you will take to address the findings of this EqIA. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>The policy will be regularly reviewed every two academic years with staff and services involved, and with student and staff representatives from the Student's Association.</p> <p>Student Experience Services will also seek to gather feedback via EUSA/Advice Place and Colleges regarding the implementation of the revised Policy around a year after its introduction.</p>

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.



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Student Experience Services

Support for Study Workflow

This workflow is intended to guide staff through the stages of the Support for Study policy.

The application of this Policy will be to provide a supportive framework for a student to be able to manage their behaviour to be able to study and live at the University. This policy is intended to be supportive rather than disciplinary.

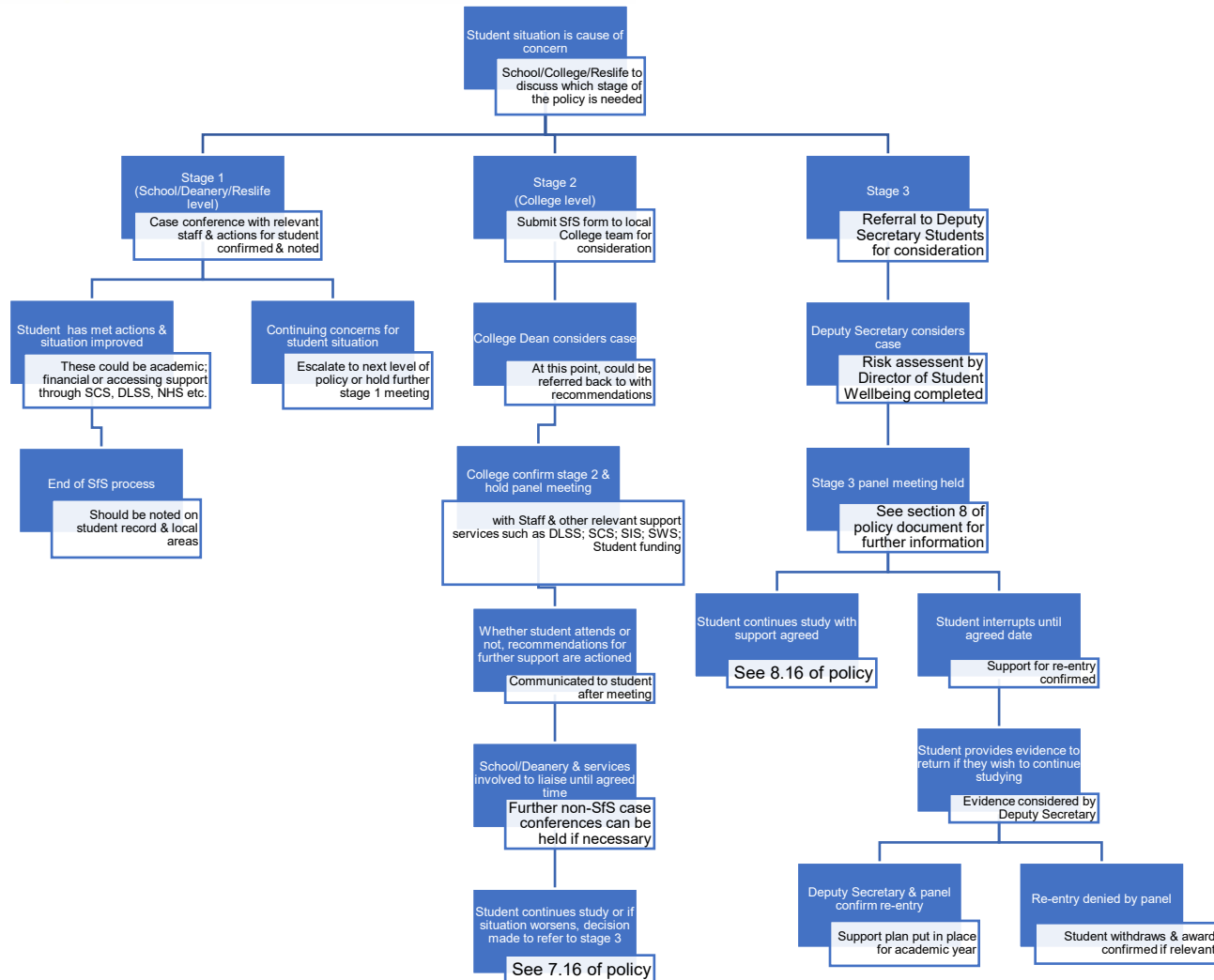
There are three stages to the policy. Under normal circumstances, staff should work sequentially through Stages 1 to 3, only going on to the next stage where the previous stages have not satisfactorily addressed the issues of concern. However, where the issues and their adverse impact are particularly severe, and the University has reasonable grounds to believe that earlier stages of the policy would not be effective in addressing these issues, or where the earlier stages may have been undertaken, the University can proceed to a later stage of the policy without working sequentially through earlier stages.

Note: Where the issues and their adverse impact are particularly severe, and the University has reasonable grounds to believe that earlier stages of the policy would not be effective in addressing these issues, or where the earlier stages may have been undertaken, the University can proceed to a later stage of the policy without working sequentially through earlier stages.

APRC 24/25 5D Appendix 3



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH Student Experience Services

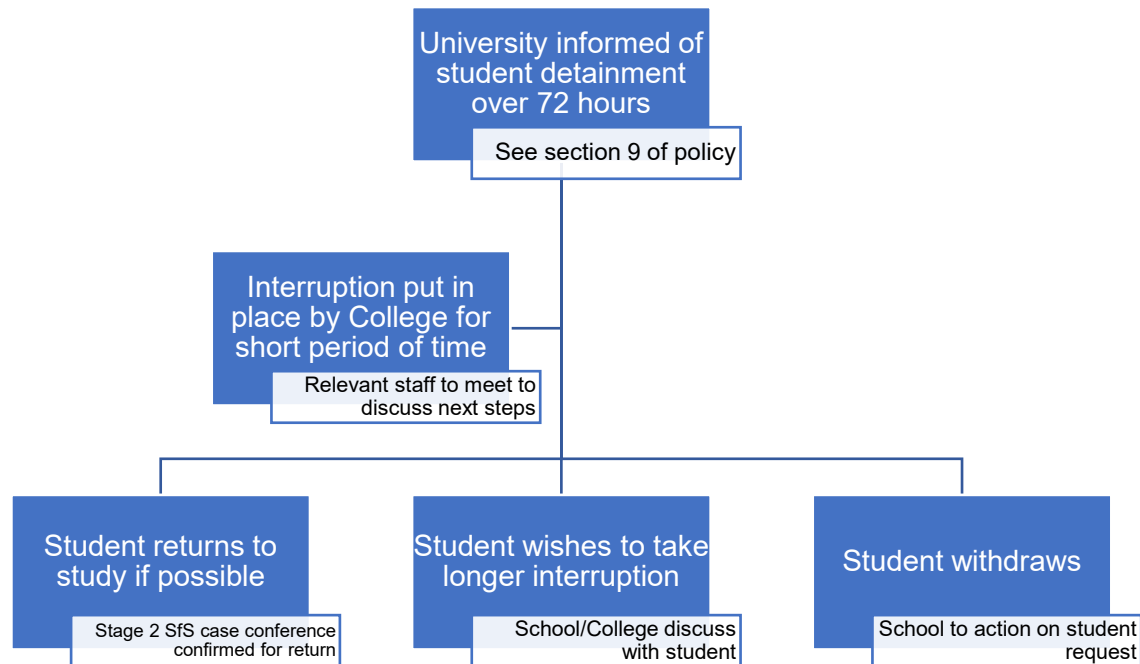


Note: Where the issues and their adverse impact are particularly severe, and the University has reasonable grounds to believe that earlier stages of the policy would not be effective in addressing these issues, or where the earlier stages may have been undertaken, the University can proceed to a later stage of the policy without working sequentially through earlier stages.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Student Experience Services

Support for Study Workflow for staff where student detained under Mental Health Act



Note: Where the issues and their adverse impact are particularly severe, and the University has reasonable grounds to believe that earlier stages of the policy would not be effective in addressing these issues, or where the earlier stages may have been undertaken, the University can proceed to a later stage of the policy without working sequentially through earlier stages.

Students – guide to policies

[If things go wrong | The University of Edinburgh](#)

Sometimes things are not straightforward and while you may never need to be aware of them, should things go wrong during your studies with us, we have policies and procedures that we will follow. This is just a summary please do read them in detail and ask staff any questions should you need to. There are different situations but, in some circumstances, we may use more than one of the policies. ...

Support for Study

There may be occasions when the University is concerned about a student and their behaviour and the impact this could have on their studies and those in the University community. If so, they may be contacted about the Support for Study policy and procedures.

This is a supportive process to work with the student to find ways to resolve or manage the issues that they may be facing through the services we have to support them.

If the student's behaviour becomes a disciplinary issue, then this is not the procedure used. Instead a student will be referred to the Code of Conduct process (see below).

Support for Study has three stages. On rare occasions, the student's case may be at Stage 2 or 3 straight away but most are supported at Stage 1.

Details are available at: [Support for study policy](#)

Fitness to Practise

Some professional programmes, accredited by external professional bodies, have requirements that students must meet in safe and appropriate standards of professional behaviour. This is to ensure a student is fit to practise in that profession. There are procedures in place to make sure that concerns around a student's fitness to practise are considered and may be investigated.

Programmes with these procedures are in two Colleges at the University. Details are available at:

[Fitness to Practise in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences](#)

[Fitness to Practise in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine](#)

Interruption of Studies

Authorised interruption of study is available for students who are unable to study for a while. This may be because of health or family problems for example. These should be discussed with the student's Student Adviser or Supervisor as soon as this may be needed and there is a form to complete for this request. Interruptions will be authorised when there is good reason.

An interruption of study may have an impact on those on visas, funding, such as scholarships, and on maximum time to complete their programme.

Details are available at [Interruption of Studies Policy](#)

Withdrawal and Exclusion

Any student may withdraw from their studies at the University at any point in the year. Before making this decision, students are recommended to speak with University staff. There is also a form to complete.

A student may be excluded from the University for unsatisfactory academic progress. If a Board of Examiners recommends this, a member of staff in the School will invite the student for interview and they can make a case for continuation. A decision is then made and communicated.

Students can also be excluded under the Fitness to Practice Policy, lapse of time of study, disciplinary, debt and non-matriculation.

Details are available at: [Withdrawal and exclusion from study procedure](#)

Conduct

It is important that we all work, study and live together as one University community. The University has expectations as to how students should behave (staff also have similar). When concerns about behaviour are raised the University follows procedures set out in the Code of Student Conduct to consider and investigate when a student's behaviour is not acceptable.

Students can complain about other students and about staff. They should use the Complaints process to do this. Details are available at: [Complaint Handling Procedure](#)

In some cases, the complaints can be resolved locally, without the formal procedure.

Some complaints are investigated but they are screened first to check the complaint comes under the criteria outlined in the Code of Conduct and the information provided suggests that there would be enough evidence to determine whether or not the misconduct has occurred.

There is support for students making a complaint and being complained about and investigated under the Code of Conduct.

Details are available at: [Code of Student Conduct](#)

Academic Misconduct

Academic integrity is critical to a student's academic studies. The University takes academic misconduct very seriously, and if a student is found to have given themselves an unfair advantage in their assessments, e.g. through plagiarism or collusion, then they may be asked to attend a meeting with the University to discuss their work which can lead to penalties being applied.

Details are available at: [Academic Misconduct Investigation procedures](#)

Exceptional Circumstances

Occasionally students may experience unexpected short-term circumstances which are exceptional for the student and beyond their student control, which could affect their ability to complete their assessments on time. A student needs to complete a simple application and if agreed, the outcome may be an extension, removal of a late penalty or others. There are reasons the university will accept, what they won't and circumstances where evidence is needed.

H/02/27/02

APRC 24/25 5D Appendix 4

Details are available at: [Exceptional Circumstances Policy](#)

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

22nd May 2025

Regulatory Framework for Award of Masters with Pathway Specialism

Description of paper

1. Paper outlines proposed credit loads for the award of pathway-based Masters Awards. Pathway based study involves students entering onto a single programme, taking a common core of courses, before developing a speciality through “pathway courses”. That speciality is then reflected in the final named degree award e.g. MSc/MA in Discipline X including specialism in Y.
2. In discussion with multiple Schools across Colleges it has been identified that development of regulations and processes to support this model of curriculum design is key to delivering on-going portfolio consolidation and is required for academic year 26/27.
3. Detailed work on wording of regulation and development of supporting processes and systems will be completed as part of L&T Workstream. To support this work, APRC are asked to comment on, and provide approval in principle for the minimum credit loadings and awarding criteria that may be applied to Pathway based Masters
4. This paper contributes to two aspects of Strategy 2030 :-
 - a. Multidisciplinary postgraduate education pathways will support flexible whole-life learning.
 - b. We will be a destination of choice, based on our clear “Edinburgh Offer”. All of our staff and students will develop here, whether they are from Leith, Lisbon, Lahore or Lilongwe.

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

5. To achieve a level of institutional consistency and deliver a transparent and equitable approach, APRC is asked to approve, in principle, the proposed credit loadings, and associated outline awarding process, for a new PGT model namely Masters with pathway specialism.

Background and context

6. This new model has been evolving in direct response to discussions with Schools and Colleges during recent evaluations of postgraduate programme portfolios as part of the College lead PGT portfolio review exercise in 24/25. The new model responds to a growing interest in, and requirement to, harmonise and consolidate programmes into disciplinary related and interconnected clusters. The pathway routes will enable and facilitate sub-disciplinary specialisms within a broader disciplinary offering and for this specialism to be reflected within the final awarded degree title.
7. Beyond facilitating sub-disciplinary specialism teaching, it is anticipated that the adoption of a single model and framework for this form of award will allow the development of consistent administrative processes, for example around the creation of streamlined Degree Programme Tables and the operation of Exam Boards, providing efficiency gains compared to the current situation where different programmes and Schools have developed their own workarounds to support the intended academic outcomes.
8. Whilst this paper has been principally developed in response to School requests identified as part of on-going PGT portfolio-review, the model presented represents the operationalisation of the “Pathways Based Masters” Degree Archetype previously presented to Senate as part of the Curriculum Transformation Project (CTP) PGT Framework. At their May 2024 meeting, Senate agreed the following statement with regards to the CTP PGT Framework, “Senate thanks the CTP board for the progress and requests Senate Academic Policy & Regulations Committee (APRC) take forward the technical implementation and detail of policy changes for final approval in a future Senate meeting.”
9. It is anticipated that any work required to further develop, and implement, the degree structure outlined below will be considered as part of the emerging Learning and Teaching Workstream outlined in the Principal’s email of 8th April 2025. This will ensure that any implementation of this approach is cognisant of other possible changes to PGT provision and fully integrated into appropriate discussions around resourcing.

Discussion

10. The use of specialist pathways within Masters programmes would be optional. It is intended to facilitate the recognition of coherent, identifiable, strands of sub discipline specialist teaching which, while relevant to students’ understanding, and presentation of their study, are not sufficiently large to merit a standalone degree programme. In addition, it is expected that the ability to award named

degrees based on an identified sub-set of credits will aid Schools in being able to more rapidly respond to new and emerging disciplinary fields; providing for a more dynamic and market responsive offering.

11. Currently, “clustered teaching” where several related programmes may share common courses has been facilitated through the provision of separate degree programmes. This has resulted in wide variations in terms of the number of credits associated with different specialities and variation in student experience between programmes. In addition, operating separate, but related programmes can make it difficult for Schools to understand, and articulate, the uptake of their “programmes” (since several related degrees might appear as separate entities but be better considered a single “programme”).
12. Attempts to use our current (single programme) Masters degree structure to deliver pathway-based teaching has resulted in duplication of administrative effort (for instance maintaining a range of separate, but strongly related, degree documentation and exam board guidance). The adoption of a specific degree model structure to support pathway-based teaching provides an opportunity to develop consistent processes and systems which should be expected to reduce administrative overheads associated with these programmes.
13. In order to provide maximum flexibility to Schools, and with an awareness that the required balance between core and specialist courses will be discipline specific, the intention is to identify an “institutional minimum” in terms of credit loading – the purpose of which is to provide a common understanding of the minimum amount of pathway specific specialist learning that would be expected to result in a named degree award.

Minimum Credit Loads

14. **APRC is asked to approve, in principle, the proposed minimum credit requirements for a Masters with Pathway specialism. Detailed regulatory wording and information on supporting processes/systems will be presented to APRC for further consideration at a later date.**
15. Based on a 180 credit Masters degree, it is proposed that a Masters with pathway offering will have:-
 - a. a minimum of 60 taught credits which are identified as “core” and shared between all awards
 - b. a minimum of 40 taught credits identified as belonging to the named pathway
 - c. where a dissertation, or capstone element is present, this will not be required to be pathway specific.
16. Defining the minimum credit loadings for the core and named pathway around taught credits ensures that the substantive nature of the learning outcomes of taught courses, and their associated assessment, will be consistent between students. In contrast, dissertation/capstone projects (where present) include greater elements of individual choice, may often change in their objectives (for

good academic reasons) during their completion; suggesting that they alone might not be an objective enough basis for demonstrating pathway specific knowledge. Although the minimum requirements for earning a named pathway are defined in terms of taught credits, this does not preclude students from writing a dissertation/capstone on a topic related to their pathway interests.

17. Core courses are expected to provide coverage of key knowledge and skills relevant to the discipline of the main degree, while the completion of specialist pathway taught credits should provide sufficient coverage of distinct material that Boards of Studies are content will demonstrate that students would have a level of knowledge appropriate to identify this knowledge as part of a degree award.
18. The advantage of specifying a minimum common core credit value is to allow subject areas to share and consolidate provision as well as allowing cohesive student cohorts to be formed across a broader range of postgraduate provision. Several Schools have noted student comments in PTES, and other surveys, expressing a strong desire to meet more students from other related programmes. In addition, this core will establish a strong foundation of critical skills, research methods (where required), and disciplinary content that likely links with a range of programmes that could extend beyond the specified specialist pathways routes.
19. A minimum of 40 credits of identified taught “pathway” courses represents just under a quarter of the full credit value of the award (for reference, “with degrees” at Undergraduate Level typically have around a quarter of their credits in the sub-disciplinary and/or specialist subject). A minimum of 40 taught pathway credits would therefore appear consistent with existing university thinking on the relative weight of disciplines to allow for their inclusion in a named award.
20. As discussed in paragraph 17, compared to a taught course, the content of a dissertation or capstone can often drift during its completion meaning that its focus on a specific specialism cannot be guaranteed. Concerns were also expressed that the offering of pathway specific dissertations might place unrealistic expectations on supervisors to have specific skills or knowledge. For these reasons the intention is that, where present, dissertations/capstone projects will be offered at the level of the main degree discipline, rather than associated with specific specialist pathways.

Awarding Criteria for Adding a Named Pathway to a Masters Degree Award

21. **APRC is asked to approve the proposed awarding criteria for adding a named pathway title to a Masters award. Detailed regulatory wording and information on supporting processes/systems will be presented to APRC for further consideration at a later date.**
22. It is proposed that the awarding of a Masters Degree with reference to a named pathway (i.e. the award of Degree X with Specialism in Y) should be a two-stage process.

- a. The award of the main degree (excluding any pathway) would be calculated in line with existing Taught Assessment Regulations (i.e. pass 80 out of 120 taught credits with a mean of at least 50.0, and pass any designated dissertation/capstone with a mark of at least 50.0. The award of merit or distinction will also be calculated at this point in line with existing regulations.
 - b. Once a student has qualified for their main award, the pathway will be added to the award title if the student has passed at least a minimum of 40 credits worth of designated taught pathway courses with a mark of at least 50.00 (for the purpose of this calculation no resits will be allowed).
23. Given a minimum of 40 taught pathway specific credits is required to represent a named pathway (and given our current regulations allow for up to 40/120 taught credits to be awarded by credit on aggregate), it is considered that allowing the addition of a named pathway to the degree certificate, without effectively making them must pass, represented a risk to the academic integrity of the degree (since a student could receive a designation despite failing all of the relevant credits).
24. The proposal not to allow resits for pathway courses where a student has received a course mark below 50.0 (which contrasts with the resit entitlement offered with regards to Masters dissertations) reflects how the dissertation is core to receiving a Masters award, while the identification of a pathway is additional to the award of the degree, and as such the impact of failure on a student is likely to be lower (i.e. a student who has a mark below 50 for a pathway course will, subject to meeting the University's current regulations, still receive a Masters degree albeit without the inclusion of the pathway name).
25. The introduction of a second stage to the awarding decision introduces additional complexity for Boards of Examiners compared to current practice. However, given the relatively small number of credits which would represent a specialist pathway, and how the pathway can appear explicitly in the degree award, it is considered that awarding a named degree without these additional checks could call into question the integrity of not only these awards, but the University's academic standards more generally.
26. While the above concerns provide a strong justification for the two-stage awarding process (outlined in paragraph 22) uptake of the flexibility offered by this proposal is only likely to be successful if the administrative overhead associated with these decisions is minimised (both in terms of calculating the award, and in terms of updating the text that appears on the degree certificate). Addressing these concerns will be a central part of further discussions within the Learning and Teaching Workstream concerning the next steps for this work.

The Award of PGDip with Pathway Specialism

27. Although the above proposals related to the award of Masters with a Specialist Pathway, the concentration on taught credits may enable the same criteria to be applied to the award of PGDip with a Specialist Pathway. Further consideration

will be given to possible demand for this option, and to any regulatory implications. An update on this issue will be provided to APRC in due course.

Resource implications

- 28. Resource implications will initially focus on the development of the detailed policy and regulations and these requirements will inform consideration and evaluation of system and process requirements. It is anticipated that this will be overseen and supported by the Learning and Teaching workstream.
- 29. Input from Academic Quality and Standards with support from College QA and Governance teams will be required for policy and regulations and it is anticipated that suitable system and process design will require input from Student Systems and Schools.
- 30. Resourcing is required for Colleges and Schools intending to adopt this programme model to extend curriculum review and programmatic re-design, model course intake and planning and complete necessary document preparation and programme approvals.
- 31. Resourcing for recruitment, admissions and marketing teams to develop clear protocols for marketing pathways, intake target setting and offer management.

Risk management

- 32. This work will be undertaken as part of the new Learning and Teaching Workstream, with progress monitoring and risk management undertaken as part of the governance of that workstream.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

33. n/a

Equality & diversity

- 34. A full EqIA will be completed as part of planned work and presented alongside forthcoming work on detailed regulatory changes.

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

- 35. Should APRC approve the proposals included in this paper, the T&L workstream will assume responsibility for overseeing the detailed policy and systems work required for implementation. Detailed policy wording (and information on supporting systems/processes) is expected to return to APRC during Semester 1 of Academic Year 25/26.
- 36. Colleges will work with Academic Quality and Standards and Student Systems to inform Schools of what provision is expected to be available for academic year 26/27.

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12th May 2025

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Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**22 May 2025****Updates to the Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure****Description of paper**

1. The paper proposes amendments to the Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure, following the scheduled periodic review of this policy document.

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. APRC is asked to approve the proposed amendments to the Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure. Should APRC approve the proposed amendments, the revised policy would come into use from Semester 1, 2025/26.

Background and context

3. Academic Quality and Standards (formerly Academic Services) carry out periodic reviews of all academic policies to ensure they remain fit for purpose, in line with a schedule agreed by APRC. The Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure (hereafter, the Procedure) is scheduled for review during the current session.
4. As part of the review of the Procedure, Academic Quality and Standards initially consulted Colleges regarding areas for potential development of the Procedure. Based on this initial feedback, we produced a revised draft of the Procedure, which was shared with all Schools, EUSA, Student Recruitment and Admissions, Student Immigration Service, and relevant support services in order to gather feedback. The final version of the Policy, which is presented for approval in Appendix 1, is designed to take account of the feedback received via consultation.

Discussion

5. The table below provides details of the amendments proposed to the Procedure, which is provided in Appendix 1. **APRC is asked to approve the amended version of the Policy, for introduction from the beginning of the 2025/26 session.**

Section (amended policy)	Amendment
3	Moved up from the section on Readmission the statement that “After withdrawal or exclusion an individual is no longer a student of the University and loses student status and access to University’s services and facilities”.
4	Added reference to relevant areas maintaining records of where authority to make decisions has been delegated.
6	Reporting changes in visa status: (Previously in section 28) Given that this point applies to all withdrawals and exclusions, this has been moved to the start of the policy. Previous reference to the “Compliance Manager” has been amended to the Student Immigration Service due to a change in role titles.
7	Reporting to funders: New section to clarify that the relevant College has responsibility for reporting withdrawal or exclusion of students to funding bodies, in cases where the University administers the scholarship or studentship. The responsibility may be delegated to Schools where appropriate.
10	Withdrawals: New section to advise students that, prior to withdrawing, they should enquire about their eligibility for an exit award and whether or not they would be eligible to apply for readmission, with reference to the section on readmission.
11	Notification of withdrawal: It remains desirable for students to complete a Withdrawal Form before they withdraw, to support record-keeping regarding reasons for withdrawal. However, many students do not complete the form, and it is not practicable to make this a requirement. As such, the Procedure now indicates that students must indicate their intention to withdraw using their University email account, but that they should be encouraged to complete a Withdrawal Form wherever possible.
13	A. Exclusion for unsatisfactory academic progress (Taught and Masters by Research programmes) Interviews for exclusion: Amended wording to define what ‘making a case for continuation’ would consist of in the context of an interview for exclusion. The proposed wording aligns with that of appeals, e.g. when appealing a Board of Examiners decision.

14	<p>Interview outcomes: Early consultation has highlighted that, while it is useful to hold these interviews, some of the existing outcomes (i-iv) of the interview are problematic. Outcome (i) to allow the student to progress means that the individual member of staff conducting the interview would be overturning a decision ratified by a Board of Examiners. This is not appropriate governance, and also does not align with the process that would take place if a student were to appeal a progression decision. In an appeal case, the Student Appeal Committee considers the new information and, if it deems that this was directly relevant to the student's academic performance, and was not available sooner for good reason, the decision is referred back to the Board of Examiners for reconsideration. The proposed amendment to outcome (i) aims to align with the appeals process and ensure that decisions are made in a more consistent way, and by the relevant body.</p>
17	<p>We have proposed to remove the previous outcome (iii), which permitted students liable for exclusion to withdraw voluntarily. Allowing the option to withdraw in these circumstances is problematic, in particular because students who are excluded for this reason are not allowed to apply for readmission to the same programme. Allowing the option to withdraw at this stage therefore risks students with similar circumstances being treated differently.</p> <p>Terms attached to outcome: Propose to remove the wording "and any of the terms attached" in relation to the outcome of the interview. The terms applicable which may result in exclusion should be those applicable to all students, rather than setting terms applicable only to individual students. If the outcome were to be appealed, any attached terms different from the standard terms could lead to the appeal being upheld.</p>
20	<p>B. Exclusion for unsatisfactory academic progress (Doctoral or MPhil programmes)</p>
21	<p>Amended in line with 13, above.</p>
24	<p>Added a section outlining the available outcomes, in line with section 14. Where continuation of study on the same, or a different programme, is recommended (outcomes i and ii), this will be referred to the relevant Postgraduate Director or Head of the Graduate School, as the authority responsible for the Annual Review recommendation.</p>
26	<p>C. Exclusion for non-attendance or non-engagement</p> <p>Initial attempts to contact student: Proposed text added to section 26 to indicate that Schools will attempt to contact students who are not</p>

<p>27</p> <p>29</p>	<p>engaging with their programme, offering support as appropriate and advising them of the risk of exclusion for non-engagement. This is standard practice within Schools, but capturing it in the Procedure communicates that a supportive approach will be taken in the first instance in cases involving non-engagement.</p> <p>Students with sponsored visas: Amended and simplified text in section 27 regarding the University's responsibility for monitoring attendance and engagement for visa-sponsored students.</p> <p>Interview outcomes: Outcomes have been reordered to align with the order of outcomes in sections A and B. We propose to retain outcome (i) to permit the student to continue their studies, given that this decision would not be overruling the decision of any other body, unlike exclusion cases due to unsatisfactory academic progression in sections A and B. We propose to also keep outcome (ii) to permit the student to withdraw, given that readmission is possible following exclusion due to non-attendance, and the impact on visa status would be the same for students who withdraw as for students who are excluded.</p>
<p>32</p>	<p>D. Exclusion under Fitness to Practise procedures</p> <p>Links added to Fitness to Practise procedures for the two Colleges that have these (CMVM and CAHSS).</p>
<p>33-35</p>	<p>E. Exclusion for non-matriculation</p> <p>Some of the detail within this section has been removed, given that the matriculation process does not need to be defined within this policy. The proposed wording in sections 33-35 has been agreed with the Head of Student Record Operations in order to ensure that the key information is retained.</p>
<p>36</p> <p>39-40</p> <p>41</p>	<p>F. Exclusion for lapse of time</p> <p>Concessions: Text has been added to clarify that students are able to request a concession for an extension to the period of study from their College, in line with the Degree Regulations and Study Period Table.</p> <p>Interviews for exclusion: We have added a section requiring Colleges to offer the student an interview prior to exclusion. This is in line with the procedure for other categories of exclusion, and consultation suggests that interviews already take place in most of these cases. Outcome (i) would entail supporting a concession for an extension to the period of study, which would need to be approved by the relevant College Committee or APRC. The other outcome is exclusion.</p>

	Reinstatement following lapse of time: We have added a section to include reference to the potential for PGR students to request reinstatement in order to permit the examination of a completed thesis, in line with PG Degree Regulation 45.
44	<p>I. Exclusion due to lack of visa permission</p> <p>This new category of exclusion has been added in order to reflect the fact that, in the event that a student's visa is cancelled or curtailed by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), the University would need to exclude the student due to not having a valid visa. This includes cases where a student needs a new or amended Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate and this is not approved by UKVI. The Student Immigration Service have confirmed they are happy with the wording for this section.</p>
45	<p>J. Exclusion due to termination of supervision</p> <p>This new category of exclusion due to termination of supervision has been added in order to align with PG Degree Regulation 43: "in the event that the College considers that it is necessary to make changes to supervisory arrangements, and the College has not been able to provide alternative supervision despite having undertaken reasonable endeavours, the University may consider terminating supervision of the student as set out in the procedure for termination of supervision of Postgraduate Research students."</p> <p>Addition of this category does not represent a change in policy, or increase the likelihood of any student being subject to exclusion for this reason.</p>
46	<p>K. Exclusion under the Support for Study Policy</p> <p>The proposed amendments to the Support for Study Policy include an outcome at Stage 3 under the procedure where a student may be excluded from the University. Should the amendments to the Support for Study Policy be approved, the wording proposed here would be included in the Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure.</p> <p>An assessment of the risk, resource, and equality and diversity implications of the proposed change to the Support for Study Policy is provided with the paper relating to the amendments to that Policy.</p>
47	<p>Appeals</p> <p>This section has been amended to clarify that exclusions for non-matriculation are not open to appeal, in line with the Student Appeal Regulations.</p>

	<p>Three further categories of exclusion are proposed as being outwith the scope of appeals, given that these types of exclusion do not relate to a decision made by a Board of Examiners or similar body, but rather to an objective fact regarding a student's status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exclusion due to lapse of time - Exclusion due to debt - Exclusion due to changes in visa status <p>For each of these categories, the policy indicates what recourse students have to challenge their exclusion. Proposed amendments to the Student Appeal Regulations to reflect this position are covered in a separate paper to be considered at this meeting.</p> <p>Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals has replaced Academic Services as the team who handle appeals.</p>
49-53	<p>Readmission</p> <p>This section has been extensively redrafted to provide greater clarity about when students who have been excluded from study or withdrawn voluntarily may be eligible to apply to return to study, either on the same, or a different programme. The wording proposed does not entail any change in policy, but directs as relevant to the underlying policy elsewhere within the document, or in the Degree Regulations.</p>

Resource implications

6. The table in the discussion section covers any relevant resource implications of the proposed amendments to the Policy.

Risk Management

7. The table in the discussion section covers any relevant risks presented by the proposed amendments to the Policy.

Equality & Diversity

8. The proposed amendments to the Policy are anticipated to provide a number of benefits from an equality and diversity point of view. A revised Equality Impact Assessment for the Policy is presented in Appendix 2.

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

9. The amended Policy would be introduced for the beginning of the 2025/26 session. Information about the amendments to the Policy would be provided in Academic Quality and Standards New and Updated Policies email

communication during the summer, and covered in briefing sessions for Schools and Colleges at the beginning of the new session.

10. Academic Quality and Standards would discuss with EUSA and Communications and Marketing what approach to communication with students regarding the amended Policy would be most beneficial. This will likely include coverage in the Student Newsletter.

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Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure



Summary

The Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure applies to circumstances where a student voluntarily wishes to leave the University permanently, and also circumstances where a student is required to leave the University permanently. This document provides information about withdrawal from studies, the different types of exclusion from study, and the process relating to each. It also provides information about appeals against exclusion, and readmission to study following withdrawal or exclusion.

Scope: Mandatory Procedure

The procedure applies to all students who withdraw or are excluded from the University, and to University staff managing this procedure.

Contact

Academic ~~Quality and Standards~~

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Document control

Dates	Version Approved: 30.05.19	Effective date: 01.08.19	Equality impact assessment: 13.11.14	Last Reviewed: 09.06.23	Next Review: 2024/25
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Approving authority

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

Assessment regulations, principles and guidelines
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations/assessment

Alternative format

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Keywords

Withdrawal, exclusion, permanent withdrawal, voluntary withdrawal



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Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure

Introduction

1. This procedure is designed to:
 - (i) state the obligations on both the University and its students within the withdrawal and exclusion processes;
 - (ii) provide clear guidance on the process to be followed when a student has failed to satisfy the criteria for progression;
 - (iii) take into account the requirements of UK immigration legislation.
2. The following terminology is used:
 - (i) withdrawal from studies - this is a voluntary decision by the student to terminate their studies at the University.
 - (ii) exclusion from studies - this is where a student is required to leave the University. This may be for academic or other reasons (see **8-29** below).
3. After withdrawal or exclusion an individual is no longer a student of the University and loses student status and access to University's services and facilities.
4. This procedure makes reference to the College, School and to the Head of College or Head of School. It is for Colleges, Schools and their Heads to determine and maintain records of local arrangements for the delegation of their authority.
5. There are separate procedures for interruption of studies (which is a temporary suspension of studies) defined in the Authorised Interruption of Study policy.
Authorised Interruption of Study Policy
6. Where a student holding a sponsored student visa withdraws or is excluded from the University for any reason, the Student Immigration Service will report the change in student status to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and end the sponsorship of their visa.
7. Where a student is in receipt of a scholarship or studentship which is administered by the University, and the student withdraws or is excluded from the University for any reason, the College will report the change in student status to the relevant funding body. The College may delegate the reporting responsibility to the School where appropriate.

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Withdrawal from studies



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Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure

8. Any student may withdraw from their studies at the University at any point in the year. However, a student may not voluntarily withdraw after the University has decided to exclude the student.

9. Before applying to withdraw, the student is strongly advised to consult their Student Adviser/ Programme Director/ Supervisor, or the Students' Association Advice Place, in order to consider the implications of withdrawal. These include matters such as: access to the University's services and facilities; financial issues (for example scholarships, fees, external financial issues relating to the Student Loans Company/Student Awards Agency for Scotland etc.); student visas; exit awards; readmission.

10. Prior to withdrawal, students should also seek advice on whether they are eligible for an exit award, and whether or not they would be eligible to apply for readmission under the Degree Regulations (see sections 49-53).

11. Students wishing to withdraw must confirm their intention in writing using their University email account. Students should be encouraged where possible to complete the standard University form (Withdrawal Form – Student).
Forms for students

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Exclusion from studies

A. Exclusion for unsatisfactory academic progress (Taught and Masters by Research programmes)

12. The criteria for progression on a programme of study depend on the nature of the programme and / or year of study. These will be contained in the University's assessment and degree regulations (see the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study) and Degree Programme Tables. There may be additional information within College or School guidance, or in course and programme handbooks. This policy should be read in conjunction with those documents.

13. Taught Assessment Regulation 47. Publication of results sets out responsibilities for communicating final programme outcomes to students where they have failed to meet programme requirements:
Assessment regulations

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Provisions relating to Masters by Research students are covered in the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research degrees:
Assessment regulations



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Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure

Where the relevant Board of Examiners has recommended a student for exclusion from studies for unsatisfactory academic progress, the Head of School (or delegated authorising officer) will invite the student for interview. The interview provides an opportunity for the student to share information directly relevant to the quality of their academic performance, which for good reason was not available to the Board of Examiners when their decision was taken.

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14. The interview may be carried out in person, or electronically (e.g. by video call). The outcome of the interview will be one of the following:

(i) The Board of Examiners will be asked to reconsider its decision regarding progression to the next year (or stage) of study in light of the new information shared during the interview;

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(ii) The student cannot progress to the next year of study on their current programme but is permitted to continue their studies under other options permitted in the University regulations (e.g. part-time, or full-time repeat year);

(iii) The student will be excluded from the University. In such cases, the student will be awarded an exit award, where they are eligible.

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15. The full range of options does not apply in every case, as it may depend on the year and nature of the programme and the status of the student. Exclusion from studies will only be invoked after other available options have been considered.

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16. Where the student does not attend the interview, the Head of School (or delegated authorising officer) will proceed to make a decision on the case.

17. The Head of School (or delegated authorising officer) will decide which option to apply, and will inform the student in writing (via the student's University email account) of the decision as soon as possible after the interview. The communication should set out clearly the decision reached.

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18. The Head of School (or delegated authorising officer) will send a copy of the communication to the Student Adviser, Cohort Lead, and Programme Director (where relevant). The School must advise Student Systems of any changes to the student's programme, mode of study, or exclusion via the online student programme change form in EUCLID.

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B. Exclusion for unsatisfactory academic progress (Doctoral or MPhil programmes)

19. Students are subject to annual progression review under the terms set out in the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees. Following an annual progression review, the relevant Postgraduate Director or Head of the Graduate School may determine that a student has made unsatisfactory academic progress and



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Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure

recommend to the College Postgraduate Committee that the student be excluded from study.

Assessment regulations

20. The Convener of the College Postgraduate Committee (or delegated authorising officer) will inform the student that exclusion from study for unsatisfactory academic progress has been recommended, and offer the student the opportunity to attend an interview. The interview provides an opportunity for the student to share information directly relevant to the quality of their academic performance and which for good reason was not available to College Postgraduate Committee when their decision was taken.

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21. The interview may be carried out electronically (e.g. by video call). The outcome of the interview will be one of the following:

(i) The relevant Postgraduate Director or Head of the Graduate School will be asked to reconsider its decision regarding progression to the next year of study in light of the new information shared during the interview;

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(ii) The relevant Postgraduate Director or Head of the Graduate School will be asked to consider the student's eligibility for registration to a different research degree, in light of the new information shared during the interview;

(iii) The student will be excluded from the University. In such cases, the student's eligibility for an exit award will be explored.

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22. Where the student does not attend the interview, the Convener of the College Postgraduate Committee (or delegated authorising officer) will proceed to make a decision on the case.

23. The Convener of the College Postgraduate Committee (or delegated authorising officer) will determine whether to exclude the student from study, or to consider one of the alternative options available to it under the provisions of the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees.

24. The Convener of the College Postgraduate Committee (or delegated authorising officer) will inform the student in writing (via the student's University email account) of the decision as soon as possible following the interview. This communication should clearly set out the decision reached.

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25. The College is responsible for sending a copy of the communication to the student's Supervisor. The College must advise Student Systems of any changes to the student's programme, mode of study, or exclusion via the online student programme change form in EUCLID.

C. Exclusion for non-attendance or non-engagement



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26. Students must attend and participate as required in all aspects of their programme of study. The Degree Programme Table or programme handbook sets out programme requirements for engagement. In cases where a student is not meeting the requirements for attendance and engagement, Schools will attempt to make contact with the student following the standard protocols and explain that continued non-attendance or non-engagement may result in exclusion from the University. Where appropriate, students will be referred to relevant student support services. Students who continue to not meet the requirements for attendance and engagement will then be referred for exclusion and invited for an interview with the Head of College (or delegated authorising officer).

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27. Students holding sponsored student visas should be aware that the University is required to monitor their attendance and engagement with their studies as part of its responsibilities for sponsoring student visas, as defined in the International Student Attendance and Engagement Policy.
International Student Attendance and Engagement Policy

28. The interview may be carried out in person, or electronically (e.g. by video call). Where the student does not attend the interview, the Head of College (or delegated authorising officer) will proceed to make a decision on the case.

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29. The outcome of the interview will be one of the following:

- (i) The student is permitted to continue their studies under options permitted in University regulations;
- (ii) The student may voluntarily withdraw from studies. This option will not be available if the student has already been notified in writing of exclusion from studies;
- (iii) The student will be excluded due to non-attendance or non-engagement. In such cases, the student's eligibility for an exit award will be explored.

Deleted: (i) The student is excluded due to non-attendance or non-engagement. In such cases, the student's eligibility for an exit qualification will be explored; ¶

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30. The Head of College (or delegated authorising officer) will decide which option to apply, and will inform the student in writing (via the student's University email account) of the decision as soon as possible after the interview. The communication should set out clearly the decision reached.

Deleted: and any terms attached

Deleted: Students holding Sponsored Student visas.¶

¶
The International Student Attendance and Engagement Policy sets out the University's responsibilities as a sponsor of international students within the UK immigration system, which includes the requirement to evidence Sponsored Student student attendance and engagement at key points in the session. The policy ensures that the University has relevant guidance for staff and mitigates risk related to the University's sponsor licence by ensuring that we have robust student attendance and engagement procedures in place: ¶
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/internationalstudentattendanceandengagementpolicy.pdf> ¶

31. The Head of College (or delegated authorising officer) will send a copy of the communication to the Student Adviser/ Programme Director/ Supervisor. The College must advise Student Systems of any changes to the student's programme, mode of study, or exclusion via the online student programme change form in EUCLID.

Deleted: <#>Where a student holding a Sponsored Student visa is excluded or withdraws from the University for any reason, the Compliance Manager (Student Administration) will report the student to the Home Office and end the sponsorship of their visa. ¶



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Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure

D. Exclusion under Fitness to Practise procedures

32. In line with the provisions of the University's Degree Regulations, Colleges may exclude students who have failed to meet Fitness to Practise requirements for their programmes. Programme Handbooks include information regarding Fitness to Practise requirements for programmes, where such requirements exist. Colleges with these requirements publicise procedures relating to Fitness to Practise: Fitness to Practise (College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) Fitness to Practise (College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine)

E. Exclusion for non-matriculation

33. Students must complete matriculation at the start of their programme, and then again at the start of each new academic year or year of study. Any student who has not completed the matriculation process within the stipulated timeframe, will be excluded from the University due to non-matriculation.

34. In order to matriculate:

- New students must have started matriculation within two weeks of their start date, and completed matriculation within five weeks of their start date. This includes providing the appropriate documentation at the start of their studies, including immigration documentation and programme-specific admissions documentation where required.
- Continuing students must have started matriculation within two weeks of the anniversary of their start date, and completed matriculation within five weeks of the anniversary of their start date. The anniversary date is the date on which the student formally starts their next year of study. This will normally be the equivalent point in the new session to their original start date on their programme, but may be adjusted for students who are returning from an authorised interruption of study.

35. Further details on matriculation are available from Student Systems: Matriculation

F. Exclusion for lapse of time

36. A student who is past the maximum end date of their studies will be excluded by the University. Students may request a concession for an extension to the period of study from their College before their maximum end date. Extensions to the period of study are exceptional and must be authorised by the College, in line with the Degree Regulations and the Study Period Table.

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Deleted: New students:¶

¶ Matriculation consists of three components: (i) registration, which includes international check-in where relevant; (ii) confirmation of attendance; (iii) full admission (i.e. adhering to other related admissions requirements).¶

¶ www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/student/matriculation/index.htm¶

¶ In order to matriculate, a new student must:¶

¶ (i) within two weeks of their start date, be "registered" or have their "attendance confirmed";¶

¶ Deleted: (ii) within five weeks of their start date, have completed both of these matriculation activities;¶

Deleted: failing to meet these requirements will be deemed not to have commenced

Deleted: their studies

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Deleted: and have their record cancelled

Deleted: A new student will not be fully matriculated until they

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Deleted: Continuing students:¶

¶ Matriculation consists of two components: (i) registration; (ii) confirmation of attendance.¶

¶ In order to matriculate, a continuing student must:¶

¶ Within two weeks of their anniversary date¹, be "registered" or have their "attendance confirmed";¶

¶ Within five weeks of their anniversary date, have completed both of these matriculation actions.¶

Deleted: Any student failing to meet these requirements will be deemed not to have resumed their studies, and will be excluded from the University and have their record cancelled.¶

Deleted: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-systems/support-guidance/students/matriculation/matriculation-intro>¶

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Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure

37. A postgraduate research student who does not submit their thesis by the deadline specified by the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees will be excluded. Where the College Postgraduate Committee recommends that the student make corrections or substantial revisions to the thesis following oral examination, they will provide the student with a new deadline for submission.

38. A postgraduate research student who has been examined but has not carried out the required corrections or re-submission within one month of the maximum timescale stipulated by the relevant College Postgraduate Committee will be excluded.

39. Before such an exclusion is enforced, the School or College will seek to make contact with the student to inform them of the exclusion procedure and invite them to an interview, which may be carried out in person, or electronically (e.g. by video call). Where the student does not attend the interview, the Head of College (or delegated authorising officer) will proceed to make a decision on the case.

Deleted: University

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40. The outcome of the interview will be one of the following:

- (i) To support the request for a concession for an extension to the period of study;
- (ii) The student will be excluded due to lapse of time. In such cases, the student's eligibility for an exit award will be explored.

Deleted: <#>The student may voluntarily withdraw from studies. This option will not be available if the student has already been notified in writing of exclusion from studies;¶

41. As set out in Postgraduate Degree Regulation 45, postgraduate research students who have been excluded for lapse of time or have withdrawn voluntarily before the end of their period of study may ask the College to reinstate their registration at a later date in order to permit the examination of a completed thesis (see section 52).

Deleted: <#>Postgraduate research students who fail to submit a thesis by the deadline specified by the regulations will be excluded.¶

¶
A research postgraduate who has been examined but not carried out the required corrections or re-submission within one month of the maximum timescale stipulated by the relevant College Postgraduate Committee will be excluded.¶

G. Exclusion for misconduct offence

Deleted: disciplinary

42. The University's Student Discipline Committee may impose permanent exclusion of a student from the University, with no eligibility for readmittance to the University on any course or degree programme. The Code of Student Conduct sets out expectations for student behaviour and the procedures the University uses to resolve matters when students' behaviour is unacceptable.
[Code of Student Conduct](#)

H. Exclusion for debt

43. Exclusion can also result from non-payment of any debt to the University as detailed in the University's Fees Policy.
[Fees Policy](#)

Deleted: [Policy on Collection of Student Fees and Related Charges...](#)



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Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure

I. Exclusion due to lack of visa permission

44. Where a student has a University-sponsored student visa and their visa is cancelled or curtailed by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) for reasons outwith the University's control, they will be excluded in order to comply with the University's UKVI sponsorship duty, unless they have an alternative visa to study in the UK or the University agrees that they can continue to study from abroad. This includes cases where a student needs a new or amended Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate and this is not approved by UKVI.

J. Exclusion due to termination of supervision

45. As set out in Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulation 43, in the event that the College considers that it is necessary to make changes to supervisory arrangements, and the College has not been able to provide alternative supervision despite having undertaken reasonable endeavours, the University may terminate supervision of the student as set out in the procedure for termination of supervision of Postgraduate Research students and exclude the student.
Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study

K. Exclusion under the Support for Study Policy

46. As set out in the Support for Study Policy, a case at Stage 3 under the Policy can lead to a student being permanently excluded from the University.
Support for Study Policy

Appeals against exclusion

47. Individuals who have been excluded, may lodge an appeal against the exclusion through the normal University appeal procedure, except where exclusion was under the following categories:

- a. Exclusion due to non-matriculation: Individuals should contact their School in the first instance, or raise a complaint via the Complaint Handling Procedure.
- b. Exclusion due to lapse of time: Individuals should contact their School in the first instance, or raise a complaint via the Complaint Handling Procedure.
- c. Exclusion due to debt: Individuals should contact the Fees and Student Support team.
- d. Exclusion due to lack of visa permission: Individuals should ensure that they have the necessary visa in place if they would like to be considered for readmission.

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Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure

Appeals should be sent directly to Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals at the email address academic.appeals@ed.ac.uk. Details of the appeal procedure can be found at: [Appeals](#)

48. For individuals who are excluded for [misconduct](#), details of the discipline procedures can be found in the [Code of Student Conduct](#):
[Code of Student Conduct](#)

Readmission

49. A former student who has been excluded from the University due to a misconduct offence under the Code of Student Conduct (see section G) is not eligible to apply to return to the University on any course or degree programme.

50. Former students who have been excluded from the University for any other reason, or who have withdrawn from the University voluntarily, may be eligible to apply to return to the University.

Reinstatement to the same programme of study

51. Students who have been excluded from study due to unsatisfactory academic progress (see sections A and B), under fitness to practise procedures (see section D), or due to termination of supervision (see section J) are not eligible to apply for reinstatement on the same programme of study subsequently.

52. Where students have been excluded from study for other reasons, or have withdrawn voluntarily, the Undergraduate Degree Regulations (33, 58) and Postgraduate Degree Regulations (45, 60) set out conditions under which former students may be permitted to apply to return to their programme of study.

Readmission to a different programme

53. With the exception of students excluded from the University due to a misconduct offence (see section G), former students who have been excluded from the University or withdrawn voluntarily will be eligible to apply for a programme of study at the University using the normal application process.

Deleted: Appeals should be sent directly to Academic Services at the email address academic.appeals@ed.ac.uk ¶

Deleted: ¶

Deleted: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/appeals>

Deleted: disciplinary reasons

Deleted: , including the appeal procedures

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Deleted: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline ¶

Moved up [1]: After withdrawal or exclusion an individual is no longer a student of the University and loses student status and access to University's services and facilities.

Deleted: After withdrawal or exclusion, a former student wishing to be considered for return to study at the University must go through the normal application procedures. The terms for reinstatement for postgraduate research students who have been excluded due to lapse of time are set out in Postgraduate Degree Regulation 45 Request for Reinstatement on Doctoral and MPhil degrees.

Deleted: [Assessment regulations](#) ¶

Deleted: <#>Students who have been excluded due to a disciplinary offence, due to fraudulent or incorrect admissions information, or due to unsatisfactory academic progress, will not be eligible for readmission. ¶

Deleted: A former PhD student who has been excluded through lapse of time is entitled to ask the College to reinstate their registration at a later date to permit examination of a completed thesis. A decision as to whether or not a candidate should be reinstated will be taken by the College, and factors such as the passage of time and its implications for the topic of study will be taken into account. Approval of such a reinstatement is exceptional and attracts a fee.

Withdrawal and
Exclusion from Studies Procedure



January 2025,

Deleted: 25 May 2023



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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:

EqlA [Guidance and Checklist](#)

EqlA [Policy Statement](#)

EqlA 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:	Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure
General background/aims of policy/practice:	The Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure applies to circumstances where a student voluntarily wishes to leave the University permanently, and also circumstances where a student is required to leave the University permanently.
School/Dept:	Academic Quality and Standards, Registry Services
Assessed by: (name & job title)	Cristina Matthews, Sarah Barnard, Adam Bunni
Sign off by: (name & job title)	
Sign off date:	
Review date:	2029/30

B. Reason for EqlA	(check one)
New policy/ practice is proposed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change to existing policy/practice is proposed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (describe in Section D below)	<input type="checkbox"/>

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	<input type="checkbox"/>	Race (including ethnicity and nationality)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marriage and civil partnership¹	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religion or belief (including no religion or belief)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy and maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other characteristics	<input type="checkbox"/>				

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

The procedure applies to all students who withdraw or are excluded from the University, and may therefore impact all nine protected characteristics. Considerations of positive and negative impacts on these characteristics are noted below.

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.

Withdrawal from studies

The withdrawal procedure is a voluntary process which applies equally to students of all ages, and this assessment has not identified any differential impact of withdrawals on specific protected characteristics.

Exclusion from studies

Some categories of exclusion are more likely to apply to students with particular protected characteristics. For example:

- Category (I) "Exclusion due to lack of visa permission" would only apply to students who require a visa to study at the University; by definition this would only affect non-UK nationals. This is, unfortunately, not an issue which the University can mitigate, given the rules for visa sponsorship set by the UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) service. The wording of the policy allows for situations where it may be possible for a student to complete their programme following the cancellation of their visa (i.e. from their home country), provided that this is compatible with the requirements of the programme. It does not, however, set an expectation that this will be possible. The inclusion of this category does not constitute a change in policy, rather it is included in order to make the requirements clearer to students, and therefore improving transparency for any students in this situation. Although there is a negative impact on the characteristic of nationality, this is an existing impact of the policy and which cannot be mitigated further.
- Category (C) "Exclusion due to non-engagement or non-attendance" applies to all students, and all students have the same requirements for attendance and engagement with their programme, regardless of visa status. However, we are aware that in practice, visa-holding students who are not meeting attendance and engagement requirements are likely to be flagged and referred for exclusion more quickly than students who are not visa-holders, as a result of the University's visa sponsor responsibilities. There may therefore be an impact on students with non-UK nationality as a consequence of the application of the policy, but again this is determined by the rules set out by UKVI. Students with disabilities are also more likely to not meet engagement and attendance requirements due to health issues. The proposed amendments to this section attempt to mitigate some of this impact, by clarifying that "where a student is not meeting the requirements for attendance and engagement, Schools will attempt to make contact with the student following the standard protocols and explain that continued non-attendance or non-engagement may result in exclusion from the University. Where appropriate, students will be referred to relevant student support services." Although this is standard practice in most areas, the inclusion of this in the procedure makes it clear that students should be notified of the risk of exclusion, and offered support services as appropriate, before the case is escalated to referral for exclusion.

There is data to indicate that both students with a declared disability and Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students have lower rates of students achieving high classification degrees (see paper SQAC 23/24 5B on Degrees Awarded Outcomes). Although we do not have equivalent data for progression rates, it stands to reason that students with these characteristics may also be more likely to not meet progression criteria, given the attainment gaps identified, and are therefore more likely to be excluded for unsatisfactory academic progress (Categories A and B).

Three amendments have been proposed in relation to the interviews for exclusion, partly as a way to mitigate the impact of the above, but also, more broadly, to mitigate the

effects of unconscious bias as part of the procedure and the negative impact this may have on all characteristics:

- Amended wording to define what 'making a case for continuation' would consist of in the context of an interview for exclusion, given that some students will be in a better position than others to advocate for themselves. The amended wording requires students to provide specific and relevant information about their academic performance, and aligns with the wording used in the appeals regulations, e.g. when appealing a Board of Examiners decision. The focus on specific information, rather than students 'making a case for continuation', should have a positive impact on all protected characteristics.
- Interview outcomes no longer include an outcome whereby the individual member of staff conducting the interview would be overturning a decision ratified by a Board of Examiners. This also mitigates the potential impact of unconscious bias, and refers the final decision back to Board of Examiners, which is also more appropriate from a governance perspective.
- The current policy indicates that the student will be informed in writing of the outcome of the interview, along with "any terms attached". The terms that may result in exclusion should be those applicable to all students, and the option to attach additional terms to individual student cases leaves room for bias and differential treatment of students with different characteristics. The amended wording therefore removes "and any of the terms attached". This should also remove the potential for bias and have a positive impact on all protected characteristics.

Although the University does not record data on students who are excluded due to lapse of time, a large proportion of concessions requesting extensions to the period of study are for students with health issues or disabilities, as well as for students who are parents or carers, or who have recently been pregnant. It is reasonable therefore to infer that students with disabilities, and students affected by pregnancy and maternity, are more likely to be excluded due to lapse of time. According to the current policy, students who are past their maximum end date should automatically be referred for exclusion. The proposed amendment clarifies that students in this situation may request a concession for an extension to their period of study, and also provides an opportunity for interview prior to exclusion, in line with other categories of exclusion. Offering students an interview provides them with an opportunity to raise any issues that may have affected their ability to complete their thesis by the deadline, and may therefore prompt an application for an extension of studies, or an interruption of studies (which may, in exceptional circumstances, be applied retrospectively). Both of these amendments should have a positive impact on students with disabilities, students affected by pregnancy and maternity, and any other characteristics where there is a higher likelihood of exclusion due to lapse of time.

The proposed amendments to the procedure either maintain the status quo or contribute to advancing equality of opportunity and fair treatment of students with protected characteristics.

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.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome 3: Continue the policy or practice despite the potential for adverse impact, and which can be justified.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome 4: Stop the policy or practice as there are adverse effects which cannot be prevented/mitigated/or justified.	<input type="checkbox"/>

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.

This procedure is due for periodic review every four years. The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee is responsible for approving the procedure. APRC includes representation from relevant groups such as Edinburgh University Students Association (EUSA) and the Disability and Learning Support Service, who provide input into the development, monitoring and review of policies and regulation.

Feedback from equality groups or communities on the procedure is always considered by the area responsible (Academic Quality and Standards). If there is a need to make amendments to the procedure before the next periodic review this can be done as needed.

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.

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

22 May 2025

Proposed Minor Amendments to Student Appeal Regulations

Description of paper

1. Minor updates to the Student Appeal Regulations for August 2025 use onwards in response to corresponding policy changes and student use of the appeal process. To ensure consistency in wording across the University and place our approach in line with other Scottish HEIs.

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

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval.

Background and context

3. An extensive review and update of the Student Appeal Regulations was made and approved by this committee in 2023/24. The changes proposed in this paper are minor, and designed to correspond with updates being proposed to the Withdrawal and Exclusion Procedure and the Support for Study Policy, in addition to amendments approved by APRC in January 2025 to the Authorised Interruption of Study Policy.

Discussion

4. The changes proposed would take effect from 1 August 2025, with appropriate templates and guidance to also be updated. The changes are:

Section A Scope (Regulations 1-2)

- Contingent upon approval of the proposed updates to the Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure, the appeal regulations have been updated to reflect changes relating to appeals against exclusion. Students may only appeal Exclusion from studies decisions made under eligible categories.

- Regulation 2 now lists the Exclusion decisions that cannot be appealed.
- Withdrawal from studies is a voluntary action by students and is not open to appeal. This is the current policy but clarity has been added.
- Due to the changes to the Authorised Interruption of Study Policy, refusal of a request to grant an interruption can now be appealed under the appeal regulations. Regulation 1 has therefore been amended to include AIS decisions. Regulation 2 removes reference to AIS and replaced with Extensions of Study requests.

Section B Academic Appeals (Regulation 19)

- Update to Exceptional Circumstances Committee reference and link. Expansion of the academic appeals coverage to mention both College and School and relevant delegated staff or committees to cover the variables in academic decision making.

Section B Appeals against Exclusion from Studies (Regulation 16)

- Clarity added to reflect categories of exclusion which are not subject to appeal, as explained in Regulation 2.

Section B Support for Study Appeals (Regulation 23)

- Subject to approval of the proposed changes to the Support for Study Policy, the option to appeal against exclusion under that policy has been added.

Section B Appeals against an Authorised Interruption of Study Refusal (Regulations 26-30)

- Addition of section relevant to Authorised Interruption of Study Refusal, detailing what these appeals are considered against and the grounds.
- As an appeal cannot challenge a concession request nor can it provide a concession outcome, appeals against an AIS refusal due to a student having exceeded the maximum duration for a programme, or maximum period of interruption cannot be considered.
- Clarity that students who fail to complete the AIS request form accurately or fully due to human error or because they did not anticipate a refusal, is not a good reason for Ground A. Similar to the requirements for EC applications earlier in the regulations.

Section D Deadlines (Regulation 40 and 41)

- Added Deadlines for AIS Refusal appeals to 10 working days, in line with our similar process deadlines.
- Change late appeal final timescale from 2 years to 1 year

- Upon review of other Scottish HEI's, the SPSO timescales and late appeal data, our two-year period is out of line with HEI sector practice and not setting expectations appropriately for students regarding when late appeals are likely to be considered. Cases made over a year late are extremely unlikely to have extraordinary circumstances to justify the length of delay. Students should be raising appeals within the stated timescales and the change would be that late appeals past 1 year will not be considered under any circumstances.
- Following the update being put in place from August 2025, there will be a grace period for 6 months (August 2025 to February 2026) in which the previous 2-year delay rule will be honoured, with cases which are up to two years beyond the relevant deadline being considered as late appeals. In such cases, students need to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that it was not possible for them to submit their appeal by the relevant deadline. Only where the Appeal Committee has accepted that there is a valid reason why the appeal has been submitted so late will they proceed to consider whether grounds for appeal have been presented.

Section F: Submission of an Appeal (Regulation 52)

- Addition of Regulation 52 to highlight the importance of evidence for both Ground A and Ground B appeals and to provide clarity that appeals made without evidence are unlikely to find grounds. Also detailing the Appeal Committee practice to assess the weight of evidence.

Section 6: Consideration of an Appeal (Regulation 56)

- Addition of Regulation 56. This is reflection of current practice. Due to the increase in Schools/Colleges voluntarily reconsidering decisions, some appeals become obsolete and no longer required when being processed. This will allow the appeal to be considered withdrawn based on the assessment from the caseworker. An appeal would be withdrawn when no further action can be offered via the appeal regulations or the original decision is to be revisited and a “new” decision issued, which would be open to a future appeal.

Department Update (throughout)

- Due to departmental changes, the reference to “Academic Services” has been removed in place for “Registry Services.”

Resource implications

5. The removal of appeals against exclusion in some circumstances is a reflection of the proposed amendments to the withdrawal and exclusion procedure. This will lead to a reduction in the number of appeals against exclusion that need to be considered by the Appeal Committee. Such appeals are not an appropriate use of the Committee's time because they relate to matters of fact, e.g. where a student has been excluded because they had not completed matriculation by the relevant deadline.
6. The changes of the AIS Policy to permit appeals against refusal of AIS requests will lead to additional appeals to be handled by the team. This will be monitored for impact on resources.

Risk management

7. Students who wish to challenge exclusion decisions that are not eligible under the appeal regulations will be directed to an appropriate process in the Withdrawal and Exclusion Procedure (usually the Complaints Handling Procedure) to minimise risk of misunderstanding.
8. The only risk identified is students who have planned to use the 2-year appeal period to submit an appeal will lose this ability in the regulations. This is likely to be an extremely small number of students. However, to counter this, as detailed above, from August 2025, there will be a 6-month grace period (August 2025 to February 2026) in which the previous 2-year delay rule will be honoured.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

9. This paper does not contribute to the SDG.

Equality & diversity

10. The Equality Impact Assessment for the Student Appeal Regulations was updated during the full review in 2024/25. These amendments are minor and are not anticipated to have any EDI implications.

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

11. The updated regulations and any changes will be highlighted on the Academic Appeals website, changed in the regulations and guidance. The updates will also be communicated in the annual New and Updated Policies communication in the summer of 2025.

Author

Amy Willis
05 May 2025

Presenter

Amy Willis

Freedom of Information - Open



THE UNIVERSITY
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Student Appeal Regulations

Summary

These are the University's Student Appeal Regulations and govern the University's student appeal procedures. The Regulations set the framework within which student appeals are handled.

The Student Appeal Regulations apply to student appeals against academic decisions; appeals against exclusion from studies; appeals against decisions of Student Fitness to Practise Committees; appeals against decisions under the Code of Student Conduct; appeals against a decision taken by a University Support for Study Panel under the Support for Study Policy ~~and appeals against the refusal for an Authorised Interruption of Study request~~. The Student Appeal Regulations set out the specific grounds under which an appeal may be submitted. Students may not use an appeal to challenge academic judgment. The fact that a student believes that they deserve a different outcome cannot constitute by itself a ground for appeal.

Deleted: and

Scope: Mandatory Regulations

These regulations apply to all students or recent students of the University who wish to submit an appeal as outlined in the overview above, and to all staff who deal with or respond to student appeals.

Contact Officer Academic Appeals academic.appeals@ed.ac.uk

Document control

Dates	Version Approved: 22.05.25	Effective date: 1.8.25	Equality impact assessment: 28.02.24	Last Reviewed: 23.01.24	Next Review: 2027/28
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Approving authority

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) on behalf of Senatus Academicus

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

Exceptional Circumstance Policy, Boards of Examiners Guidance, Code of Student Conduct <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/assessment>
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline>
<https://registryservices.ed.ac.uk/exceptional-circumstances>
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners>
Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures:
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/conduct/academic-misconduct/academic-misconduct-procedure>
College Fitness to Practise guidance:
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/arts-humanities-soc-sci/taught-students/student-conduct/fitness-to-practise>
Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure:
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/code-of-practice/absences-concessions/exclusion>
Support for Study Policy: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/support-for-study>
~~Authorized Interruption of Study Policy:~~
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/academic-life/study-interruption>

Deleted: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/assessment/special-circumstances>

Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format, please email academic.appeals@ed.ac.uk

Keywords

Academic Appeal, Appeal, Discipline, Conduct, Marks, Degree, Exclusion



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Student Appeal Regulations

The Student Appeal Regulations detail the scope, appeal grounds, process, deadlines and outcomes open to students who wish to request a reconsideration of a decision made by the University.

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Student Appeal Regulations

Section A: Scope

1. An appeal is a request for reconsideration of a decision that has been taken in relation to the following:
 - Academic decisions, e.g., degree awards and classification, course results, progression outcomes, academic misconduct mark penalties
 - Exclusion from studies decisions under eligible categories (Refer to Regulation 2 for exemptions)
 - Outcomes under the Code of Student Conduct
 - Decisions of Student Fitness to Practise Committees
 - Outcomes under the Support for Study policy Stage 3
 - Outcomes under the Authorised Interruption of Study Policy
2. The following **cannot** be considered under these regulations:
 - Decisions related to applications to study at the University of Edinburgh
 - Decisions on degree transfers and course change requests
 - Information included on transcripts
 - Decisions related to fees or funding
 - Concession request decisions: including Extensions of Study requests
 - Challenges to academic or professional judgment from a decision-making body or officer
 - Voluntary Withdrawal Decisions from students
 - Exclusion under the following categories:
 - Exclusion due to non-matriculation
 - Exclusion due to lapse of time
 - Exclusion due to debt
 - Exclusion due to changes in visa status
3. Decisions taken in relation to the areas listed under Regulation 1 are made in compliance with the relevant University policy, regulation, or procedure, and decisions are made by the responsible person or persons identified. This is considered the proper exercise of academic or professional judgment by the appropriate decision-making body or officer.
4. If a decision has been made in compliance with the relevant policy, regulation or procedure, a student may not appeal simply on the basis that they disagree with the decision. A student's disagreement or belief that they deserve a different outcome cannot constitute a ground for appeal.
5. Students cannot use the appeal regulations to challenge academic judgment when this judgment has been applied according to established policy, regulation or procedure. For academic appeals, it is accepted that the academic staff who mark students' assessed work make a judgment about the quality of the work against an agreed marking scheme and the final mark is taken to be a reasonable judgment by an academic expert.
6. An academic appeal can only be lodged when the decision has been ratified by the relevant Board of Examiners. For other decisions, an appeal can only be lodged when the decision in question is finalised by the relevant Committee or Panel and the outcome has been communicated to the student.
7. For the purposes of these regulations the term 'assessment' will be taken to include any summative written or practical examination, dissertation or final project, take home examination, continuously assessed coursework, electronic and online assessment, oral assessment, peer and self-assessment that counts towards the final outcome or decision.

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Student Appeal Regulations

8. The consideration of an appeal does not include remarking academic assessments for academic appeals or re-investigating cases relating to exclusion from studies, Student Fitness to Practise, Support for Study Stage 3, Academic Misconduct or Code of Student Conduct cases.

Section B: Grounds for Appeal

Academic Appeals

9. Academic appeals are appeals against the decision of a College/School Board of Examiners, Progression Board or Exceptional Circumstances Committee or relevant delegated staff or committees, and decisions by the Exceptional Circumstances team, taken under the Exceptional Circumstances Policy www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners.
Exceptional Circumstances Policy.
10. If an appeal against a penalty from an academic misconduct investigation is upheld, the Board of Examiners that ratified the penalty will consider whether the information in the upheld appeal requires the academic misconduct officer to also review the decision.
11. For academic decisions relating to postgraduate research students the relevant Board of Examiners will be deemed to be the College committee which is responsible for overseeing postgraduate research studies within the relevant College.
12. There are two grounds under which an academic appeal can be lodged. These are:
- Ground A: **Substantial information directly relevant** to the quality of performance in the assessment which for **good reason** was not available to the examiners when their decision was taken.
 - Ground B: **Evidence** of irregular procedure or improper conduct in the conduct of an assessment or in the process of decision-making by the Board of Examiners or another relevant body or Officer.
13. Ignorance of the requirement set out in the Exceptional Circumstances Policy to report timeously any exceptional circumstances adversely affecting performance, or failure to report exceptional circumstances because the student did not anticipate an unsatisfactory result in the assessment, can never by themselves constitute the good reason to fulfil the requirement described in Ground A.
14. For appeals against mark penalties following an academic misconduct investigation, it is not within the remit of the academic misconduct officer to take account of exceptional circumstances in reaching a decision. Therefore, an appeal submission made solely on this basis would not constitute a ground for appeal.
15. For appeals against decisions taken by the Exceptional Circumstances (EC) team, the term "examiners" in Ground A refers to members of the EC team. Appeals under Ground B should relate to evidence of irregular procedure or improper conduct of the EC team. The function of the EC team is set out in the Exceptional Circumstances Policy.

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Student Appeal Regulations

Appeals against Exclusion from Studies

16. Appeals against exclusion from studies are appeals against the eligible decisions of the Head of College, or their delegate, or other authorised officer following the Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies procedure. (Refer to Regulation 2 for exemptions)
[Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure](#)
17. For appeals against exclusion from studies, there are two grounds of appeal:
 - Ground A: **Substantial information directly relevant** to the decision to exclude the student which **for good reason** was not available to the Head of College, or their delegate, or other authorised officer when their decision was taken.
 - Ground B: **Evidence** of irregular procedure or improper conduct of the Procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies.

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Student Fitness to Practise Appeals

18. Fitness to Practise Appeals are appeals against the decision of a College Student Fitness to Practise Committee.
19. For Student Fitness to Practise Appeals, there are two grounds of appeal:
 - Ground A: **Substantial information directly relevant** to the student's case which for **good reason** was not available to the College Fitness to Practise Committee when its decision was taken.
 - Ground B: **Evidence** of irregular procedure or improper conduct of the College procedure for assessing Fitness to Practise.

Conduct Appeals

20. Conduct appeals are appeals against the decision of a Student Discipline Officer and the Student Discipline Committee. Code of Student Conduct: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline> Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct>
21. For conduct appeals, there are two grounds of appeal:
 - Ground A: **Substantial information directly relevant** to the investigation of a student discipline case which for **good reason** was not available to the Student Discipline Officer, or the Student Discipline Committee when their decision was taken.
 - Ground B: **Evidence of** irregular procedure or improper conduct of an investigation or disciplinary action. This includes conduct of a meeting of the Student Discipline Committee or academic misconduct investigation.
22. Where a student does not engage in the processes in place to investigate or consider their case, or to make any decision about penalties, this alone will not constitute a "good reason" under Ground A. This includes:
 - Not attending any meeting, interview or hearing with a School or College Academic Misconduct



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Officer, Conduct Investigator, Student Discipline Officer or Student Discipline Committee, where the student was given due notice to appear;

- Not providing written representations, evidence or names of witnesses, when invited to do so;
- Not providing a statement in explanation or extenuation of misconduct; or in mitigation of any possible penalty, when invited to do so.

Support for Study Appeals

23. Support for Study appeals are appeals against a decision of the University Support for Study Panel under Stage 3 of the Support for Study Policy to require a student to take an authorised interruption of study, or to exclude a student from study.
24. For Support for Study appeals, there are two grounds of appeal:
 - Ground A: **Substantial information directly relevant** to the Support for Study decision which for **good reason** was not available to the Support for Study Panel when their decision was taken.
 - Ground B: **Evidence** of irregular procedure or improper conduct of a case under the Support for Study Policy. This includes conduct of a hearing of the Support for Study Panel.
25. Failure to attend a Support for Study Panel hearing, or to provide written representations when invited to do so, this alone will not constitute the good reason to fulfil the requirement described in Ground A.

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Appeals against an Authorised Interruption of Study Refusal

26. Appeals against an Authorised Interruption of Study Refusal are appeals against the decision of the relevant Head of College or School (or delegated authorising officer or Committee) to refuse a student's request for an authorised interruption of study. Authorised Interruption of Study Policy: XX
27. Refusal decisions made on the basis that the student would exceed the maximum available time for interruption or exceed the maximum period of study for the programme are considered final and not open to appeal.
28. For appeals against an Authorised Interruption of Study refusal, there are two grounds of appeal:
 - Ground A: **Substantial information directly relevant** to the Authorised Interruption of Study decision which for **good reason** was not available to the relevant Head of College or School (or delegated authorising officer or Committee) when their decision was taken.
 - Ground B: **Evidence** of irregular procedure or improper conduct in the handling of a request under the Authorised Interruption of Study Policy. This includes the consideration of the relevant Head of College or School (or delegated authorising officer or Committee).
29. Ignorance of the relevant policies regarding the maximum period of study or the maximum period of interruption will not be considered a ground for appeal.



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30. Failure to complete the Authorised Interruption of Study form in full and accurately, or failure to include all relevant circumstances or evidence due to human error or not anticipating a refusal outcome would not by themselves constitute the good reason to fulfil the requirement described in Ground A.

Section C: Student Responsibility

31. It is the student's responsibility to have read and be familiar with the content of any relevant University policies, procedures, regulations, codes of practice, and course and programme handbooks, including all sections relating to marking schemes, assessment and moderation of work. For postgraduate research students, this includes the University's *Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students*, which students are directed to upon acceptance or registration. Ignorance of the content of this information cannot constitute a ground for appeal.
32. It is the student's responsibility to submit a piece of work which is capable of satisfying the relevant examiners. Students should be aware that they are ultimately solely responsible for the academic quality of work they submit for assessment, including dissertations, final projects and theses. Students should also be aware that approval or absence of criticism by a Dissertation/Project supervisor, Research supervisor or member of teaching staff and following the advice and guidance of a supervisor or member of teaching staff carries no guarantee of success in an assessment. Any such comments, or their absence cannot constitute a ground for appeal.
33. It is the student's responsibility to provide any relevant evidence in support of their application to appeal. Whilst Student Appeal Committees may request further information under these regulations, it is not the responsibility of the Student Appeal Committee to gather evidence on the student's behalf that the student wishes to rely upon in their appeal.
34. It is the student's responsibility to respond to any queries or requests for further information from the administrative caseworker or Registry Services staff. Students who do not respond to contact from a caseworker or member of Registry Services staff, without good reason, may have their appeal withdrawn and the case closed.

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Section D: Deadlines

35. There are strict deadlines governing the submission of academic appeals. These are as follows:
- For undergraduate students:
Final Year: within 30 working days of being informed of the decision. All others: within 10 working days of being informed of the decision.
- For postgraduate students:
All: within 30 working days of being informed of the decision.
36. Appeals against exclusion from studies must be submitted within 10 working days of the decision being issued.
37. Appeals against Student Fitness to Practise Committee decisions must be submitted within 10 working days of the decision being issued.
38. Student conduct appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of the decision being



Student Appeal Regulations

issued.

39. Support for Study appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of the decision being issued.
40. Appeals against an Authorised Interruption of Study Refusal must be submitted within 10 working days of the decision being issued.
41. Appeals which are received outside of the timescales stated above are regarded as late and will only be accepted for consideration if extraordinary circumstances are evidenced. The decision as to whether or not extraordinary circumstances exist will be taken by either the Student Appeal Committee or the Student Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee. Appeals submitted over one year late will not be accepted under any circumstances.

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Section E: Appeal Committees

The Student Appeal Committee

42. Appeals are considered by the relevant Student Appeal Committee. This may be the Undergraduate or Postgraduate Student Appeal Committee. The Student Appeal Committee's remit will be to consider all appeals except Fitness to Practice cases. Membership of the Student Appeal Committee is approved annually by the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee on behalf of University Senate and includes members with expertise in undergraduate and postgraduate matters. Conveners of Student Appeal Committees may serve for a term of five academic years. Conveners may return to committee membership following their term. Membership of the Student Appeal Committee itself does not carry a maximum term of service.
43. A Student Appeal Committee will be quorate to reach decisions on appeal cases with two members of the relevant Student Appeal Committee and an administrative caseworker, appointed by Registry Services, acting as the University Secretary's nominee.
44. In the event that a Student Appeal Committee are unable to reach an agreed decision, a third member may be asked to consider the case. In this circumstance, an outcome will be based on the majority decision.

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The Student Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee

45. Student Fitness to Practise Appeals are considered by staff who are members of the relevant professional discipline. These staff form the Student Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee, the membership of which is approved annually by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee on behalf of University Senate. Conveners of Student Fitness to Practise Appeal Committees may serve for a term of five academic years. Conveners may return to committee membership following their term. Membership of the Student Appeal Committee itself does not carry a maximum term of service. Members of the Fitness to Practise Committee for specific cases will never be the same individuals as those involved in the Fitness to Practise proceedings at the College stage.
46. The Student Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee will be quorate to reach decisions on appeal cases with two academic members of staff from the same professional discipline as the student, and an administrative caseworker, appointed by Registry Services, acting as the nominee of the University Secretary.

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Student Appeal Regulations

47. In the event of the Student Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee being unable to reach an agreed decision, an appropriate third committee member may be asked to consider the case. In this circumstance, an outcome will be based on the majority decision.

Section F: Submission of an Appeal

48. Appeals must be written and submitted electronically to Registry Services at academic.appeals@ed.ac.uk. Students must ensure that in submitting an appeal, they have completed and attached the relevant appeal forms; and will be deemed to have read and understood all accompanying regulations and guidance. Appeal forms and relevant guidance are available from the Registry Services website. <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/appeals/submitting>
49. Students must specify the ground or grounds under which they wish to have their appeal considered. They must also specify the reasons as to why they believe the ground or grounds apply.
50. The written submission must contain all relevant arguments on the basis of which the appeal is being made, together with all supporting documentation the student wishes to be taken into account. It will not be possible to introduce new circumstances, evidence or documentation into the appeal at a later date.
51. Students must ensure that appeal information and documentation submitted is in a format that can be accessed by Registry Services staff, is readable and, if evidence is not in English, translations should be included.
52. For all appeals made under either ground, students are expected to provide relevant, contemporaneous evidence to support their submission. Appeals made without supporting evidence are unlikely to establish grounds for appeal. The Appeal Committee may assess the strength of the evidence appropriately in consideration of an appeal.
53. Registry Services, the Student Appeal Committee and the Student Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee may request further information, if this is required. This can be in the form of further information from the student, or further information from members of University staff. If appropriate, previous communications between a student and Registry Services or relevant information included from previous appeal submissions may be considered.
54. Submission of an appeal does not alter a student's status, nor pause or prevent the application of any decision being appealed against. Therefore, the decision of a Board of Examiners, or other relevant Committee, remains unchanged while the appeal process is carried out. Any recent student appealing against exclusion from studies remains excluded during the appeal process. In relation to Fitness to Practise appeals, any decision of the College Student Fitness to Practise Committee remains in force during the appeal process. In relation to conduct appeals, any penalties imposed by the Student Discipline Officer, the Academic Misconduct Officer or the Student Discipline Committee will remain in force during the appeal process.

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Section G: Consideration of an Appeal

Preliminary Screening



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Student Appeal Regulations

55. When an appeal is received, it is screened by staff in Registry Services to establish whether or not the documentation has been submitted correctly, and whether the appeal is eligible for consideration under these regulations. If Registry Services judge that the appeal is eligible for consideration under these regulations, and the submission is complete, then the appeal is submitted to the Student Appeal Committee or the Student Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee for consideration.
56. If actions or consideration, equivalent to or beyond that of an upheld appeal outcome are offered from elsewhere in the University, without the need for a decision from the Appeal Committee, the appeal may be determined as no longer required and withdrawn. This determination is made on the basis that no further action can be offered via the appeal regulations or that the decision subject to appeal is to be revisited. Academic Services staff have the remit to make this determination. If an appeal is withdrawn, an explanation will be provided.

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The Student Appeal Committee and Student Fitness to Practise Committee

57. An administrative caseworker, appointed by Registry Services, acting as the University Secretary's nominee, and two members of the Student Appeal Committee (who must not be from the same School as the student, or a member of their supervisory team) are empowered as the Student Appeal Committee to decide whether sufficient grounds have been established for an appeal case to be upheld or the case should be dismissed. In Fitness to Practise appeals, a member of staff from Registry Services, acting in the same capacity as described above, and two members of the Student Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee, are empowered to decide whether sufficient grounds have been established for an appeal case to be upheld or the case should be dismissed. Appeal Committee considerations normally take place electronically by correspondence. A Student Appeal Committee or Student Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee may make one of two decisions [(i), (ii)].
- (i) The appeal is **not upheld** as no grounds have been established. Appeal proceedings are concluded and the case is dismissed; or
- (ii) The appeal **is upheld** as grounds have been established. The Appeal Committee instructs the relevant decision-making body or officer to re-consider the original decision in light of the upheld information. The relevant decision-making body or officer must record how they have given specific consideration to the information presented in the upheld appeal in reconsidering their original decision. The decision-making body or officer is responsible for informing the student of any outcome following a reconsidered decision.
58. The decisions of the Student Appeal Committee and the Student Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee are final. There will be no further opportunity for appeal against the decision within the University.

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Section H: Ombudsman and Reporting

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

59. Students who are dissatisfied with the way their appeal has been handled have the right to complain to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The SPSO will consider the case and make a decision on whether to investigate. It is important to note that the SPSO can only investigate whether an appeal has been handled appropriately by the University; it does not look again at the substance of the original appeal case. The SPSO can only consider cases when consideration is complete at University



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Student Appeal Regulations

level. Information on how to complain to the SPSO will be provided to the student on completion of the appeal. Full information on the SPSO and on how it handles complaints can be found at the SPSO website: <https://www.spsso.org.uk/>

Reporting

60. If an appeal is upheld and referred back to the relevant decision-making body, that body is expected to keep record of the upheld appeal information being reconsidered and any decision that is communicated to the student regarding this.
61. The Student Appeal Committee and Student Fitness to Practise Committee reports annually to the Senate Quality Assurance Committee, detailing the volume and nature of the appeals dealt with in the previous academic session, and highlighting any issues of concern or significance.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

22 May 2025

Proposed Minor Amendments to Expected Behaviour Policy

Description of paper

1. Minor amendments to the Expected Behaviour Policy in relation to Appeals, Complaints, Student Conduct and related procedures, in line with Registry Services restructure.

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

Action requested / recommendation

2. APRC is asked to approve the proposed changes.

Background and context

3. Following a restructure in Registry Services, a new Office for Student Conduct, Complaints, and Appeals (OSCCA) has been established, and a new Head will be joining the University in June 2025. Originally scheduled for review during the 2024/25 academic year, this policy, pending approval from APRC, will now undergo a comprehensive review in the 2025/26 academic year. In the interim, several minor amendments for the policy are proposed to align with the changing organisational structure.

Discussion

4. The changes proposed would take effect from 1 August 2025. The changes are:
 - “Defamatory” has been removed from the list of unacceptable manners of communicating with the University. The University cannot find that someone has been defamatory, as defamation can only be judged via a civil law procedure. Neither the Code of Student Conduct nor Dignity and Respect Policy refer to defamation.
 - A reference to Academic Services has been replaced with a reference to the Office for Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals.
 - References to the Head of Investigations and Student Casework has been replaced with references to the Head of the Office for Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals.

- The policy has been updated to specify that objections to the termination of contact, or the dismissal of an appeal or complaint, should be directed to the Academic Registrar.

Resource implications

5. These amendments are in response to a restructure within Registry Services. Any impact on workloads has already been considered as part of that restructure. The appointment of a new Head of OSCCA has already been approved and costs will be met within existing budgets.

Risk management

6. The policy sets out the expected behaviour of individuals involved in appeals, complaints and student conduct cases. By clearly defining what is and is not considered to be acceptable standards of behaviour, the policy mitigates risk of inconsistent approaches, which could lead to unfair outcomes and reputational damage.
7. Specifically, the proposed amendments ensure that those referring to this policy can identify the correct points of contact within Registry Services in relation to incidences of unacceptable behaviour.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

8. This paper does not directly contribute to the SDGs.

Equality & diversity

9. The proposed amendments are minor and not expected to have any EDI implications. The policy is scheduled for a full review in 2025/26, at which time any potential equality impacts will be considered and, if necessary, a new or revised EqIA will be drafted and presented along with the revised policy.

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

10. The updated policy will be introduced for 2025/26, ahead of the full review to take place in that session. Information about the amendments will be published in the annual New and Updated Policies communication in the summer of 2025.

Author

Sarah Barnard
Academic Policy Officer
Academic Quality and Standards

Nichola Kett
Head of Academic Quality and Standards

May 2025

Freedom of Information Open.

H/02/27/02

APRC 24/25 5H Appendix 1

Expected Behaviour Policy in relation to Appeals, Complaints, Student Conduct and related procedures



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Summary

The policy sets out expectations for behaviour by parties involved in Appeals, Complaints and Student Conduct procedures and specifies how we will manage cases where behavior is problematic.

Deleted: Purpose of Policy

The policy recognises that people may act out of character in times of stress. Three steps to addressing unacceptable behaviour are set out: 1) an explanation and a request to modify behaviour; 2) for parties who are students, potential referral under the Code of Student Conduct; and 3) termination of contact.

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Scope: Mandatory Policy

The policy covers students and former students, applicants for admission, and other members of the public. The policy is applied by Academic Services.

Contact

[Complaints](#)

Complaints@ed.ac.uk

Deleted: Officer

Deleted: Jean Grier

Deleted: Head of Investigations and Student Casework

Deleted: Jean.Grier@ed.ac.uk

Document control

Dates	<u>Version</u> approved:	<u>Effective</u> date:	Equality impact assessment:	<u>Last Reviewed:</u>	Next Review:
	08.10.20	08.10.20	17-07-2020	<u>22-05-25</u>	2025/26

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Deleted: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/appeals>

Deleted: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/university-secretary-group/complaint-handling-procedure>

Deleted: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/conduct/code-of-student-conduct>

Deleted: UK Quality Code

Deleted: UK Quality Code: Concerns, Complaints and Appeals

Deleted: Policies superseded by this policy

Deleted: None. Consolidation of existing dispersed information

Deleted: Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.

Approving authority

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

Student Appeal Regulations
Complaint Handling Procedure
Code of Student Conduct

Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email Complaints@ed.ac.uk

Keywords

Conduct, behaviour, appeal, complaint, misconduct, dignity and respect



Expected Behaviour Policy in relation to Appeals, Complaints, Student Conduct and related procedures

Policy

1 Purpose and Scope

1.1 The University is committed to providing fair, consistent and accessible processes for handling appeals, complaints and student conduct cases. It is recognised that people may act out of character in times of stress. We understand that undergoing some of these processes – especially serious conduct cases – can be traumatic for all involved. We also accept that a disability can have a bearing on someone's conduct and we will make reasonable adjustment as necessary. However, we must also provide a safe working environment for our staff, and ensure that our work is undertaken in an effective and efficient manner.

1.2 This policy sets out the behaviour we expect of:

- students, graduates, former students and applicants for admission (in appeals cases)
- students, former students and members of the public (in complaint cases)
- reporting parties, witnesses and respondents (in student conduct cases).

The term 'student' also includes anyone who communicates with the University for or on behalf of one of its students/former students. Throughout this policy the term 'party' is used to refer individuals involved in appeals, complaints or student conduct cases.

1.3 The Expected Behaviour Policy is primarily applicable to, but not limited to, the following policies and procedures:

- Academic Appeals
- Academic Misconduct
- Code of Student Conduct (including any appeal stage*)
- Complaint Handling Procedure
- Fitness to Practise
- Support for Study.

*With regard to cases considered through the Code of Student Conduct, it should be noted that there is no right of appeal *by the reporting party* against the outcome of a conduct investigation or the penalties applied (if any) to the respondent.

2 Expected Behaviour

2.1 We expect parties to behave in a respectful manner at all times, avoiding the use of any offensive language except where necessary, for example when quoting as evidence something one party has allegedly said to another.



Expected Behaviour Policy in relation to Appeals, Complaints, Student Conduct and related procedures

Policy

2.2 Where parties are going to respond to questions put to them or information requested from them, we expect them to do so within the specified timeframe.

2.3 With regard to cases considered through the Code of Student Conduct it should be noted that none of the parties are technically required to respond to anything sent to them by us; but where parties choose to respond, we expect them to do so promptly in order to avoid undue delay to the consideration of cases.

3 Unacceptable behaviour

3.1 The Code of Student Conduct includes an offence of 'Obstructing, or interfering with, the functions, duties or activities of any Person'. In light of this, the University's definition of 'unacceptable behaviour' includes, but is not necessarily restricted to, cases in which we consider there is evidence that the party has behaved in one or more of the following inappropriate ways:

- Bringing a complaint which has the aim or effect of harassing an individual or which is malicious;
- Making unreasonable demands of case handlers, for example; demanding responses within an unreasonable timescale; insisting on seeing or speaking to a particular member of staff; continual phone calls, emails, or letters; repeatedly changing the substance of the complaint, or raising unrelated concerns;
- Communicating with the University in an abusive, offensive, aggressive, threatening, coercive or intimidating manner;
- Repeatedly including multiple staff members in correspondence about the issues when those staff members do not need to be involved in the case;
- Making false, frivolous, malicious or vexatious statements and/or allegations;
- Knowingly submitting a case containing materially inaccurate or false information or evidence;
- Insistence on pursuing frivolous or vexatious complaints, issues which are not covered by the Complaints Handling Procedure, and/or seeking unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes;
- submitting multiple complaints on substantially the same issue
- Persistent refusal to accept a decision once the relevant procedure has been exhausted.

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THE UNIVERSITY
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Expected Behaviour Policy in relation to Appeals, Complaints, Student Conduct and related procedures

Policy

4 What we will do – first and second steps

4.1 In the majority of cases our expectations are met, but in the small number of cases where a party demonstrates unacceptable behaviour we reserve the right to take action as necessary.

4.2 As a first step when we consider a party's behaviour unacceptable, the University will tell the party why their behaviour is considered to be unacceptable and will ask them to desist. Any decision regarding unacceptable behaviour made in relation to this policy will be communicated to the party in writing by the relevant staff member in the Office for Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals. The University will try to ensure that any action taken is the minimum required to address the unacceptable actions or behaviour, taking into account any relevant personal circumstances of the party. The options the University is most likely to consider at this stage include but are not limited to:

- Requesting contact in a particular form (taking into account any reasonable adjustment needed)
- Requiring contact to take place with a named officer of the University
- Requiring the tone and language of the correspondence to be respectful and moderate
- Restricting telephone calls or emails to specified days and times
- Asking a student to appoint a representative, usually from the Students' Association, to correspond with the University; and/or
- Asking the party to enter into an agreement outlining expectations of their future conduct
- Where the party is communicating for or on behalf of a student, asking the student to communicate directly with the University instead of through the party
- Where multiple complaints are submitted on what is essentially the same or a similar issue, the University reserves the right to treat the matter as a single complaint and to decline to respond to any subsequent complaint on the same/similar issue.

4.3 For cases already under consideration through the Code of Student Conduct, failure to observe Expected Behaviour may be treated as a potential breach of the Code of Student Conduct and taken into consideration in the ongoing conduct case. Before any such action is taken we will attempt to work with the party by explaining our expectations for their behaviour.

4.4 As a second step where we consider an appeal or complaint to be frivolous and/or vexatious, or where a student party continues to behave in a way that we consider to be unacceptable, the Head of the Office for Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals will decide whether the student party should be referred for consideration through the Code of

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**Expected Behaviour Policy in relation to Appeals,
Complaints, Student Conduct and related procedures**



THE UNIVERSITY
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Policy

Student Conduct and/or referred to the third step. Referral through the Code of Student Conduct is only applicable where the party is a current student.

Expected Behaviour Policy in relation to Appeals, Complaints, Student Conduct and related procedures



Policy

5 Termination of contact and/or dismissal of appeal or complaint – third step

5.1 In the rare cases where we consider it would be an unreasonable use of staff, time and resources to consider a case further, we may decide to terminate contact with the party and/or dismiss an appeal or complaint. The Head of the Office for Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals will advise the party of the decision and the reason for the decision.

Deleted: Investigations and Student Casework

5.2 Should the party wish to object to a decision to terminate contact or to dismiss an appeal or complaint, the party should contest the decision by writing to the Academic Registrar, via complaints@ed.ac.uk within 10 working days of the date of the communication.

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5.3 The Academic Registrar, or nominee, will consider the party's representations and, where the Academic Registrar considers the objection to be reasonable, the Academic Registrar will write to confirm that the restriction is lifted or to confirm an alternative restriction, if appropriate.

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5.4 Where the Academic Registrar considers the restriction to be reasonable in the circumstances, the Academic Registrar will confirm the decision and issue the party with a Completion of Procedures letter within 28 days; this letter will confirm the party's right to seek review by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) or the appropriate alternative body.

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Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

22 May 2025

Updates to the Policy Review Schedule

Description of paper

1. The paper requests approval of amendments to the schedule for reviews for some policies, where there is either benefit or necessity to delay these reviews.

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. APRC is asked to approve the proposed amendments to the schedule for the review of some policies. APRC is also asked to approve the transfer of responsibility for one of the policies affected to Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC).

Background and context

3. Academic Quality and Standards (formerly Academic Services) carry out periodic reviews of all academic policies to ensure they remain fit for purpose, in line with a schedule agreed by APRC. The current schedule for the review of policies was approved by APRC in March 2023.

Discussion

4. The table below lists the policies which were scheduled for review during the current session for which it is proposed to delay the review to 2025/26 (except where stated). The table includes the reason why the delay is being proposed.
APRC is asked to approve the proposed amendments to the review schedule for the affected policies.
5. The Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy is currently the responsibility of APRC. Issues relating to the quality of programmes of study are generally considered by Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) rather than APRC. As such, **we request approval from APRC to transfer responsibility for the maintenance and review of the policy from**

APRC to SQAC. Staff in Academic Quality and Standards would continue to support the process of review for the policy.

Policy	Reason for delay
Models for Degree Types	These policies are likely to be significantly impacted by the development of the Curriculum Transformation Programme (CTP). As such, it is proposed to review these when there is confirmation regarding the relevant elements of CTP.
Framework for Curricula	
Degree Programme Specification Guidance	
Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy	
Expected Behaviour Policy in relation to Appeals, Complaints, Student Conduct and Related Procedures	Following a restructure within Registry Services, a new Office for Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals has been established, with a new Head joining the University in June 2025. It is proposed to delay the review of this document to allow the incoming Head to lead the review.
Academic Timetabling Policy	It is proposed to delay the review of this policy until 2026/27 to align with the timeline for the Timetabling and Course Selection project.
Dual, Double, and Multiple Awards Policy	The review of these policies was deprioritised during the current session due to a temporary reduction in staff resource within Academic Quality and Standards.
Course Organiser Outline of Role	
Including Publications in Postgraduate Research Thesis: Guidance	
Lay Summary in Theses - Guidance	
PhD by Research oral examinations by video link (Videolinked PhD oral)	
Thesis Format Guidance	

Resource implications

6. Moving some policy reviews into the 2025/26 session increases the volume of policies requiring review during that session. However, staff resource within Academic Quality and Standards is expected to be back at normal levels by that time. The majority of the policies scheduled for review are relatively brief and relate to operational, rather than strategic areas of policy. As such, the process of reviewing these policies is not expected to be resource-intensive.

Risk Management

7. The regular review of policies is an expectation under the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code and is required in order to ensure policies remain fit for purpose and promote enhancement. As such, it is important to ensure that policies continue to be reviewed regularly. However, it is not anticipated that the delay to the review of the policies noted in this paper should pose a risk to our compliance with QAA expectations or lead to policies being so outdated as to present challenges for their users.

Equality & Diversity

8. The delay to the schedule of review for policies is not anticipated to have any implications for equality and diversity.

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

9. Academic Quality and Standards will amend the coversheets on the affected policies to reflect the revised review schedule.

Author

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Academic Policy Manager
Academic Quality and Standards

Cristina Matthews
Academic Policy Officer
Academic Quality and Standards

Presenter

Adam Bunni

Freedom of Information

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Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**22 May 2025****Approval for non-standard programme end dates for the Online MBA****Description of paper**

1. This paper is seeking permission for the part time Online Masters in Business Administration (MBA) to deviate from the standard academic year end dates with one of the two standard exit points to be in February.

Action requested / recommendation

2. APRC is asked to **approve** a new non-standard academic year end date for the existing Online MBA (effective from next intake, September 2025).

Background and context

3. In 2022 the Business School went through the College curriculum approval process to launch a new programme which was to be a part time (33 months), online version of the successful MBA programme. Market testing identified the Online MBA as a strategic gap within the current programme portfolio of the Business School. This programme has complemented and enhanced the existing full time one year MBA programme which is administered and directed by a specialist unit based within the Business School.
4. Please see [Online MBA Programme overview](#) for further details of this programme where all teaching, assessment and student support is delivered within the Business School. Further details can also be viewed in the [degree finder information](#).
5. The original Online MBA proposal included one standard and one non-standard entry points within each academic year to enable a synergistic and sustainable delivery model with planned courses being delivered to each cohort but in a different order to allow the same courses to be taken by different cohorts at the same time.
6. On 26th January 2023, APRC approved the non-standard programme start dates for the Online MBA. Please see the confirmed [minutes](#) and [papers](#) from the APRC meeting for further discussion details.
7. In April 2025, the Business School submitted a major change request to the CAHSS College Office to change the existing 33-month programme to two streamlined variants: a 30-month and an expedited 24-month programme. This has been approved at College level.
8. These programme variants will have the same non-standard start dates (March and September) previously approved by APRC. As a result of the shorter duration of study period, both start dates (March and September) will also have estimated non-standard end dates (August and February for a March start; February and August for a September start). The 30-month variant is intended to

replace the 33-month original version of the programme which will be on teach out for current students with an option to transfer to the shorter model where possible.

Discussion

9. The proposal to reduce the existing 33-month programme to two streamlined variants is based on demand and benchmarking analysis conducted by the Business School Marketing Team. Offering both programme-lengths will enable them to appeal to a wider range of student candidates while maintaining efficiency, as the taught components are shared. The key difference between the two variants lies in the capstone period: in the 24-month programme, students undertake the capstone alongside their final year of taught courses, whereas in the 30-month programme, the capstone takes place in the third year, following the completion of all taught elements.
10. To support this structure, all courses are now compulsory, with no electives offered. The proposed revision improves operational efficiency by allowing full sharing of taught components across both programme lengths and across both September and March start dates. This new programme structure will also improve workload planning for capstone supervision, by aligning the proposal submission and advisor allocation period to the existing process and timelines for UG/PGT (MSc) dissertations.
11. Due to the professional nature, and accreditation requirements, of the MBA programmes, including the reliance on external partners for a high proportion of teaching and experiential learning, the courses and coaching that are offered to the students are all contained within the Business School.
12. The MBA programmes have no exams within the centrally scheduled exam diets and assessment takes place at the end of each block of courses (of which there are four per year, each being around 3 months). Board of Examiner meetings are appropriately timed to ensure award decisions can be managed efficiently. Please see table below mapping out dates and courses. The programme team works in close cooperation with the EC service and coursework deadlines for the online MBA will be included in EC processes such that students will be able to access the standard level of support from the EC service with no difficulties. There are no formal progression points on the Online MBA. However, we work to identify, immediately following each block, those who would not have enough credits to complete the full MBA.
13. We recognise that a February finish for a July graduation is unusual, however, this is the model operated successfully for our Executive MBA programme when degrees were conferred at graduation. It can also have some benefits, particularly for our international students in planning their travel to attend graduation at a peak travel time. Due to the highly personal service that our Online MBA students receive there is no lull in communication with the school during this period.

Resource implications

14. The choice of courses and delivery has been carefully considered by the School to align with resource planning and staff workload. The established practices and processes from the MBA ensure that the School is able to appropriately assess the anticipated resource requirements based on student numbers and capstone choices and plan accordingly.
15. As the Business School has been working with MBA students (the majority of whom work full time and are therefore accessing teaching and support at out with standard office hours) many years there is already well established practice in ensuring students are able to access institutional support teams such as the Disability and Learning Support Services. The non-standard start and end dates are therefore not expected to have any detrimental impact on student access to support and guidance.

Risk management

16. As stated above the risks associated with non-standard end times have been carefully reviewed and are sufficiently mitigated through the well-established existing support and planning arrangements.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

17. There are no direct impacts on the climate emergency and sustainable development goals.

Equality & diversity

18. The online and part time nature of this programme promotes and encourages greater diversity of applicants and entrants to the MBA and ensures an equality of opportunity previously unavailable to many with caring commitments or other barriers from full time on campus offerings.

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

19. This paper has been prepared in consultation with colleagues in the Business School and the Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Validation. The School will be notified of the APRC decision by the CAHSS College Office.

Author

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Sarah Yaxley
Catriona Morley
Alessandra Eleuteri

Presenter

Dr Emily Taylor
Catriona Morley

Freedom of Information *This paper is OPEN*

24-month programme

No formal progression points on the Online MBA as there is not a traditional final research project.

BoE Date	Year 1 courses to be ratified	Year 2 courses to be ratified	Sept 2025 total credits ratified	March 2026 total credits ratified	Notes
February 2026	Operations Improvement, Data and Analytics for Leaders	NA – not commenced	20	-	
June 2026	Understanding Economies, Integrated Sustainability in the Boardroom		40	-	March- 40 out of 80 credits ratified at point of entry to year 2
October 2026	Strategic Leadership 1, Strategic Marketing, Accounting, Strategic HRM		80	40	
February 2027	Operations Improvement, Data and Analytics for Leaders	Professional Development, Negotiations	100	60	60 out of 80 credits ratified at point of entry to Year 2
June 2027	Understanding Economies, Integrated Sustainability in the Boardroom	Organising for Effectiveness, Business Transformation in a Digital Age,	120	80	
October 2027	Strategic Leadership 1, Strategic Marketing, Accounting, Strategic HRM	Finance, Strategic Leadership 2 Management Report (40)	180	140	September cohort to graduate in November
February 2028		Professional Development, Negotiations		160	
June 2028		Organising for Effectiveness, Business Transformation in a Digital Age		180	March cohort to graduate in July

30-month programme

No formal progression points on the Online MBA as there is not a traditional final research project.

BoE Date	Year 1 courses	Year 2 courses	Sept 2025 total credits	March 2026 total credits	Notes
February 2026	Operations Improvement, Data and Analytics for Leaders	NA – not commenced	20	-	
June 2026	Understanding Economies, Integrated Sustainability in the Boardroom		40	-	March- 40 out of 80 credits ratified at point of entry to year 2
October 2026	Strategic Leadership 1, Strategic Marketing, Accounting, Strategic HRM		80	40	
February 2027	Operations Improvement, Data and Analytics for Leaders	Professional Development, Negotiations	100	60	60 out of 80 credits ratified at point of entry to Year 2
June 2027	Understanding Economies, Integrated Sustainability in the Boardroom	Organising for Effectiveness, Business Transformation in a Digital Age,	120	80	
October 2027		Finance, Strategic Leadership 2	140	100	
February 2028		Professional Development, Negotiations		120	
June 2028		Organising for Effectiveness, Business Transformation in a Digital Age Sept – Management Report (40)	180	140	September cohort to graduate in July
October 2028		March Management Report (40)			March cohort to graduate in November

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

22 May 2025

Membership and Terms of Reference 2025/26

Description of paper

1. The paper outlines Academic Policy and Regulations Committee's (APRC) Membership and Terms of Reference for 2025/26.

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
Act with delegated authority from the Senate on matters of student conduct and discipline.	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 Membership and Terms of Reference are presented to APRC for members to note and advise of any forthcoming changes not already highlighted.

Background and context

3. The membership for APRC is presented to Senate annually for approval. Any subsequent amendments to the membership are reported to Senate at the next Ordinary meeting, usually held in October.
4. Senate Standing Committees formally report to Senate annually in addition to providing updates on upcoming business at each ordinary meeting of Senate. These committees feed into and out of College level committees (Undergraduate Education, Postgraduate Education, Quality Assurance) and specialist Support Services (the Institute for Academic Development, Careers Service, Student Recruitment and Admissions, Registry Services) via committee membership. Therefore, a number of committee roles are ex officio, to ensure that committee members have the appropriate knowledge, expertise, responsibility and accountability to fulfil the committee remit. In October 2022, Senate agreed to

expand the membership of each Standing Committee to include three elected Senate members. An election is held annually to fill the three positions. All committees include student representation.

Discussion

5. The Committee membership for APRC will be presented to Senate for approval at its May meeting.
6. Changes to membership to take effect from 1 August 2025 are highlighted.
7. The APRC webpages will be updated with membership once all positions are confirmed.
8. The APRC Terms of Reference remain unchanged and are published via the following Academic Quality and Standards webpage:
<https://registryservices.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/academic-policy-regulations>

Resource implications

9. No amendments with resource implications are proposed.

Risk management

10. Effective academic governance assists the University in managing risk associated with its academic activities.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

11. N/A

Equality & diversity

12. The composition of the Senate Committees is largely determined according to defined role-holders (e.g. defined Assistant or Vice-Principal, Director of a defined Support Service or delegate) or as representatives of particular stakeholders (e.g. a College or the Students' Association). The membership of APRC is therefore largely a consequence of decisions taken elsewhere to appoint individuals to particular roles. Ensuring that appointment processes support a diverse staff body is part of the broader responsibility of the University.

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

13. APRC's Membership and Terms of Reference are communicated via the following Academic Quality and Standards webpage:
<https://registryservices.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/academic-policy-regulations>

Author

Sarah Barnard
Academic Quality and Standards
April 2025

Presenter

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

Freedom of Information: *Open*

If you require this document in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background, please contact academicpolicy@ed.ac.uk or Academic Quality and Standards, Old College, South Bridge, Edinburgh, EH8 9YL.

Name	Position	Term of Office
Dr Emily Taylor	Representative of CAHSS (Academic governance and student experience)	
Professor Jeremy Crang	Representative of CAHSS (Academic governance and student experience)	
Catriona Morley	Representative of CAHSS (Academic governance and student experience)	
Professor Linda Kirstein	Representative of CSE (Academic governance and student experience)	
New member TBC	Representative of CSE (Academic governance and student experience)	
Katy McPhail	Representative of CSE (Academic governance and student experience)	
Professor Gill Aitken	Representative of CMVM (Academic governance and student experience)	
Professor Mohini Gray	Representative of CMVM (Academic governance and student experience)	
Isabel Lavers	Representative of CMVM (Academic governance and student experience)	
Kirsty Woomble	Representative of CAHSS (Postgraduate research)	
Amanda Fegan	Representative of CSE (Postgraduate research)	
New member TBC	Representative of CMVM (Postgraduate research)	
Katya Amott	Edinburgh University Students' Association sabbatical officer	Ex Officio
Charlotte Macdonald	Member of the Edinburgh University Students' Association permanent staff (shared position)	
Clair Halliday	Member of the Edinburgh University Students' Association permanent staff (shared position)	
Lisa Dawson	Member of staff from Registry Services	Ex Officio
Dr Donna Murray	Member of staff from the Institute for Academic development (Director's nominee)	
Dr Adam Bunni	Member of staff from Academic Services	

Karen Howie	Member of staff from Information Services' Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division	
TBC – election outcome not yet known	Representative of Senate (CAHSS)	1 August 2025 – 31 July 2026
TBC – election outcome not yet known	Representative of Senate (CMVM)	1 August 2025 – 31 July 2026
TBC – election outcome not yet known	Representative of Senate (CSE)	1 August 2025 – 31 July 2026
Victoria Buchanan	Co-opted member (Disability and Learning Support Service)	Up to 3 years
Lucy Evans	Co-opted member (Deputy Secretary, Students)	Up to 3 years
Callum Paterson	Co-opted member (Academic Engagement Coordinator, Edinburgh University Students' Association)	Up to 3 years
Cristina Matthews	Committee Secretary	

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**22 May 2025****Senate and Standing Committees Annual Internal Effectiveness Review****Description of paper**

1. This paper notifies the Committee of the plans for the annual internal review of Senate and its standing committees' effectiveness which Senate will be asked to approve at its May meeting.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is asked to note the plans.

Background and context

3. The Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance 2023 (64) states:

"The governing body is expected to review its own effectiveness each year and to undertake an externally facilitated evaluation of its own effectiveness and that of its committees, including size and composition of membership, at least every five years. As part of these processes or separately, the effectiveness of the academic board (also known as Senate, Senatus Academicus or academic council) is expected to be reviewed similarly. These reviews should be reported upon appropriately within the institution and outside. Externally facilitated reviews should be held following any period of exceptional change or upheaval (allowing suitable time to see the effects of changes made), the usual timetable for externally facilitated review being brought forward, if necessary in these circumstances."

4. Previously, the Senate annual internal effectiveness review process has involved a self-reflective survey of members which runs over summer. Response rates to these surveys have typically been low, with a response rate of 16% of members for 2023/24. For Senate standing committees, the process has also previously involved a self-reflective survey of members which runs over summer. Whilst response rates have been better than for Senate member surveys, they vary and are not consistently high. Surveying of committee members is not a requirement for internal effectiveness review.
5. A post-meeting survey for Senate, which is sent to members after each ordinary meeting, has been implemented for 2024/25. Meeting metrics and an analysis of the results are shared on the [Senate members' portal](#) alongside points of learning.
6. Senate members also received a survey on Senate and its committees as part of the work of the External Review Task and Finish Group in 2024/25, with outcomes informing actions in response to recommendations.

Discussion

7. For 2024/25 it is felt there is sufficient information available to conduct this year's internal effectiveness review of Senate and its standing committees without the need to issue a further survey to members. Additionally, there is a high risk that running a member survey and identification of actions as had been done in previous years will create overlap and/or duplication with the extensive work and changes that have been undertaken and are planned as a result of the externally facilitated review of Senate.
8. The internal effectiveness review for Senate and the standing committees for 2024/25 will therefore consist of the annual report from the standing committees to Senate (which has been significantly enhanced over previous years in response to feedback from Senate¹) and a summary report of the findings and action taken as a result of the Senate post-meeting survey. These will be presented to the October 2025 meeting of Senate.
9. Going forward, Academic Quality and Standards will lead work to develop proposals for how internal effectiveness review processes can be enhanced, with key considerations being:
 - How these processes can meaningfully support the evaluation of changes implemented in response to the externally facilitated review of Senate;
 - Engaging processes which encourage and enable participation;
 - How to capture a holistic view across Senate and its standing committees, so members are not being asked solely about their own committee; and
 - Internal and external benchmarking to ensure alignment with good practice and external requirements.

Resource implications

10. There are no additional resource implications as a result of the plans for internal effectiveness. Additional resource has been required in 2024/25 from Academic Quality and Standards to design, run and analyse the post-meetings survey and to identify and implement changes in response to feedback. If any additional actions are proposed, either in terms of the internal effectiveness review processes themselves or as a result of the review, the resource implications of these will need to be outlined and agreed.

Risk management

11. The annual effectiveness review process assists the University in ensuring that its academic governance arrangements are effective.

Equality & diversity

12. Equality and diversity implications of committee work are considered on an ongoing basis. Consideration will be given to ensuring that enhanced internal effectiveness review processes are equitable and inclusive. Action to improve equality, diversity and inclusion on Senate is being progressed separately by the University Lead, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in response to recommendations arising from the AdvanceHE external review of Senate effectiveness.

¹ 2023/24 report (Paper I) <https://registryservices.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2024-10/9%20October%202024%20-%20Agenda%20and%20Papers.pdf>

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

13. Two reports (the annual report from the standing committees to Senate and a summary report of the findings and action taken as a result of the Senate post-meeting survey) will be presented to the October Senate meeting, with any associated proposals for actions. Academic Quality and Standards will update Senate and the standing committees on work to enhance annual internal effectiveness review processes.

Author

Nichola Kett

Head of Academic Quality and Standards

April 2025

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