

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

Thursday 15th May 2025, 2pm –5pm

Hybrid meeting: Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House & Microsoft Teams

A G E N D A

1.	Welcome and Apologies	
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting To approve: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3rd April 2025	SQAC 24/25 5A
3.	Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Convener's communications	Verbal Update
	SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS	
4.	Degree Awards Outcomes 2023/24 To discuss.	SQAC 24/25 5B
5.	Student Data Monitoring: Data Analysis Update For information and comment.	SQAC 24/25 5C
6.	Thematic Review Proposal: Support for LGBTQ+ Students To approve.	SQAC 24/25 5D
	ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NOTING	
7.	Scotland's Rural College (SRUC): Accreditation Committee Annual Report 2024/25 For information.	SQAC 24/25 5E
8.	Annual Monitoring and Internal Periodic Review Themes 2023/24: University Level Actions For information.	SQAC 24/25 5F
9.	Principal's Teaching Award Scheme: April 2025 report For noting.	SQAC 24/25 5G
10.	Membership and Terms of Reference 2025/26 For information.	SQAC 24/25 5H
11.	Senate and Standing Committees Annual Internal Effectiveness Review For noting.	SQAC 24/25 5I

12.	Internal Periodic Review: Reports and Responses For approval/information.	SQAC 24/25 5J
13.	Any Other Business	
14.	Date of next meeting & 2025/26 dates (provisionally) All meetings hybrid and 2-5pm– venue TBC. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 30th September 2025 • Thursday 11th December 2025 • Thursday 26th February 2026 • Thursday 23rd April 2026 • Thursday 14th May 2026 	

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on
Thursday 20th February, 2-5pm
Hybrid meeting: Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House
and Microsoft Teams

1. Attendance

Present:	Position:
Professor Tina Harrison	Deputy Vice Principal, Students (Enhancement) (Convener)
Professor Jake Ansell	Senate Representative
Professor Matthew Bailey	Dean of Quality, CMVM
Dr Michael Barany	Senate Representative
Professor Laura Bradley	Doctoral College Representative of CAHSS (PGR)
Marianne Brown	Head of Academic Planning, Registry Services
Brian Connolly	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Academic Quality and Standards, Registry Services
Dr Anne Desler	School Representative of CAHSS
Faten Adam	School Representative of CSE
Olivia Eadie	Co-Director, Institute for Academic Development
Dr Neneh Rowa-Dewar	School Representative of CMVM
Professor James Hopgood	Dean of Quality and Enhancement, CSE
Callum Paterson	Academic Engagement and Policy Coordinator, Students
Dr Emily Taylor	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Validation, CAHSS
Dylan Walch	Vice President (Education), Students' Association
Professor Patrick Walsh	Senate Representative
Sinéad Docherty	Committee Secretary, Academic Quality and Standards, Registry Services
Apologies:	
Professor Nazira Karodia	Deputy Vice Chancellor and Vice Principal of Learning & Teaching, Edinburgh Napier University
In attendance:	
Fiona Buckland	Learning Technology Team Manager, Educational Design and Engagement
Suzanne Holland	Academic Policy Officer (Complaints), Registry Services
Nichola Kett	Head of Academic Quality and Standards, Registry Services

2. Minutes of February meeting (SQAC 24/25 4A)

Two amendments were agreed to the February minutes. It was agreed that page 6 should reference School annual monitoring reports for clarity, and reference should be made on page 9 to the recommendation concerning academic staff promotions. The minutes were approved pending the noted changes.

Action: Committee Secretary to update February minutes with two edits and publish on the Committee webpage.

Members discussed the timeframe for drafting and consulting upon Committee minutes. It was highlighted that in receiving the minutes with the papers one week ahead of the next meeting, members who did not attend the prior meeting only had one week to catch up on the record. It was commented that members' recollection of the discussion is impacted as more time passes, and to make use of accurate and effective input into the minutes it is preferable to have them circulated for consultation shortly after the Committee meeting.

The Committee were informed that the timeframe for drafting minutes is dependent upon the workload within the Academic Quality and Standards (AQS) team. Committee Secretaries endeavour to turn the minutes around quickly, but the task is considered alongside other priorities within the team. Internal Periodic Reviews (IPRs) are a particular demand on AQS resource in semester two each year, and as an external requirement this is a priority area of work. It was emphasised that AQS review their processes and look to balance workloads appropriately, but there remain peak times of year when demands on resource are especially high. Consultation on draft minutes has been introduced as an additional stage as good practice and this can be done when there is capacity to facilitate the process within a short timeframe.

There was discussion of how to approach minute writing and expectation management within the resources available. It was suggested that communication could be sent to members to inform them of minutes being deprioritised in the immediate weeks after a meeting to better set expectations of the timeframe. There was also a suggestion of issuing a quick note of the actions, to be followed by the full minutes within an agreed timeframe.

3. Matters Arising

- **Annual Monitoring Templates 2024/25**

Members were informed that the final templates were approved by Convener's action after consultation with the College Deans of Quality. The templates were presented to the School Directors of Quality network meeting which had been held earlier in the day.

- **Self- Evaluation Action Plan (SEAP)**

The Convener shared that the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) have identified the University's 2023/24 SEAP submission as an exemplar of good practice. Mature reflection and evaluation and the use of multi-year trend data were praised by the SFC. The Convener noted thanks to EUSA representatives and the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement for their work on creating the SEAP report.

4. Complaints Annual Report 2023/24 (SQAC 24/25 4B)

Colleagues from AQS and the Complaints team presented this paper to the Committee. It was highlighted that the complaints handling procedure must map to the clearly defined sector model. This model, with key performance indicators (KPIs) set by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), has been in place for two academic years. It is expected that the third year's report will be able to identify any trends. It is understood that the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is interested in trends in complaints and understanding what can be learnt from sector wide trends.

The Committee were informed that the complaints team are looking to enhance awareness and understanding within Schools of their complaint reporting responsibilities. Some Schools report quarterly whereas others are less consistent, and some have reported no complaints received. The central team are looking to ensure that stage 1 reporting is accurate. It was reported to the Committee that the complaints team are confident in the accuracy of stage 2 reports.

The discussion considered the risk of under-reporting, and considered measures which may help to improve stage 1 reporting. The SPSO have introduced a category of resolved, and it was suggested that this category should be highlighted as good practice within the process. It is possible that Schools are not reporting cases which they have resolved locally, but these should be logged to demonstrate the work that has been done. The central complaints team have held information briefings with Schools and offer refresher sessions on how to report complaints. Some Schools have experienced a turnover of area contacts for the complaints process, and new members of staff may benefit from briefing sessions. The Committee were advised that an escalation process has been put into place this year, which escalates areas not making returns to the University Executive. This will feature in the 2024/25 report.

It was noted that no more than 5% of stage 1 complaints should remain open beyond 10 working days. The complaints team did not identify any clear, recurring themes for cases which take longer to resolve at stage 1. The complaints team routinely advise areas that they can be consulted for cases which look like they will go over 10 days but areas have not been forthcoming in contacting the complaints team for their assistance.

A EUSA representative informed the Committee that separate discussions had been held with the Advice Place, who sometimes have a role in directing students toward the University's Complaints Procedure. Colleagues in the Advice Place reported their agreement with concerns around under-reporting and non-compliance with timeframes. There was also concern that there is not the right differentiation between a contact and a complaint, and some complaints are not being reported as a result.

Action: Complaints team to enquire with Communications and Marketing (CAM) about getting their guide to complaints and contact featured in all staff emails.

There was discussion of complaints submitted by postgraduate research students (PGR) and the complexities that may occur when a PGR student has both a staff and a student role. The complaints team routinely deal with complaints from PGR students and highlighted that these

can often come at the end of the programme, particularly when the case involves a complaint against a supervisor. It was noted that it is difficult for the complaints team to conduct a meaningful investigation for historic matters, and complaints are supposed to be received within 6 months. The complaints team reported that they have received complaints up to 5 years after the event.

The Committee were informed that it is standard practice for anyone named in a complaint to be contacted with details, and this is a possible explanation for late PGR complaints when the student does not wish for their supervisor to know. It was proposed that it may help PGR students to be aware of informal mechanisms for resolving complaints and issues, and support should be in place for these instances.

Action: All members to encourage awareness and reporting of complaints within their area, and share the resources that are available.

Action: Committee Secretary to share Complaints Annual Report with College Deans of Quality for circulation within their College Quality Committees.

5. Student Voice Update (SQAC 24/25 4C)

This paper was presented by the Head of Academic Planning and provided an update on the work that has been undertaken over the last year to learn about the student voice activity within each School. The Committee were informed that this work has identified the need for greater clarity and consistency in student voice activities, and in communicating responses back after gathering student feedback.

Therefore, a student voice framework is to be developed, which will offer structure and guidance for Schools in their student voice activity. This framework and associated guidance will be developed in partnership with EUSA and will focus on taught students in its initial phase. It was recognised that different feedback mechanisms are in place for PGR students.

It was emphasised that this framework is looking to encourage innovation, as student voice activity benefits from sharing ideas and approaches without being prescriptive. A student voice PTAS project from the School of Mathematics was cited as an example of good practice at a local level. It is intended that the framework will offer a tool-kit with evidence-based interventions that Schools can use, and will facilitate consistency and common principles across the University.

The Committee discussed the importance of responding to feedback and how this is an integral aspect of student voice activity. It was proposed that “feedback spiral” is the preferred term amongst students rather than “feedback loop” as it better indicates that progress is expected as a result of feedback. Setting expectations is a key part of this, with clear communication needed to explain when change cannot happen.

Discussion also addressed the importance of understanding how effective different mechanisms are, to ensure that resource and workload is focussed in appropriate areas. The Committee were informed that the Student Analytics and Insights Modelling team is constructing a PowerBI data

dashboard which will capture student voice data and effective mechanisms. This will support colleagues in monitoring activity and effectiveness. Benchmarking with Russell Group institutions and the wider sector is also underway, in order to learn from different methodological approaches.

The Committee were assured that there will be plenty of opportunities for members and other colleagues to feed into the student voice work. It was also highlighted that the project can use some of the information we already have, such as data from mid-course surveys and NSS results, to inform the framework development. This area of work will not require all new initiatives to be developed but can draw from existing models. This aligns with the intention to pull together efforts across the University and be more efficient with the resource and information that we already have.

6. Closing the Feedback Loop (SQAC 24/25 4D)

This paper, presented by the Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Validation CAHSS, set out a proposed University wide-commitment to responding to student feedback and a guarantee on closing the feedback loop. The objective is to have clear baseline expectations for responding to feedback within a set timeframe and for all areas to be accountable for providing feedback. This is motivated, in part, by Schools receiving feedback for issues outside of their control and consequently needing a response from central services to close the loop. It was highlighted that no part of the University is mandated to respond to feedback within a certain timeframe, and this leads to a lack of timely or forthcoming responses.

It was explained that students often raise the same issues year-on-year and new students are not aware of previous updates or context. It is reasonable for services to continually explain progress, or otherwise, on key issues for the benefit of all students. It was recognised that in many areas this is happening, often facilitated by the Student Support Model, and it would be beneficial for this to be formalised and evaluated. It was noted that appropriate questions already exist in University and sector-wide surveys which would evaluate the feedback loop and avoid the need for further surveys to be developed as an evaluation tool.

There was discussion of how a feedback system would operate and be monitored. The ticketing system used by areas such as Information Services (IS) was cited as a responsive and timely service, but it was acknowledged that there is not enough resource to implement this on a University-wide basis. Therefore, it is expected that clearly defined reporting lines would be set between Schools and central services, with key points of contact identified, and ownership clearly understood and communicated. There is a sense that informal mechanisms are in place in some parts of the University, but this must be formalised with a clear escalation route for acquiring a response. A core part of the system will be central student services having someone responsible for responding to student feedback.

The current lack of formal reporting structure within feedback was highlighted as reason why issues can be so difficult to resolve where they are referred to a different area. It was recognised that a prescriptive approach would not be effective when there are so many different scenarios that can require feedback; however, a commonly understood reporting structure and

obligation to respond within a defined period is expected to have a positive impact on the feedback loop and on student voice satisfaction. There was agreement that students should only have to give feedback once and the University, as a whole, is responsible for responding to that. It is not the responsibility of students to have to chase up a response or to approach multiple areas to ensure the right service is looped in.

The Committee articulated their endorsement of the approach and standards set out in the paper. There was concern over the timeframe set out, with some hesitation on whether the mechanisms can be implemented within the timeframe given. It was agreed that the Colleges and Academic Planning would consult with their own areas and with each other to ensure alignment with ongoing work and to develop a timeframe in which this proposal can be realistically implemented. After these discussions, the item will be brought back to the next meeting of the Committee.

Action: College Deans of Quality and Head of Academic Planning to liaise on implementation of this proposal.

7. Student Data Monitoring Task Group: Sector Analysis (SQAC 24/25 4E)

The Convener presented the update from the Student Data Monitoring Task Group, a subgroup of SQAC. The update outlined sector analysis work undertaken by the group, and it was communicated that a further update on data collection and analysis would be forthcoming from the task group. It was emphasised that the interventions detailed in the paper are examples of promising practice within the sector, although they often do not have robust evaluations attached. The biggest awarding gap within the University of Edinburgh has been identified as that which affects Black students, and this is also reflected in the sector. The paper suggests some measures to be piloted and evaluated for impact in reducing the awarding gap.

The Committee were informed that the task group wish to recommend interventions which can be measured for impact. It was recognised that data and evidence is vital in selecting interventions and evaluating their success, and it was also acknowledged that the evidence base can be informed by more than just data sets. There was agreement that evidence-based interventions are important, but also recognised that some of the suggested interventions may run counter to current evidence and therefore it is vital to pilot and evaluate these mechanisms to establish their impact on our student community.

During the discussion, it was suggested that there would be value in the task group contacting School Directors of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) to establish whether any of the proposed interventions are already in place locally. It is important to effectively share knowledge and resources, where possible, and avoid duplicating work that may be happening elsewhere.

The Committee were supportive of utilising mechanisms already in place, such as the EDI Committee and the Principal's Teaching Award Scheme (PTAS). It was noted that senior leadership has a role in highlighting this work at the top of the University, and that explicit messaging around KPIs and commitment to reducing the gap would be another effective means in furthering this workstream. It was commented that no members of the senior leadership team

are measured on awarding gaps and this may indicate a gap in University strategy which should be addressed.

Action: IAD representative to liaise with PTAS colleagues to explore opportunities for the Student Data Monitoring Task Group and related activity.

Comments were received on the terminology used in the paper and labelling of particular student groups. The Committee agreed that it would be appropriate for this to be an institutional level discussion with the involvement of the new University lead for EDI.

The Committee were informed that this area of work aligns with sector initiatives connected to Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP). Using data and evidence to respond to student outcomes is an area of focus, and there will be opportunities for the University to work with other institutions and develop sector practice.

8. Digital Badges Governance (SQAC 24/25 4F)

A colleague from the Educational Design and Engagement team was in attendance to speak to this item, which has been brought to the Committee for approval. It was explained to members that the paper outlined the proposed changes to the approval process for digital badges. A key change would be the role of Boards of Studies (BoS) approving new or revised short courses which seek to issue digital badges to their learners. It is not expected that this will create additional work in the BoS approval process, who are already responsible for approving credit and non-credit bearing courses.

The Committee discussed the proposal, and questioned how the proposed approval process would work for professional areas which do not have BoS. In response, it was explained that Boards of Directors can take on the role, and that this is the case within Information Services Group (ISG), as an example. It was suggested that there may be opportunities for collaboration between services as they develop their digital badges offering.

There was discussion of the criteria that Boards would need in order to consider the approval of badges. The Committee were informed that criteria is outlined on the badging profiling website, which details the earning and assessment criteria. It was emphasised to the Committee that digital badges relate to non-credit bearing provision and as such does not have the same criteria as credit-bearing. The proposed approval process is intended to provide consistency throughout different areas of the University responsible for badges and to assure the quality of the University of Edinburgh's offering.

The Committee were supportive of this position but questions remained around the strength of the current criteria, and the appropriate area of responsibility for approvals within professional services areas. There was also a concern raised around this oversight not applying to existing courses and the potential for inconsistency to arise as a result. There was a suggestion that a governance or steering group might be needed to monitor consistency in the provision of digital badges across the institution, in addition to the proposed approval process. It was agreed that conversations would continue to address these concerns and the paper would be brought back for decision by the Committee at a later date.

Action: Convener, AQS colleagues and College Deans of Quality to meet with Educational Design and Engagement team to further discuss approach to digital badges governance before retuning to full Committee.

9. Taught External Examiner Reports: Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Thematic Analysis 2023/24 (SQAC 24/25 4G)

This paper provided an analysis of data from the External Examiner Reporting System (EERS). Key points highlighted to the Committee were the high number of commendations and low number of issues reported, and that the major themes identified in the analysis had already been pulled out through annual monitoring and internal periodic review reporting.

The Committee discussed feedback consistently received from External Examiners (EEs), which raised issues with the timeliness and amount of information given to them in order to perform their role well. This indicates the need for focus across the University on ensuring EEs are provided with the correct information in a timely manner. It was noted that there is University guidance to facilitate this, but engagement between Schools and EEs is believed to be an issue. Provision of training for EEs was proposed as another mechanism to help set out the role and expectations of those acting as EEs.

There was discussion of how to escalate this recurring concern and feed it in to the University EE practices. The Convener advised the Committee that there is an ongoing Board of Examiners workstream and related projects, and will therefore feed the QA voice into that process. It was also recognised that there is a role for the Colleges in sharing relevant information locally and setting expectations in their area.

Action: Convener to highlight EE feedback and themes to Board of Examiners workstream to help inform future direction.

Some comments were received on the production of the report. It was highlighted that it would be best practice to use mixed bar graphs to illustrate the points made in figure 2. It was also noted that CAHSS colleagues question the accuracy of the figures, as an EE may enter the same comment into multiple boxes and this creates duplicate entries. It was requested that future EERS analysis reports clearly state how many reports were received from EEs and how many had comments attached which are then reflected in the analysis. Colleagues from CSE shared that they noticed disparity in comments across Schools and College, and highlighted that one CSE School does not use the EERS system and are therefore not reflected in the overall analysis.

Action: Academic Quality and Standards to incorporate requested changes into future iterations of EERS analysis report.

10. External Examiners: Exceptional Appointments Report 2023/24

The Committee formally noted the report which detailed the exceptional External Examiner (EE) appointments made during 2023/24. The College Deans of Quality shared brief reflections on the appointments relevant to their College.

On behalf of CAHSS, the Dean of Quality noted that the College has experienced a high number of exceptional appointments. The College has sent communications to Schools and created a SharePoint page which sets out the role and expectations for an External Examiner. It is hoped that the number of exceptional appointments will drop as a result of these clarifications.

The Dean of Quality, CMVM noted that their cases of exceptional appointments have decreased. It was highlighted that, as an enhancement to the EE process, a vet in practice was brought in as an EE alongside another EE affiliated with a University.

On behalf of CSE, the Dean of Quality reflected that the College's exceptional appointments are in line with University policy and the College and Schools are working well together to manage nominations.

11. Committee Priorities 2025/26 (SQAC 24/25 4I)

An updated version of the Committee Priorities was presented for discussion and approval. It was noted that the priorities from the current year have been taken forward into the next year with language updated to reflect change in focus or objectives, where required. It was proposed that student voice should be added as a priority, in light of this being an area of focus for the next year. The Committee agreed that this should be included as an additional priority.

Action: Academic Quality and Standards to liaise with EUSA and Academic Planning representatives to shape student voice priority.

There was a query as to why the priorities applying to all Senate Standing Committees from 2024/25 were not brought forward into 2025/26. In response, it was explained that the Task and Finish Group working on the Senate external review recommendations are taking forward those areas of work.

There was discussion of factors which may impact on quality processes and it was commented that there is a risk to quality assurance if it is affected by the financial environment of the University. It was suggested that financial context should be included as a theme which cuts across all of the priorities. To counter this, it was emphasised that the University must meet the external requirements set by the QAA and quality processes will continue to run in a way that meets the requirements. It was anticipated that the existing quality processes, including annual monitoring, will surface any concerns around impact on quality. After discussion, the Committee agreed that it is preferable for any quality concerns to be surfaced organically through existing processes, rather than setting an explicit priority which may have the effect of leading towards issues.

It was noted that priorities for all Senate Standing Committees will be discussed by full Senate. The priorities were approved by the Committee, with one member adding their approval on the basis that the priorities are subject to final approval at Senate, rather than an item for noting.

Committee Secretary's Note: A review of Senate Standing Orders and of the Committees' terms of reference identified that formal Senate approval is not required for priorities. However, the priorities will be presented to Senate and Senate may propose amendments or additions to the priorities.

12. AOB

There was no other business to consider.

13. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 15th May 2025, 2-5pm.

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

May 2025

Degrees Awarded Outcomes

Description of paper

1. This paper provides an overview of the degree outcomes awarded to students who completed their studies in 2023/24 academic year. This includes outcomes at institutional and School level, and across key student groups.

Fit with remit

Quality Assurance Committee	Y/N
Oversee the delivery and enhancement of the University's quality assurance framework, ensuring that it meets external requirements.	Y
Maintain oversight of the outcomes of the quality assurance framework, ensuring that actions are addressed, and support the sharing of good practice.	Y
Promote the quality assurance framework as an important part of the University's activities and ensure that the outcomes inform relevant University business.	Y
Support the University's engagement with external quality requirements and activities, including: Enhancement-Led Institutional Review, the UK Quality Code, and responses to consultations and initiatives.	Y
Identify areas for innovation and enhancement of the student experience and ensure that these inform Senate Education Committee's policy development.	Y
Consider the implications of the Committee's work and its decisions in the context of external initiatives and compliance and legal frameworks, particularly in relation to equality and diversity.	Y

Action requested / recommendation

2. The committee are asked to note and discuss this paper.

Background and context

3. Analysis of the degree outcomes awarded by the University is reviewed annually by Senate Quality Assurance Committee as part of ensuring academic standards are monitored and maintained.
4. Outcomes are presented across a five-year period to illustrate trends over time, with summaries of year-on-year changes and overall shifts across the period. Due to the number of factors that have impacted outcomes during this time, 2018/19 outcomes continue to be included in the data tables as a baseline reference point. Known factors that have impacted degree outcomes across all, or parts of, the University within the five-year period include:

- **2019/20** – Introduction of the “no detriment” policy to mitigate the impact of Covid-19
 - **2022/23** – Marking and assessment boycott
5. The paper also provides insights into the awarding gap between key student groups. This report aligns with the work of the Data Monitoring Task Group and will continue to evolve as requirements are defined through the group's activities. As a result of work undertaken in 2024/25, additional analysis has been included in the annual report for the first time, specifically the categorisation of key student groups (disability, ethnicity, domicile).

Discussion

6. Full analysis and data are presented within the main body of the paper. At institutional level, the key outcomes are:
- In 2023/24, approximately one-third (33.8%) of undergraduate students at the University achieved a First Class degree. This represents a decrease of 0.3 percentage points compared to 2022/23 and a significant decline of 6.6 percentage points over the past five years. However, it remains 5 percentage points higher than the pre-pandemic outcome recorded in 2018/19.
 - Over 90% of students at the University obtained a degree with a high classification. This reflects a significant increase of 1.1 percentage points compared to 2022/23 and a 1 percentage point increase from 2018/19.
7. An awarding gap persists between student groups across the demographic and widening participation factors analysed. Students with a disclosed disability, those from a Scottish domicile, students from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, and those identified as widening participation are significantly less likely to be awarded a First Class degree.
8. Similarly, students who are male, from a Scottish domicile, from BAME backgrounds (non UK only), or identified as widening participation are less likely to achieve a high classification award.

Resource implications

9. There are no resource implications of this work.

Risk management

10. The University must maintain oversight of the distribution of degrees awarded to ensure academic standards are monitored.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

11. This paper does not contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Equality & diversity

12. Outcomes across key student groups are included in analysis to allow oversight of awarding gaps.

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

13. This paper presents an update for discussion. Outcomes will be shared with local areas for consideration.

Author

Vivian So – Senior Analyst

*Marianne Brown – Head of Academic
Planning, Registry Services*

May 2025

Presenter

Marianne Brown

Vivian So

May 2025

Freedom of Information

Open

Degrees Awarded Analysis

Student Analytics, Insights & Modelling

May 2025

Introduction

This report presents analysis on degree award outcomes for undergraduate students at the University over the past five academic years from 2019/20 to 2023/24. The data is obtained internally from the Student Record system¹, and includes award classification information for all students who completed their degree programmes of study:

- All awards, including both exit and interim awards.
- All award qualifications, including Degrees, Undergraduate Certificate of Higher Education, and Undergraduate Diploma of Higher Education.
- All programmes, including integrated masters, medical, dental and veterinary medicines degrees.
- All SRUC programmes are excluded.
- High classification is defined as follow:
 - Honours programmes: First Classification or Second Class, Division 1
 - Integrated masters, MBChB and BVM&S programmes: Target award is the same as the award they received (e.g., Pass or above)
- Low classification is defined as follow:
 - Second Class, Division 2
 - Third Class

The analysis examines trends in the proportion of students who achieved a First Class degree, a high classification degree, and a low classification degree, at both University and School levels. It examines differences in awarding outcomes between student demographic groups and widening participation² factors.

As with previous reports, data is analysed over a five-year period. Due to the level of fluctuation in outcomes over the analysed five-year period, 2018/19 outcomes are also included for reference. Factors which have impacted outcomes across all, or parts, of the University during this period are:

- **2019/20** – Introduction of the “no detriment” policy to mitigate the impact of Covid-19
- **2022/23** – Marking and assessment boycott

¹ The data is a snapshot taken on 24 March 2025.

² Widening participation data is only available for UK-domiciled students.

First Class Degrees

In the 2023/24 academic year, approximately one-third (33.8%) of UG students at the University achieved a First Class degree. This figure represents a decrease of 0.3% compared to 2022/23, and a significant decline of 6.6% over the last five years, however remains higher than pre-pandemic levels in 2018/19 (increase of 5%).

Year	% First Class
2018/19	28.8%
2019/20	40.4%
2020/21	45.0%
2021/22	37.3%
2022/23	34.1%
2023/24	33.8%

The School of Informatics had the highest proportion of First Class degree (56.2%) in 2023/24, followed by the School of Literatures, Languages and Culture (48.9%), and the School of Mathematics (45.1%).

While the majority of Schools maintained a steady trend in the proportion of First Class degrees awarded between 2022/23 and 2023/24, significant decreases were observed in the School of Mathematics (-18.9%) and the Business School (-7.4%). The proportion of First Class degrees awarded by the School of Mathematics has been particularly variable over the analysed period. Substantial declines were also observed in the School of Physics and Astronomy (-10.8%) and the School of Chemistry (-9.4%), although these changes were not statistically significant.

The School of Divinity (+8.3%), and the School of Engineering (+5.2%) experienced the largest increases, yet these changes were not statistically significant.

Over the five-year period, there was a general decline in the proportion of First Class degrees awarded. Nine Schools experienced significant decreases in the proportion of First Class degrees awarded from 2019/20 to 2023/24. This trend was anticipated, with the high proportion of First Class awards in 2019/20 attributed to the "no detriment" policy implemented to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Moray House School of Education and Sport (+7.1%), and the School of GeoSciences (+4.7%) demonstrated the largest increases, however these changes were not significant.

Due to the level of fluctuation across the five year period, a six year comparison is also included. Over the past six years, there has been a general rise in the proportion of First Class degrees awarded across all Schools. During this period, seven Schools saw significant increases in the First Class degrees awarded from 2018/19 to 2023/24.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	YoY Change	5-Year Change	6-Year Change
BIO	35.1%	32.0%	42.3%	42.4%	33.7%	33.8%	0.1%	1.8%	-1.2%
BMS	32.3%	35.2%	30.2%	30.2%	31.4%	31.4%	-0.1%	-3.9%	-0.9%
BUS	31.0%	46.6%	36.3%	33.0%	33.9%	26.4%	-7.4%†	-20.2%†	-4.5%
CHE	38.4%	65.0%	69.2%	52.6%	45.1%	35.7%	-9.4%	-29.3%†	-2.7%
CSC	12.5%*	33.3%*	33.3%*	14.3%*	0.0%*	0.0%*	0.0%	-33.3%	-12.5%
DIV	16.2%	32.7%	38.0%	19.4%	23.9%	32.2%	8.3%	-0.4%	16.0%†
ECA	30.8%	46.6%	45.5%	41.6%	36.3%	38.2%	1.8%	-8.5%†	7.4%†
ECN	26.7%	42.9%	39.0%	29.4%	33.9%	34.8%	1.0%	-8.0%	8.1%
EDU	19.4%	24.6%	52.0%	24.1%	32.8%	31.7%	-1.1%	7.1%	12.3%†
ENG	26.4%	36.4%	41.7%	35.5%	26.9%	32.2%	5.3%	-4.2%	5.8%
GEO	28.0%	29.0%	42.0%	37.7%	30.7%	33.6%	3.0%	4.7%	5.7%
HCA	24.7%	41.6%	45.8%	32.8%	29.8%	33.6%	3.8%	-8.0%†	8.9%†
HEA	43.9%	53.8%	62.2%	51.1%	32.7%	32.2%	-0.5%	-21.6%†	-11.7%
INF	58.1%	61.1%	73.4%	61.4%	57.5%	56.2%	-1.4%	-5.0%	-1.9%
LAW	20.6%	40.3%	58.4%	42.3%	30.2%	33.2%	2.9%	-7.1%	12.6%†
LLC	37.9%	59.1%	70.1%	57.1%	49.1%	48.9%	-0.2%	-10.2%†	10.9%†
MAT	53.5%	64.8%	58.4%	55.9%	64.0%	45.1%	-18.9%†	-19.7%†	-8.4%
MED					0.4%		-0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
PHY	37.8%	51.7%	45.9%	48.6%	46.3%	35.5%	-10.8%	-16.2%†	-2.3%
PPL	36.3%	48.6%	48.5%	39.1%	33.3%	37.2%	3.9%	-11.4%†	0.9%
SPS	24.4%	36.7%	42.5%	36.1%	31.2%	32.7%	1.5%	-4.0%	8.3%†
VET				1.6%	4.7%	3.3%	-1.4%	3.3%	3.3%

* CSC have less than 10 students in 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24.

† The YoY/5Y/6Y difference is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

High Classification Degrees

In the 2023/24 academic year, over 90% of students at the University obtained degrees with a high classification. There was a significant increase of 1.1% compared to 2022/23 and a significant decrease in 2.0% over the last 5 years.

Year	% High Classification
2018/19	89.8%
2019/20	92.3%
2020/21	94.2%
2021/22	91.0%
2022/23	89.2%
2023/24	90.3%

More than 80% of students from all Schools received a high classification degree in 2023/24. Both Edinburgh Medical School and The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies had at least 99% of their students achieving a high classification degree. The lowest were seen in the Moray

House School of Education and Sport (80.9%), School of Physics and Astronomy (81.9%), and the School of Mathematics (82.1%).

While the majority of the Schools maintained a stable trend (with variation +/- 2%) in the proportion of high classification degrees awarded between the 2022/23 and 2023/24 academic years, the School of Mathematics (-9.9%) experienced the most significant decrease, whereas the School of Engineering (+6.1%) had the most significant increase.

Over the past five years, there were a significant decrease in the proportion of high classification degrees in the School of Health in Social Science (-14.4%), the School of Mathematics (-9.1%), the School of History, Classics and Archaeology (-6.3%), and the Business School (-4.7%) saw a significant decrease in the proportion of high classification degrees.

Over the past six years, most Schools maintained a consistent trend in the proportion of high classification degrees awarded. However, the School of Health in Social Science (-14.5%), and Deanery of Biomedical Sciences (-4.6%) saw significant declines in high classification degrees awarded. In contrasts, the School of GeoSciences (+7.9%) was the only School that experienced a significant increase.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	YoY Change	5-Year Change	6-Year Change
BIO	87.9%	87.4%	93.9%	90.9%	87.4%	84.5%	-2.8%	-2.8%	-3.4%
BMS	96.8%	94.9%	93.4%	93.9%	92.8%	92.2%	-0.6%	-2.7%	-4.6% [†]
BUS	92.1%	96.4%	93.9%	94.2%	88.2%	91.7%	3.5%	-4.7% [†]	-0.4%
CHE	86.6%	93.0%	96.2%	89.6%	88.5%	88.9%	0.4%	-4.1%	2.3%
CSC	62.5%*	66.7%*	55.6%*	85.7%*	28.6%*	75.0%*	46.4%	8.3%	12.5%
DIV	98.6%	89.8%	98.6%	95.5%	93.5%	98.3%	4.8%	8.5%	-0.3%
ECA	86.4%	88.6%	88.7%	91.2%	86.2%	86.1%	-0.1%	-2.4%	-0.2%
ECN	84.9%	91.4%	88.8%	86.4%	84.1%	88.2%	4.1%	-3.3%	3.3%
EDU	75.4%	84.7%	94.7%	77.5%	81.4%	80.9%	-0.5%	-3.8%	5.5%
ENG	84.3%	88.1%	92.5%	87.6%	82.7%	89.1%	6.3% [†]	1.0%	4.7%
GEO	85.8%	89.1%	93.4%	90.5%	88.4%	93.7%	5.3%	4.7%	7.9% [†]
HCA	90.7%	93.3%	97.5%	89.5%	87.5%	87.0%	-0.5%	-6.3% [†]	-3.7%
HEA	97.6%	97.4%	95.6%	93.6%	84.6%	83.1%	-1.6%	-14.4% [†]	-14.5% [†]
INF	84.5%	88.6%	94.2%	87.3%	87.3%	90.0%	2.7%	1.4%	5.5%
LAW	91.1%	91.8%	96.3%	93.4%	87.0%	89.1%	2.1%	-2.7%	-2.0%
LLC	96.5%	98.0%	99.1%	97.1%	94.9%	95.7%	0.9%	-2.3%	-0.8%
MAT	86.0%	91.2%	90.5%	88.8%	92.0%	82.1%	-9.9% [†]	-9.1% [†]	-3.9%
MED	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.6%	99.1%	99.6%	0.4%	-0.4%	-0.4%
PHY	81.1%	87.3%	93.2%	83.6%	85.3%	81.9%	-3.4%	-5.4%	0.8%
PPL	94.9%	94.9%	91.9%	88.2%	90.3%	91.7%	1.4%	-3.2%	-3.2%
SPS	90.1%	92.4%	95.0%	91.1%	91.3%	93.3%	2.0%	1.0%	3.2%
VET	99.4%	99.3%	100.0%	99.5%	98.8%	99.4%	0.6%	0.1%	0.1%

* CSC have less than 10 students in 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24.

[†] The YoY/5Y/6Y difference is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

Low Classification Degrees

In the 2023/24 academic year, 8.0% of students at the University obtained degrees with a low classification. There was a slight decrease of 0.5% compared to 2022/23 and a significant increase of 1.2% over the last 5 years.

Year	% Low Classification
2018/19	8.5%
2019/20	6.8%
2020/21	4.8%
2021/22	7.1%
2022/23	8.5%
2023/24	8.0%

The School of Physics and Astronomy reported the highest proportion of low classification degrees at 21.0% in 2023/24, followed by the Moray House School of Education and Sport (16.9%), the School of Mathematics (15.9%), and the School of Biological Sciences (14.0%). Meanwhile, the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures had the lowest percentage of students obtaining low classification degrees, with just 2.9% of their students obtaining low classification degrees.

While the majority of the Schools maintained a steady trend (with variation +/- 2%) of low classification degrees awarded between the 2022/23 and 2023/24 academic years, the School of Mathematics experienced a significant increase of 4.8%.

Over the past five years, both the School of Mathematics and the School of History, Classics and Archaeology have seen significant increases in the proportion of low classification degrees, at 10.2% and 5.9% respectively. In contrast, although the School of Divinity saw the largest decrease in low classification, this change was not statistically significant.

Meanwhile, over the last six years, the Deanery of Biomedical Sciences (+4.7%), and the School of Philosophy, Psychology, and Language Sciences (+3.7%) had experience significant increases in the proportion of low classification degrees awarded. On the other hand, the School of GeoSciences (-5.5%), and the School of Social and Political Science (-4.8%) have both recorded significant declines.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	YoY Change	5-Year Change	6-Year Change
BIO	11.5%	11.7%	5.6%	7.6%	11.6%	14.0%	2.4%	2.4%	2.5%
BMS	2.4%	4.1%	5.5%	5.0%	6.1%	7.1%	1.0%	3.0%	4.7% [†]
BUS	4.8%	2.4%	4.4%	2.9%	8.6%	5.8%	-2.8%	3.4% [†]	1.0%
CHE	13.4%	7.0%	3.0%	7.1%	8.2%	7.9%	-0.3%	0.9%	-5.5%
CSC	37.5%*	33.3%*	44.4%*	14.3%*	71.4%*	25.0%*	-46.4%	-8.3%	-12.5%
DIV	1.4%	10.2%	1.4%		2.2%		-2.2%	-10.2%	-1.4%
ECA	10.5%	10.3%	8.0%	7.5%	9.9%	10.2%	0.4%	-0.1%	-0.3%
ECN	14.0%	6.3%	10.2%	12.7%	15.5%	11.5%	-4.0%	5.2%	-2.5%
EDU	21.3%	14.6%	4.9%	18.2%	14.7%	16.9%	2.3%	2.4%	-4.3%
ENG	16.5%	12.5%	6.7%	11.4%	16.3%	11.9%	-4.4%	-0.7%	-4.7%

GEO	10.9%	8.7%	6.2%	7.0%	9.3%	5.4%	-4.0%	-3.4%	-5.5% [†]
HCA	8.0%	5.2%	1.7%	6.9%	7.3%	11.1%	3.8%	5.9% [†]	3.1%
HEA	2.4%	2.6%		2.1%	7.7%	8.5%	0.8%	5.9%	6.0%
INF	5.8%	7.8%	3.9%	10.4%	8.7%	6.0%	-2.8%	-1.8%	0.2%
LAW	6.1%	6.9%	3.7%	6.1%	10.7%	6.2%	-4.5%	-0.7%	0.1%
LLC	2.6%	1.5%	0.4%	1.6%	3.0%	2.9%	-0.1%	1.4%	0.3%
MAT	10.1%	5.7%	8.0%	9.5%	6.3%	15.9%	9.6% [†]	10.2% [†]	5.8%
MED							0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
PHY	19.7%	16.1%	10.3%	11.0%	16.9%	21.0%	4.1%	4.9%	1.3%
PPL	3.9%	5.1%	5.4%	10.0%	7.9%	7.6%	-0.3%	2.5%	3.7% [†]
SPS	9.0%	6.2%	4.2%	7.2%	5.5%	4.2%	-1.3%	-2.0%	-4.8% [†]
VET		0.7%			1.2%		-1.2%	-0.7%	0.0%

* CSC have less than 10 students in 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24.

[†] The YoY/5Y/6Y difference is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

Awarding Gap

The report further analyses awarding gaps in First Class, high classification and low classification degrees based on demographic and widening participation factors.

Sex

In 2023/24, female students (33.2%) were slightly less likely than male students (34.9%) to achieve a First Class degree while other students (36.4%) were slightly more likely than male students to obtain a First Class degree, yet the awarding gaps were not statistically significant. However, a significantly higher proportion of female students (91.8%) achieved a high classification degree compared to the male students (87.9%). In contrast, there were significantly lower percentage of female students (6.8%) graduated with a low classification degree than male students (10.0%). Meanwhile, although there were lower proportion of students who identified themselves as other sex obtained both high and low classification degrees than male students, though these awarding gaps were both not statistically significant.

	First Class Degree			High Classification Degree		
	Male	Female	Other	Male	Female	Other
2018/19	28.1%	29.2% (1.1%)	71.4%* (43.3%)	87.0%	91.6% (4.5% [†])	100.0%* (13.0%)
2019/20	39.3%	41.1% (1.8%)	80.0%* (40.7%)	89.3%	94.2% (4.9% [†])	100.0%* (10.7%)
2020/21	42.5%	46.5% (3.9% [†])	83.3% (40.8% [†])	91.8%	95.7% (3.9% [†])	91.7% (-0.2%)
2021/22	36.1%	38.0% (1.9%)	58.3% (22.3% [†])	88.0%	92.8% (4.7% [†])	95.8% (7.8%)
2022/23	34.8%	33.5% (-1.3%)	47.4% (12.5%)	86.9%	90.6% (3.7% [†])	92.1% (5.2%)
2023/24	34.9%	33.2% (-1.7%)	36.4% (1.5%)	87.9%	91.8% (3.9% [†])	81.8% (-6.1%)

Note: The figure in the parenthesis indicates the awarding gap between "Male" and the corresponding sex.

* There were less than 10 students identified as "Other" in 2018/19 and 2019/20.

[†] The awarding gap between "Male" and the corresponding sex is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, with a Bonferroni correction applied to adjust for multiple comparisons.

	Low Classification Degree		
	Male	Female	Other
2018/19	11.3%	6.7% (-4.6% [†])	0.0%* (-11.3%)
2019/20	9.3%	5.2% (-4.1% [†])	0.0%* (-9.3%)
2020/21	6.9%	3.4% (-3.5% [†])	0.0% (-6.9%)
2021/22	9.2%	5.9% (-3.3% [†])	4.2% (-5.0%)
2022/23	10.7%	7.1% (-3.6% [†])	5.3% (-5.4%)
2023/24	10.0%	6.8% (-3.2% [†])	6.1% (-4.0%)

Note: The figure in the parenthesis indicates the awarding gap between "Male" and the corresponding sex.

* There were less than 10 students identified as "Other" in 2018/19 and 2019/20.

[†] The awarding gap between "Male" and the corresponding sex is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, with a Bonferroni correction applied to adjust for multiple comparisons.

Disability

Students with a disclosed disability (31.9%) were significantly less likely than those without a disclosed disability (34.6%) to achieve First Class degrees in 2023/24. The awarding gap has widened compared to the previous year. Although there was an increase in high classification degrees among students with disabilities, their awarding compared to peers without disabilities continued to be not significant. Similarly, student with a disclosed disability (8.6%) were slightly more likely to graduate with low classification degrees, yet this difference was not significant.

	First Class Degree			High Classification Degree		
	Disclosed disability	No disclosed disability	Awarding Gap	Disclosed disability	No disclosed disability	Awarding Gap
2018/19	26.3%	29.3%	-3.0%	89.5%	89.8%	-0.4%
2019/20	38.7%	40.7%	-2.1%	89.9%	92.7%	-2.8% [†]
2020/21	44.9%	45.0%	-0.1%	92.7%	94.6%	-1.9% [†]
2021/22	36.1%	37.7%	-1.5%	89.2%	91.5%	-2.3% [†]
2022/23	33.2%	34.4%	-1.3%	87.9%	89.6%	-1.7%
2023/24	31.9%	34.6%	-2.7% [†]	89.2%	90.7%	-1.6%

[†] The awarding gap is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

	Low Classification Degree		
	Disclosed disability	No disclosed disability	Awarding Gap
2018/19	7.5%	8.7%	-1.2%
2019/20	8.0%	6.6%	1.4%
2020/21	5.3%	4.6%	0.6%
2021/22	7.2%	7.1%	0.2%
2022/23	8.5%	8.4%	0.1%
2023/24	8.6%	7.8%	0.8%

[†] The awarding gap is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

Disability Type

The Data Task Group has been working with colleagues in Disability and Learning Support Service to determine more granular categories for students who have disclosed a disability. The mapping between the disability type used in this paper and in the Student Record is shown in Appendix D.

Students with various types of disabilities: mental health conditions, physical impairments or mobility issues, a social/communication impairments, specific learning difficulties, multiple disabilities or those who preferred not to disclose their disability, generally were less likely to attain a First Class compared to those with no known disability. However, these awarding gaps were not statistically significant.

Meanwhile, compared to students with no known disability, those with mental health conditions, social/communication impairments, multiple disabilities or other disabilities, or those who preferred not to disclose their disability were less likely to graduate with a higher classification degree, however the difference is not statistically significant.

The awarding gap between students with no known disability and those with social/communication impairments was significant at -12.7%.

While students with long-standing health conditions, physical impairments or mobility issues, or specific learning difficulty were more likely to obtain low classification degrees compared to students without any known disability, the disparities were not statistically significant. Meanwhile, students with social/communication impairments were significant more likely to receive low classification degrees.

First Class Degree

	No known disability	A long-standing health condition	A mental health condition	A physical impairment/mobility issue	A social/communication impairment	A specific learning difficulty	Multiple disabilities	Other disability/condition	Prefer not to say
2018/19	29.3%	66.7%* (37.4%)	22.9% (-6.4%)	15.0% (-14.3%)	29.4% (0.1%)	24.8% (-4.5%)	41.7% (12.4%)	28.9% (-0.4%)	45.5% (16.2%)
2019/20	40.7%	50.0%* (9.3%)	37.9% (-2.9%)	40.9% (0.2%)	40.0% (-0.7%)	35.9% (-4.9%)	44.7% (4.0%)	43.3% (2.5%)	46.2% (5.4%)
2020/21	45.0%	50.0%* (5.0%)	44.3% (-0.7%)	42.9% (-2.2%)	39.0% (-6.0%)	41.4% (-3.6%)	40.4% (-4.6%)	54.0% (8.9%)	75.0% (30.0%†)
2021/22	37.7%	33.3%* (-4.3%)	33.7% (-3.9%)	42.9% (5.2%)	40.0% (2.3%)	37.4% (-0.2%)	32.9% (-4.8%)	38.1% (0.4%)	38.1% (0.4%)
2022/23	34.4%	31.8% (-2.6%)	27.6% (-6.8%)	30.6% (-3.9%)	27.3% (-7.2%)	34.3% (-0.1%)	29.1% (-5.4%)	42.4% (7.9%)	36.8% (2.3%)
2023/24	34.6%	37.5% (2.9%)	30.9% (-3.8%)	28.0% (-6.6%)	24.4% (-10.2%)	31.5% (-3.2%)	28.1% (-6.5%)	44.2% (9.6%)	33.3% (-1.4%)

Note: The figure in the parenthesis indicates the awarding gap between “No known disability” and the corresponding disability.

* There were less than 10 students with “A long-standing health condition” in 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, and 2021/22.

† The awarding gap between “No known disability” and the corresponding disability is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, with a Bonferroni correction applied to adjust for multiple comparisons.

High Classification Degree

	No known disability	A long-standing health condition	A mental health condition	A physical impairment/mobility issue	A social/communication impairment	A specific learning difficulty	Multiple disabilities	Other disability/condition	Prefer not to say
2018/19	89.8%	100.0%* (10.2%)	84.1% (-5.8%)	90.0% (0.2%)	94.1% (4.3%)	91.4% (1.5%)	91.7% (1.8%)	87.6% (-2.2%)	100.0% (10.2%)
2019/20	92.7%	100.0%* (7.3%)	87.7% (-5.1%†)	90.9% (-1.8%)	86.7% (-6.1%)	90.0% (-2.7%)	86.8% (-5.9%)	93.3% (0.5%)	96.2% (3.4%)
2020/21	94.6%	100.0%* (5.4%)	92.7% (-1.9%)	90.5% (-4.1%)	82.9% (-11.6%†)	93.8% (-0.8%)	91.5% (-3.1%)	92.1% (-2.5%)	96.9% (2.3%)
2021/22	91.5%	77.8%* (-13.7%)	87.3% (-4.2%†)	85.7% (-5.8%)	82.2% (-9.3%)	90.5% (-1.0%)	92.1% (0.6%)	90.5% (-1.0%)	100.0% (8.5%)
2022/23	89.6%	93.2% (3.5%)	83.5% (-6.1%†)	91.7% (2.0%)	86.4% (-3.3%)	92.1% (2.4%)	85.0% (-4.6%)	89.8% (0.2%)	87.9% (-1.7%)
2023/24	90.7%	95.3% (4.6%)	88.5% (-2.3%)	100.0% (9.3%)	78.0% (-12.7%†)	92.6% (1.8%)	85.9% (-4.8%)	81.4% (-9.3%)	88.8% (-1.9%)

Note: The figure in the parenthesis indicates the awarding gap between “No known disability” and the corresponding disability.

* There were less than 10 students with “A long-standing health condition” in 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, and 2021/22.

† The awarding gap between “No known disability” and the corresponding disability is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, with a Bonferroni correction applied to adjust for multiple comparisons.

Low Classification Degree

	No known disability	A long-standing health condition	A mental health condition	A physical impairment/mobility issue	A social/communication impairment	A specific learning difficulty	Multiple disabilities	Other disability/condition	Prefer not to say
2018/19	8.7%	0.0%* (-8.7%)	8.3% (-0.4%)	10.0% (1.3%)	5.9% (-2.8%)	7.5% (-1.2%)	4.2% (-4.6%)	8.3% (-0.5%)	0.0% (-8.7%)
2019/20	6.6%	0.0%* (-6.6%)	8.8% (2.2%)	4.5% (-2.1%)	13.3% (6.7%)	8.8% (2.2%)	7.9% (1.3%)	5.2% (-1.4%)	3.8% (-2.8%)
2020/21	4.6%	0.0%* (-4.6%)	5.1% (0.5%)	4.8% (0.1%)	7.3% (2.7%)	5.2% (0.6%)	2.1% (-2.5%)	7.1% (2.5%)	3.1% (-1.5%)
2021/22	7.1%	11.1%* (4.0%)	7.4% (0.4%)	11.4% (4.4%)	13.3% (6.3%)	7.4% (0.4%)	3.9% (-3.1%)	6.8% (-0.3%)	0.0% (-7.1%)
2022/23	8.4%	6.8% (-1.6%)	9.0% (0.5%)	8.3% (-0.1%)	4.5% (-3.9%)	5.3% (-3.2%)	10.6% (2.1%)	6.8% (-1.7%)	10.1% (1.7%)
2023/24	7.8%	4.7% (-3.1%)	8.2% (0.4%)	8.0% (0.2%)	19.5% (11.7% [†])	6.6% (-1.2%)	9.6% (1.8%)	11.6% (3.8%)	9.0% (1.2%)

Note: The figure in the parenthesis indicates the awarding gap between “No known disability” and the corresponding disability.

* There were less than 10 students with “A long-standing health condition” in 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, and 2021/22.

[†] The awarding gap between “No known disability” and the corresponding disability is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, with a Bonferroni correction applied to adjust for multiple comparisons.

Domicile

Scotland domiciled students were significantly less likely than then Rest of UK (RUK)³ and Overseas students to graduate with First Class or high classification degrees. While the awarding gap for the First Class degrees increased from 11.5% in 2022/23 to 12.7% in 2023/24 between Scotland and RUK students, the gap between Scotland and Overseas students decreased from 5.6% to 4.7%.

The gap for high classification degrees awarded between Scotland and RUK students widened to 10.3%, the highest since 2019/20. On the other hand, a significantly higher proportion of Scotland domiciled students (11.3%) obtained low classification degrees compared to their RUK peers (3.4%), yet the difference between Scotland and Overseas students (10.0%) was not significant.

	First Class Degree			High Classification Degree		
	Scotland	RUK	Overseas	Scotland	RUK	Overseas
2018/19	21.4%	33.1% (11.7% [†])	32.5% (11.1% [†])	86.4%	94.2% (7.8% [†])	88.4% (1.9%)
2019/20	33.9%	46.9% (13.0% [†])	39.3% (5.4% [†])	90.0%	95.6% (5.6% [†])	90.5% (0.4%)
2020/21	38.5%	51.1% (12.5% [†])	44.1% (5.6% [†])	92.9%	96.6% (3.7% [†])	92.5% (-0.4%)
2021/22	30.4%	42.6% (12.1% [†])	37.4% (7.0% [†])	87.5%	94.5% (7.0% [†])	90.2% (2.8% [†])
2022/23	28.0%	39.5% (11.5% [†])	33.6% (5.6% [†])	85.2%	94.5% (9.3% [†])	87.0% (1.9%)
2023/24	27.6%	40.3% (12.7% [†])	32.3% (4.7% [†])	85.6%	95.9% (10.3% [†])	88.4% (2.7% [†])

Note: The figure in the parenthesis indicates the awarding gap between "Scotland" and the corresponding domicile.

[†] The awarding gap between "Scotland" and the corresponding domicile is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, with a Bonferroni correction applied to adjust for multiple comparisons.

	Low Classification Degree		
	Scotland	RUK	Overseas
2018/19	11.7%	4.4% (-7.3% [†])	9.8% (-2.0%)
2019/20	9.0%	3.3% (-5.7% [†])	8.9% (-0.1%)
2020/21	5.6%	3.0% (-2.7% [†])	6.1% (0.5%)
2021/22	9.6%	4.2% (-5.4% [†])	8.1% (-1.6%)
2022/23	10.9%	4.1% (-6.8% [†])	10.8% (-0.1%)
2023/24	11.3%	3.4% (-7.9% [†])	10.0% (-1.3%)

Note: The figure in the parenthesis indicates the awarding gap between "Scotland" and the corresponding domicile.

[†] The awarding gap between "Scotland" and the corresponding domicile is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, with a Bonferroni correction applied to adjust for multiple comparisons.

³ RUK include England, Wales, and Northern Ireland

Ethnicity (All students)

BAME students (regardless of their domiciles) continue to show a lower likelihood of achieving both First Class and high classification degrees compared to their White peers.

The awarding gap for First Class degrees widened from -11.6% in 2022/23 to -13.4% in 2023/24, though the gap for high classification degrees slightly decreased from -7.4% to -6.6%. In contrast, 12.8% of BAME students graduated with low classification, which was significantly higher than that of White students (5.7%).

	First Class Degree			High Classification Degree		
	BAME	White	Awarding Gap	BAME	White	Awarding Gap
2018/19	22.7%	30.3%	-7.6% [†]	84.6%	91.1%	-6.5% [†]
2019/20	28.9%	43.7%	-14.7% [†]	88.2%	93.5%	-5.3% [†]
2020/21	35.1%	47.7%	-12.6% [†]	91.1%	95.1%	-4.0% [†]
2021/22	27.7%	40.9%	-13.2% [†]	87.6%	92.3%	-4.7% [†]
2022/23	25.9%	37.5%	-11.6% [†]	84.1%	91.6%	-7.4% [†]
2023/24	24.3%	37.6%	-13.4% [†]	85.9%	92.5%	-6.6% [†]

[†] The awarding gap is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

	Low Classification Degree		
	BAME	White	Awarding Gap
2018/19	13.5%	7.4%	6.1% [†]
2019/20	10.7%	5.6%	5.1% [†]
2020/21	7.8%	3.8%	4.0% [†]
2021/22	10.3%	5.9%	4.4% [†]
2022/23	13.2%	6.3%	7.0% [†]
2023/24	12.8%	5.7%	7.1% [†]

[†] The awarding gap is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

Ethnicity: Asian, Black, Chinese, Mixed, and White (All students)

While BAME students (regardless of their domiciles) continuously demonstrated lower rates of achieving First Class and high classification compared to their White peers, distinct differences were observed within the BAME group, particularly among the Asian and Chinese students.

In 2023/24, only 22.1% of both Asian and Chinese students achieved First degrees, with awarding gaps of -15.6% and -15.5%, respectively, compared to White students. Similarly, Asian (88.5%) and Chinese students (82.3%) were less likely to graduate with high classification degrees compared to their White peers. These gaps between White and both Asian and Chinese students were statistically significant for both First Class and high classification degrees.

Although there was a -13.3% awarding gap between Black and White students in achieving First Class degrees, this gap was not considered statistically significant. Meanwhile, there was a substantial improvement among Black students. The proportion graduating with First Class degrees rose from 15.4% in 2022/23 to 24.4% in 2023/24, and those achieving high classification degrees increased from 73.6% to 92.7% within the same period. This considerable improvement has helped to narrow the awarding gaps between the White and Black students.

In contrast, there were significantly higher proportions of Asian (10.5%) and Chinese (16.4%) students obtaining low classification degrees than the White students (5.7%). Both Black and Mixed students were slightly less likely to graduate with low classification degrees, yet the differences between their White peers were considered not statistically significant.

First Class Degree					
	White	Asian	Black	Chinese	Mixed
2018/19	30.3%	17.8% (-12.5% [†])	12.2% (-18.1% [†])	24.6% (-5.8%)	28.2% (-2.1%)
2019/20	43.7%	20.2% (-23.5% [†])	17.5% (-26.1% [†])	29.9% (-13.8% [†])	41.4% (-2.3%)
2020/21	47.7%	30.6% (-17.1% [†])	38.8% (-8.9%)	31.0% (-16.6% [†])	46.6% (-1.1%)
2021/22	40.9%	18.9% (-22.0% [†])	24.1% (-16.8% [†])	26.1% (-14.7% [†])	41.2% (0.3%)
2022/23	37.5%	24.5% (-13.1% [†])	15.4% (-22.1% [†])	24.0% (-13.5% [†])	36.1% (-1.4%)
2023/24	37.6%	22.1% (-15.6% [†])	24.4% (-13.3%)	22.1% (-15.5% [†])	33.5% (-4.2%)

Note: The figure in the parenthesis indicates the awarding gap between "White" and the corresponding ethnicity.

[†] The awarding gap between "White" and the corresponding ethnicity is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, with a Bonferroni correction applied to adjust for multiple comparisons.

High Classification Degree					
	White	Asian	Black	Chinese	Mixed
2018/19	91.1%	83.6% (-7.5% [†])	73.2% (-17.9% [†])	86.0% (-5.1% [†])	88.7% (-2.4%)
2019/20	93.5%	86.0% (-7.5% [†])	75.4% (-18.1% [†])	87.0% (-6.5% [†])	96.3% (2.8%)
2020/21	95.1%	91.7% (-3.4% [†])	86.6% (-8.6% [†])	90.5% (-4.7% [†])	93.2% (-2.0%)
2021/22	92.3%	85.8% (-6.5% [†])	78.5% (-13.8% [†])	85.5% (-6.7% [†])	95.7% (3.4%)
2022/23	91.6%	85.3% (-6.3% [†])	73.6% (-18.0% [†])	82.2% (-9.3% [†])	92.2% (0.6%)
2023/24	92.5%	88.5% (-4.0% [†])	92.7% (0.2%)	82.3% (-10.2% [†])	93.0% (0.5%)

Note: The figure in the parenthesis indicates the awarding gap between "White" and the corresponding ethnicity.

[†] The awarding gap between "White" and the corresponding ethnicity is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, with a Bonferroni correction applied to adjust for multiple comparisons.

Low Classification Degree					
	White	Asian	Black	Chinese	Mixed
2018/19	7.4%	14.1% (6.8% [†])	19.5% (12.1% [†])	12.3% (4.9% [†])	10.2% (2.8%)
2019/20	5.6%	12.8% (7.2% [†])	21.1% (15.4% [†])	11.6% (5.9% [†])	4.1% (-1.5%)
2020/21	3.8%	6.1% (2.3%)	10.4% (6.6% [†])	8.9% (5.1% [†])	6.4% (2.6%)
2021/22	5.9%	11.8% (5.8% [†])	16.5% (10.5% [†])	12.6% (6.7% [†])	3.6% (-2.4%)
2022/23	6.3%	11.4% (5.1% [†])	25.3% (19.0% [†])	14.9% (8.6% [†])	6.3% (0.0%)
2023/24	5.7%	10.5% (4.8% [†])	4.9% (-0.9%)	16.4% (10.6% [†])	5.4% (-0.3%)

Note: The figure in the parenthesis indicates the awarding gap between "White" and the corresponding ethnicity.

[†] The awarding gap between "White" and the corresponding ethnicity is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, with a Bonferroni correction applied to adjust for multiple comparisons.

Ethnicity (UK-domiciled students)

UK-domiciled BAME students were significantly less likely to achieve First Class degrees compared to their White peers, with only 27.4% of BAME students receiving First Class honours compared to 35.6% of White students. The awarding gap has widened, increasing from -6.3% in 2022/23 to -8.2% in 2023/24. Despite the disparity in First Class degrees, over 90% of both BAME and White students graduated with high classification degrees. Meanwhile, fewer than 7.0% of students from both ethnic groups obtained low classification degrees. The awarding gaps between BAME and White students for both high and low classification degrees were not statistically significant.

	First Class Degree			High Classification Degree		
	BAME	White	Awarding Gap	BAME	White	Awarding Gap
2018/19	22.4%	27.8%	-5.4%†	84.1%	90.9%	-6.9%†
2019/20	30.9%	42.0%	-11.1%†	91.2%	93.3%	-2.1%
2020/21	39.2%	46.0%	-6.7%†	93.4%	95.1%	-1.7%
2021/22	32.8%	38.1%	-5.4%†	90.8%	91.5%	-0.6%
2022/23	28.8%	35.1%	-6.3%†	88.0%	90.9%	-2.8%
2023/24	27.4%	35.6%	-8.2%†	92.1%	91.5%	0.5%

[†] The awarding gap is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

Low Classification Degree			
	BAME	White	Awarding Gap
2018/19	14.9%	7.4%	7.5%†
2019/20	7.5%	5.7%	1.7%
2020/21	5.6%	4.0%	1.6%
2021/22	6.9%	6.6%	0.4%
2022/23	9.1%	6.7%	2.4%
2023/24	7.0%	6.6%	0.4%

[†] The awarding gap is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

Widening Participation (UK-domiciled students only)

Widening participation (WP) students were significantly less likely to be awarded First Class or high classification degrees than their non-WP peers. There were significantly higher proportion of WP students (9.8%) graduating with low classification degrees than the non-WP students (6.0%).

The gap for First Class degrees expanded from -7.5% in 2022/23 to -9.8% in 2023/24. However, the gap for high classification degrees narrowed from -9.0% to -6.4% during the same period. A similar pattern was also observed in the awarding gap for low classification degrees (-7.4% in 2022/23 and -3.8% in 2023/24).

	First Class Degree			High Classification Degree		
	WP	Not WP	Awarding Gap	WP	Not WP	Awarding Gap
2018/19	23.8%	29.5%	-5.7% [†]	86.1%	93.0%	-6.9% [†]
2019/20	35.9%	43.7%	-7.8% [†]	90.3%	94.6%	-4.3% [†]
2020/21	38.9%	49.2%	-10.3% [†]	91.8%	96.7%	-4.9% [†]
2021/22	30.2%	40.6%	-10.3% [†]	86.8%	93.6%	-6.8% [†]
2022/23	29.2%	36.7%	-7.5% [†]	84.1%	93.1%	-9.0% [†]
2023/24	27.3%	37.0%	-9.8% [†]	86.5%	92.9%	-6.4% [†]

[†] The awarding gap is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

	Low Classification Degree		
	WP	Not WP	Awarding Gap
2018/19	11.5%	5.8%	5.7% [†]
2019/20	8.9%	4.3%	-4.6% [†]
2020/21	6.2%	3.1%	-3.1% [†]
2021/22	10.3%	4.9%	-5.4% [†]
2022/23	12.3%	4.9%	-7.4% [†]
2023/24	9.8%	6.0%	-3.8% [†]

[†] The awarding gap is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

Widening Participation – Based on SIMD20 and ACORN 5/6 (UK-domiciled students only)

Students who lived in SIMD20 or ACORN 5/6 postcodes when applying to the University were significantly less likely to achieve a First Class or high classification degree, and more likely to obtain low classification degrees compared to those who from other postcode areas.

Although the awarding gap for First degrees remained around 14.0% from previous year, the gaps for high and low classification degrees decreased from -15.5% to -8.8% and 13.0% to 7.1% respectively.

	First Class Degree			High Classification Degree		
	WP	Not WP	Awarding Gap	WP	Not WP	Awarding Gap
2018/19	16.2%	27.9%	-11.8% [†]	76.3%	91.1%	-14.8% [†]
2019/20	30.0%	41.5%	-11.5% [†]	83.3%	93.6%	-10.4% [†]
2020/21	26.9%	46.6%	-19.7% [†]	85.9%	95.5%	-9.6% [†]
2021/22	24.4%	38.3%	-13.9% [†]	83.6%	92.0%	-8.4% [†]
2022/23	21.2%	35.6%	-14.4% [†]	76.3%	91.7%	-15.5% [†]
2023/24	21.8%	35.8%	-14.0% [†]	83.3%	92.1%	-8.8% [†]

[†] The awarding gap is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

	Low Classification Degree		
	WP	Not WP	Awarding Gap
2018/19	22.5%	7.2%	15.3% [†]
2019/20	16.3%	5.3%	10.9% [†]
2020/21	11.0%	3.8%	7.3% [†]
2021/22	12.2%	6.1%	6.1% [†]
2022/23	19.0%	6.0%	13.0% [†]
2023/24	13.5%	6.3%	7.1% [†]

[†] The awarding gap is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

Appendix

Appendix A: First Class Degree

This table shows the total number of students who achieved a First Class degree, with the number in parentheses representing the total student population at the school level.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
BIO	61 (174)	66 (206)	83 (196)	84 (198)	64 (190)	70 (207)
BMS	80 (248)	111 (315)	110 (364)	114 (377)	139 (442)	145 (462)
BUS	78 (252)	117 (251)	107 (295)	91 (276)	103 (304)	105 (397)
CHE	43 (112)	93 (143)	92 (133)	81 (154)	55 (122)	45 (126)
CSC	1 (8)	1 (3)	3 (9)	1 (7)	0 (7)	0 (8)
DIV	12 (74)	16 (49)	27 (71)	13 (67)	11 (46)	19 (59)
ECA	140 (455)	208 (446)	238 (523)	184 (442)	195 (537)	190 (498)
ECN	46 (172)	75 (175)	80 (205)	67 (228)	83 (245)	100 (287)
EDU	52 (268)	66 (268)	127 (244)	45 (187)	58 (177)	58 (183)
ENG	91 (345)	122 (335)	161 (386)	140 (394)	109 (405)	106 (329)
GEO	59 (211)	53 (183)	95 (226)	75 (199)	69 (225)	75 (223)
HCA	77 (312)	137 (329)	164 (358)	100 (305)	110 (369)	124 (369)
HEA	18 (41)	21 (39)	28 (45)	24 (47)	17 (52)	19 (59)
INF	90 (155)	118 (193)	152 (207)	154 (251)	145 (252)	141 (251)
LAW	37 (180)	64 (159)	111 (190)	83 (196)	65 (215)	64 (193)
LLC	162 (427)	240 (406)	324 (462)	254 (445)	248 (505)	240 (491)
MAT	69 (129)	103 (159)	80 (137)	100 (179)	112 (175)	111 (246)
MED	0 (225)	0 (237)	0 (212)	0 (232)	1 (235)	0 (246)
PHY	48 (127)	61 (118)	67 (146)	71 (146)	63 (136)	49 (138)
PPL	121 (333)	143 (294)	162 (334)	149 (381)	131 (393)	162 (435)
SPS	84 (344)	130 (354)	162 (381)	155 (429)	136 (436)	162 (495)
VET	0 (157)	0 (152)	0 (148)	3 (184)	8 (169)	6 (180)
Total	1,369 (4,749)	1,945 (4,814)	2,373 (5,272)	1,988 (5,324)	1,922 (5,637)	1,991 (5,882)

Appendix B: High Classification Degree

This table shows the total number of students who achieved a High Classification degree, with the number in parentheses representing the total student population at the school level.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
BIO	153 (174)	180 (206)	184 (196)	180 (198)	166 (190)	175 (207)
BMS	240 (248)	299 (315)	340 (364)	354 (377)	410 (442)	426 (462)
BUS	232 (252)	242 (251)	277 (295)	260 (276)	268 (304)	364 (397)
CHE	97 (112)	133 (143)	128 (133)	138 (154)	108 (122)	112 (126)
CSC	5 (8)	2 (3)	5 (9)	6 (7)	2 (7)	6 (8)
DIV	73 (74)	44 (49)	70 (71)	64 (67)	43 (46)	58 (59)
ECA	393 (455)	395 (446)	464 (523)	403 (442)	463 (537)	429 (498)
ECN	146 (172)	160 (175)	182 (205)	197 (228)	206 (245)	253 (287)
EDU	202 (268)	227 (268)	231 (244)	145 (187)	144 (177)	148 (183)
ENG	291 (345)	295 (335)	357 (386)	345 (394)	335 (405)	293 (329)
GEO	181 (211)	163 (183)	211 (226)	180 (199)	199 (225)	209 (223)
HCA	283 (312)	307 (329)	349 (358)	273 (305)	323 (369)	321 (369)
HEA	40 (41)	38 (39)	43 (45)	44 (47)	44 (52)	49 (59)
INF	131 (155)	171 (193)	195 (207)	219 (251)	220 (252)	226 (251)
LAW	164 (180)	146 (159)	183 (190)	183 (196)	187 (215)	172 (193)
LLC	412 (427)	398 (406)	458 (462)	432 (445)	479 (505)	470 (491)
MAT	111 (129)	145 (159)	124 (137)	159 (179)	161 (175)	202 (246)
MED	225 (225)	237 (237)	212 (212)	231 (232)	233 (235)	245 (246)
PHY	103 (127)	103 (118)	136 (146)	122 (146)	116 (136)	113 (138)
PPL	316 (333)	279 (294)	307 (334)	336 (381)	355 (393)	399 (435)
SPS	310 (344)	327 (354)	362 (381)	391 (429)	398 (436)	462 (495)
VET	156 (157)	151 (152)	148 (148)	183 (184)	167 (169)	179 (180)
Total	4,264 (4,749)	4,442 (4,814)	4,966 (5,272)	4,845 (5,324)	5,027 (5,637)	5,311 (5,882)

Appendix C: Low Classification Degree

This table shows the total number of students who achieved a Low Classification degree, with the number in parentheses representing the total student population at the school level.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
BIO	20 (174)	24 (206)	11 (196)	15 (198)	22 (190)	29 (207)
BMS	6 (248)	13 (315)	20 (364)	19 (377)	27 (442)	33 (462)
BUS	12 (252)	6 (251)	13 (295)	8 (276)	26 (304)	23 (397)
CHE	15 (112)	10 (143)	4 (133)	11 (154)	10 (122)	10 (126)
CSC	3 (8)	1 (3)	4 (9)	1 (7)	5 (7)	2 (8)
DIV	1 (74)	5 (49)	1 (71)	0 (67)	1 (46)	0 (59)
ECA	48 (455)	46 (446)	42 (523)	33 (442)	53 (537)	51 (498)
ECN	24 (172)	11 (175)	21 (205)	29 (228)	38 (245)	33 (287)
EDU	57 (268)	39 (268)	12 (244)	34 (187)	26 (177)	31 (183)
ENG	57 (345)	42 (335)	26 (386)	45 (394)	66 (405)	39 (329)
GEO	23 (211)	16 (183)	14 (226)	14 (199)	21 (225)	12 (223)
HCA	25 (312)	17 (329)	6 (358)	21 (305)	27 (369)	41 (369)
HEA	1 (41)	1 (39)	0 (45)	1 (47)	4 (52)	5 (59)
INF	9 (155)	15 (193)	8 (207)	26 (251)	22 (252)	15 (251)
LAW	11 (180)	11 (159)	7 (190)	12 (196)	23 (215)	12 (193)
LLC	11 (427)	6 (406)	2 (462)	7 (445)	15 (505)	14 (491)
MAT	13 (129)	9 (159)	11 (137)	17 (179)	11 (175)	39 (246)
MED	0 (225)	0 (237)	0 (212)	0 (232)	0 (235)	0 (246)
PHY	25 (127)	19 (118)	15 (146)	16 (146)	23 (136)	29 (138)
PPL	13 (333)	15 (294)	18 (334)	38 (381)	31 (393)	33 (435)
SPS	31 (344)	22 (354)	16 (381)	31 (429)	24 (436)	21 (495)
VET	0 (157)	1 (152)	0 (148)	0 (184)	2 (169)	0 (180)
Total	405 (4,749)	329 (4,814)	251 (5,272)	378 (5,324)	477 (5,637)	472 (5,882)

Appendix D: Disability Type Definition

Disability Type	EUCLID Disability
No known disability	No disability
	No known disabilities, health condition or learning difference
A long-standing health condition	Long-term illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy
	You have a long standing illness or health condition
A mental health condition	Mental health
	Mental health condition, challenge or disorder, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety
	You have a mental health condition, such as depression
A physical impairment/mobility issue	Physical impairment (a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, lifting or carrying).
	Wheelchair/mobility
	D/deaf or have a hearing loss/impairment
	Deaf/partial hearing
	Blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
	Blind/partial sight
	You are blind or have a serious visual impairment
	You are deaf or have a serious hearing impairment
	You have physical impairment or mobility issues, such as
A social/communication impairment	Development condition that you have had since childhood which affects motor, cognitive, social and emotional skills, and speech and language,
	Autistic disorder
	Social/communication conditions such as a speech and language impairment or an autistic spectrum condition
	You have a social/communication impairment such as
A specific learning difficulty	Learning difference such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D
	Learning difficulty
	You have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia
Multiple disabilities	Multiple disabilities,
	You have two or more impairments and/or disabling
Other disability/condition	A disability, impairment, health condition or learning difference not listed above,
	Other disability
	Personal care support
	Unseen disability
	You have a disability, impairment or medical condition
Prefer not to say	Information refused
	Prefer not to say

Appendix E: Students Graduated with Certificate/Diplomas, or without any award

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
CAHSS	12	9	9	16	33	33
UG Certificate of Higher Education	9	2	4	6	13	5
UG Diploma of Higher Education	3	6	3	10	15	28
CSE	19	15	5	11	20	19
UG Certificate of Higher Education	13	8	2	5	15	11
UG Diploma of Higher Education	6	6	3	6	5	8
MVM	3		4	4	3	1
UG Certificate of Higher Education				1	1	1
UG Diploma of Higher Education	1		1	2	1	
Total	34	24	18	31	56	53

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

15 May 2025

Student Data Monitoring: Data Analysis Update

Description of paper

1. This paper provides an update on the **data analysis** work undertaken by the Student Data Monitoring task group.

Fit with remit:

Quality Assurance Committee	Y/N
Oversee the delivery and enhancement of the University's quality assurance framework, ensuring that it meets external requirements.	X
Maintain oversight of the outcomes of the quality assurance framework, ensuring that actions are addressed, and support the sharing of good practice.	X
Support the University's engagement with external quality requirements and activities, including: Enhancement-Led Institutional Review, the UK Quality Code, and responses to consultations and initiatives.	X
Identify areas for innovation and enhancement of the student experience and ensure that these inform Senate Education Committee's policy development.	X
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.	X

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is provided with the data analysis update from the Student Data Monitoring Task Group for information and asked to comment.

Background and context

3. In May 2024, the Committee approved the establishment of a task and finish group to explore methodological options and make recommendations for a new systematic approach to monitoring student data at University level.
4. It was also agreed that the initial focus of the group will be to ensure that the new approach will also address the [Enhancement Led Institutional Review \(ELIR\) 2021](#) and the [Quality Enhancement and Standards Review \(QESR\) 2023](#) recommendations regarding equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the student population.
5. The short-life task and finish group has the remit to: benchmark approaches to monitoring student data; identify the different student groups and the key stages in the student lifecycle that should be overseen at University level; identify the relevant data required and any gaps in current data sets; and then make

recommendations to SQAC for a new systematic approach to monitoring student data.

6. The group has held 3 meetings to date, and sub-groups have met separately to undertake particular research and to work on particular activity streams, focussing on sector analysis and data analysis.

Discussion

7. Please see appendix for full update. This includes information on:
 - Available data sources
 - Known data gaps
 - Current status of awards, progression and student journey data
 - Considerations for future work
8. Following consideration of the Degree Awards Outcomes 2023/24 (Paper B) in the meeting of 15 May 2025, the Committee is asked to comment on the approach to data monitoring and identified areas for future work.

Resource implications

9. There are no immediate resource implications from this paper. There will be resource implications depending on the approach taken and specific interventions that may be agreed to be taken forward. Investment in systems, software and additional statistical analysis resource may be required to systematically monitor student data.
10. Resource consideration must be given to the teams working in data analysis and planning roles, as well as staff in QA roles which will manage the systematic monitoring. Additional resource may be required as these teams roll-out data and evidence-based monitoring throughout the institution.

Risk management

11. Poor performance across the range of student experience and lifecycle metrics is a risk to the University's reputation particularly if we do not develop a better understanding of which groups of students are at higher risk of withdrawing or under-achieving and the underlying reasons.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

12. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Equality & diversity

13. Equality and diversity are integral to the development of a new systematic approach to monitoring student data.

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

14. Communication will be driven by the Deputy Vice-Principal Students (Enhancement) and shared by staff working in QA roles across the institution. Action may be driven through existing and enhanced QA practices.
15. Evaluation will be a key part of any practice adopted to address the awarding gap. The task and finish group expect that interventions will be initially piloted and evaluated to understand their impact before rolling out more widely.

Authors

Professor Linda Kirstein, Dean of Education, CSE

Jim Galbraith, Senior Strategic Planner, Governance and Strategic Planning

Serena Goodman, Senior Planning & Business Insight Officer, CSE

Vivian So, Senior Analyst, Registry Services

Presenter

Professor Linda Kirstein, Dean of Education, CSE

Freedom of Information Open

Student Data in the University

The ambitions for the student data task group involve understanding the data the University holds on students and how we can gain insights from analysing it to inform strategy and provide potential interventions enabling our students to succeed. We agreed to address the following questions:

a) Awards

- Across all award outcomes, how important are the different demographic categories (age on entry, sex, disability, disability type, domicile, ethnicity, nationality, fee status, school type, widening participation (WP) markers) in determining variation in award? – Focus on intersectional analysis and not just on highest classification but all exit awards.
- Are there particular combinations of attributes (e.g. Scottish and male; declared disability and state school) that indicate students are less likely to obtain the highest degree award? – Intersectionality of attributes may be important to understand wider implications. This links with the sector wide analyses of best practice.

b) Progression between years

- Are any population of students more likely to require resits and is there any relationship to the nature of assessment e.g. exam only?
- If students have more than 1 attempt to pass a course in pre-honours e.g. require resits, is the degree outcome on average different from students without resits?
- Do students with repeat years achieve a higher classification or lower classification than students without repeat years?
- What is the impact on classification of requiring a concession (carry credits, awarding CA etc) to progress between years?

In the first instance we need to understand the data, its accessibility and whether any changes are needed to enhance our ability to derive meaningful outcomes from the analyses.

DATA SOURCES

Glossary: **EUCLID** is the underlying applicant and student record system. Many staff can search it or get filtered data e.g. class lists from it. By contrast **Business Objects** is the University's standard business intelligence system/tool for data analysis; gives access to various prepared 'universes' (i.e. sets of data). Each universe is designed to give access to data for analysts to use (EUCLID data, in this context). In practice analysts frequently export data from Business Objects into something else more convenient e.g. Power BI for a dashboard.

Recruitment (applications) and Admissions (offers, accepts)

- For undergraduates, UCAS provides applicant data to University of Edinburgh which is then populated into EUCLID.
- Some information is only held until offer decision made (pre- versus post-offer data). If declined – information removed.
- Some information e.g. ethnicity not revealed by UCAS until a) applicant accepted for entry or b) UCAS supply a file at the end of the recruitment cycle (a tricky file to link to our records).
- For PGT/PGR/Visiting students there is an online application system hosted by UoE; they engage directly with us, no 'clearing house' like UCAS. Applicants may have live offers with other institutions, of which we are unaware. Here we focus on UGT only.

- Business Objects ‘universes’ are: ‘EUCLID Admissions’ which is very detailed ‘live’ data including for earlier cycles; ‘ADMISMI’ and ‘DirectMI’ contain monthly or weekly snapshot data for year-on-year comparisons.
- These are all drawing data from EUCLID, but the *admissions* side of EUCLID is separate. Although admissions records and matriculated student records are ‘siloe’d’ in Business Objects, GaSP have an ‘attrition’ dashboard which shows the loss from one state to the other (ie ‘no shows’ and Sept/Oct withdrawals).
- An Edinburgh Data Warehouse solution (more flexible than the above) is in development but not quite ready for use yet.

On programme

- EUCLID is the primary source of student data in the University. EUCLID includes data for Curriculum Management (including Class lists (course enrolments), Direct Admissions and Student administration (Figure 1)).
- EUCLID information underpins BI suite ‘universes’ (BI datasets) and data dashboards which are used to report on statistics across the student lifecycle including awarding gap analyses (See list below).
- Exceptional Circumstances data sits external to EUCLID with Registry and ISG.
- Advocates system is a case management system used by Wellbeing and ResLife. Data on this system is not currently visible to Schools but will be.
- DLSS operate on a separate system but data can be merged with EUCLID system.
- Learning adjustment information is captured within EUCLID (Figure 1, course adjustments breakdown).
- LEARN is fed with information from EUCLID.

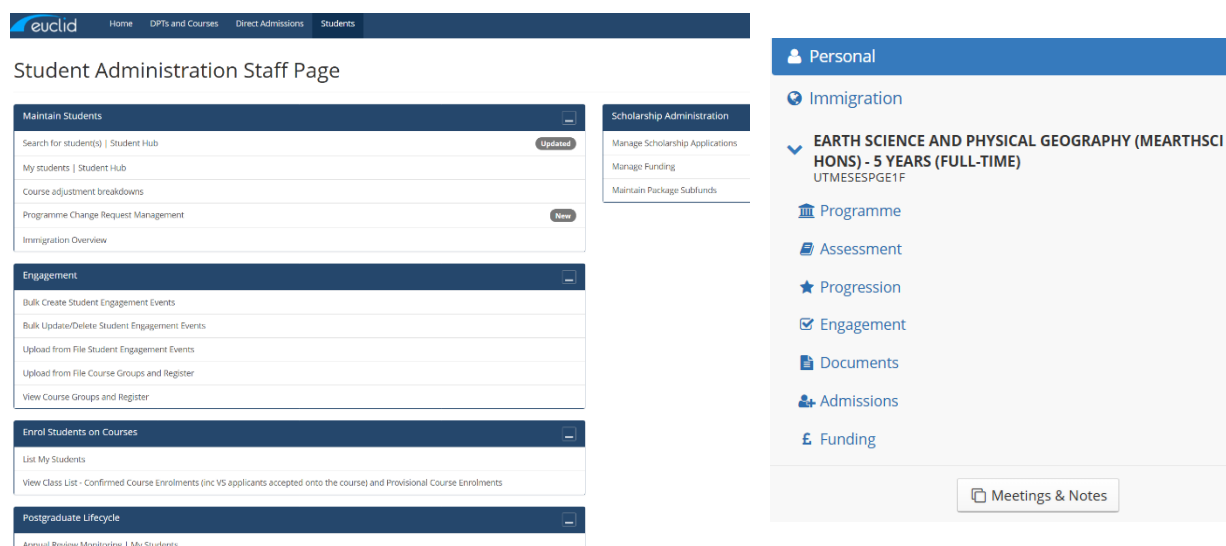


Figure 1. Information regarding Students on Euclid. General overview (left) and specific information (right).

Retention/progression

- Annual Monitoring Reports include a progression dashboard for UG and PGT which can be filtered down to Programme level, year of programme, session, demographics etc. This is based on showing the ratio of favourable to unfavourable progression decisions. Deferred or

unknown decisions are filtered out. Progression does not infer continuation, i.e. a student can be allowed to progress but may not actually return to their studies. Whether resits were required to progress is unclear.

- The alternative approach is/was based on the approach taken by [HESA Performance Indicators](#), which are no longer current online but the Office for Students and Scottish Funding Council do still use the same methodology for their summary analysis. In this methodology, the focus is retention in Higher Education; of the students who entered their programme in session x, and lasted at least 50 days, what % were still in HE study 50 days into the following session x+1. As with the Monitoring Report approach, receiving a qualification e.g. a 120 credit Undergraduate Certificate, is counted as a positive and will be included as a low classification degree in the Awards dashboard. This approach disregards whether the student progressed or not, although this can be derived fairly easily from year of programme. We are able to use STUDMI data to replicate this methodology fairly closely (HESA can tell if a student was still in higher education at another institution in session x+1, but we can't tell).

Course and programme results

- The Annual Monitoring course dashboard allows users to examine two different types of course results: one attempt, and first attempt.
One attempt - course results for students who have just one single attempt per academic year. If the student retakes a course in the subsequent year, their data will be shown for each relevant academic year. However, if a student attempts a course multiple times within the same academic year, his result will not be included for this academic year.
First attempt - course results for students' first attempt in any academic year. For students who make more than one attempt, only the results for the first attempt will be shown.

Dashboards include the following:

- SURVEYS (National Student Survey (NSS); Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES); Student Life Survey (SLS)
- Annual Monitoring Report (Application Dashboard; Awards Dashboard; Progression Dashboard; Course Mark Dashboard; Outcome Dashboard). Demographics listed and explained [here](#)
- Student Number - Matriculation Tracker
- Assessment and Progression Tool
- Exam Board Progress
- Assessment and Feedback Tracker
- Exceptional Circumstances Strategic Reporting Dashboard
- Student Wellbeing Dashboard
- Programme Assessment Structure Dashboard (under development)
- 'EDMARC' student [data report](#) and 'EDI' [dashboard](#) (population composition, UG degree class attainment gaps, % successful completion attainment gaps). All staff can access
- GaSP 'tracker' app shows how the recruitment cycle is going and contains SIMD

DATA GAPS

There has been recent progress on the definitions of WP and BAME students as summarised below but currently the data are not in a form that is easily accessible to intersectional analyses across a student's journey at the University. Identification of key data fields is important.

BAME:

- Groupings into Asian, Black, Chinese, Mixed, White, Other and Not Known do exist and are being used where possible e.g. Annual Monitoring; EDI dashboard.
- The challenges are data protection and statistical significance for smaller overall populations when subject level or intersectionality analysed. That is a general challenge to note around data that is not a data gap, rather a challenge for dissemination and access rights to reports, and statistical reliability. Best practice is to round absolute figures to nearest 5 and suppress percentages of small populations.

WP:

- SIMD (Scotland) and ACORN (rest of UK) are the key dimensions for *headline* tracking of contextual admissions (including WP) progress, but many other indicators of disadvantage are held.
- Several indicators ('basket' approach) are used in our contextual admissions policy; outcomes can be measured with this as a dimension i.e. where the students 'Plus', 'Flag', or 'no flag' under that policy but there are two points to note:
 - The policy has changed a couple of times in recent years so care is required in interpretation of time series.
 - Not all who were flagged *needed* the flag to be made an offer, which does not undermine using the flag data, but it does mean we have to be careful interpreting it i.e. measure of background, not necessarily measure of qualification level.
- There are different combinations of indicators which can be used for a wider definition of 'WP', which is open to debate. SCE have a working definition for instance. Colleagues are free to use combinations of indicators but debating a common definition would be useful. Some indicators e.g. bursary holder are valuable indicators but only applicable to students not applicants, where that matters.
- SAIM dashboards use the WP Student Measure flag from EUCLID to identify WP students. This flag is based on *Access Bursary, Access Programme, Accom Bursary, Care Leaver, Low Performance School, RUK Bursary, SHEP, and SIMD (SIMD1 or SIMD2)*. Any students who fulfilled at least one of these criteria will be flagged as WP.

A key dimension for analysis of attainment and retention is the student's relative level of qualification on programme entry, which has several challenges:

- 'STUDMI' student management information resource contains 'highest qualification on entry' (eg 'Highers', or 'HND') however this is self-reported by the student from a pick list so not 100% reliable and in some edge cases their highest qualification may not be the relevant one for our analysis e.g. Engineering student may have an Advanced Higher but not in Mathematics.
- Extensive qualifications records are held for students in EUCLID but the extraction and data preparation work required is not trivial if we want to analyse outcomes based on holding particular subject-specific qualifications and at what grade. Transformation of data at the source would be required.
- UCAS total tariff score exists but not in EUCLID(?) and is too comprehensive / flawed anyway. We could seek to aggregate qualifications into a general reliable 'score' for analysis which is very complex to do. The point of this would be to have it as a dimension alongside various demographics for testing statistical correlation, with retention, or outcome as the dependent

variable. For non-UK students there are so many different qualifications this would be a huge challenge. For UK students the challenge with Scots is greater as there are some students who take other qualifications alongside Highers, and Highers themselves need more 'de-duplication' e.g. student takes Higher Maths in S5 and gets an A, takes Advanced Higher Maths in S6 and gets a lower grade. RUK students mostly with A levels are more straightforward (work was begun a while back but multiple weeks work would be required to finish). To create a summary metric for Scots is more complex would take several weeks more work).

- We don't have clear data on which qualifications were considered as relevant to entry (e.g. consider a mature applicant who has both Highers and a recent HND). Offer conditions are not always transparent due to their complex nature and results confirmation are handled by Admissions Officers in free text notes.

CURRENT STATUS

Awards

- The awards paper as presented to SQAC is comprehensive with a focus on award compared with sex, disability, disability type, domicile, ethnicity, widening participation.
- Based on current datasets it should be possible to look at particular combinations of attributes (e.g. Scottish and male; declared disability and state school).

Progression between years

- 1st sit attempt reports available – not clear where data for other sits are archived/can be accessed which makes looking at assessments and resits more challenging.
- Work needs to be done on resit data to identify where it is held in order to answer progression questions.

Student journey

- Based on the current data it is not possible to follow a student's journey from the point of admission to graduation, in that there is no comprehensive one-stop dashboard or tool that tracks the whole lifecycle.
- The data for those who become students at Edinburgh exist in EUCLID but currently there is no *report* that can be done for aggregate analysis.
- We have applications data and students' data, and with work we are able to join them, but as discussed elsewhere we might not have the summary entry qualifications data to analyse properly. IF we are tracking aggregate and wanting to show e.g. ethnicity patterns including those who did not become students, as well as those who did, again we have a data gap.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK:

EUCLID: Recommendation for a change in EUCLID, to move from open field answers to text boxes. As mentioned above offer conditions and results confirmation are handled by Admissions Officers in free text notes. This makes later analysis of entry qualifications more difficult. The consideration here is if a student's focused qualifications on entry are a required dimension for analysing progress and outcome patterns. We understand that whilst all of a student's prior qualifications are held in EUCLID, a student may have more qualifications than those which secured entry. The information about what

our offer conditions were, and which qualifications were relevant, is only contained in free text written by admissions staff. Further discussion with R&A colleagues is needed before any action can be taken:

- To define more clearly what is necessary for progress/outcomes analysis, as any changes would be high risk because:

The existing business processes support a vital, and high-pressure sphere of work (admissions) with different practices (e.g. nomenclature) in different Colleges and those who understand it best (Admissions Officers) are very 'time-poor' due to the compressed nature of their activity.

University systems: Linking and analysing the University's data requires systems that integrate, and this need should be considered when replacement systems are being procured. Whilst EUCLID itself is broad, Business Objects 'universes' drawing from it are siloed. Edinburgh Data Warehouse needed.

Review WP markers: WP definitions should be reviewed and standardised across the University, informed by indexes of ACORN, POLAR and SIMD for Scottish students. As highlighted in the previous section, ACORN for RUK and SIMD for Scots can be key headline dimensions, SRA colleagues could be brought in to debate and agree a single definition of WP as a basket of dimensions. Key area of debate include whether a basket should only contain data known for applicants, to enable across lifecycle analysis (i.e. including those who did not come to us) or to have a basket that includes student only data like bursaries.

Review of data definitions / methodology could consider:

- Whether retention or progression should be the key focus for student 'on programme' analysis. Perhaps both, but the nuance of what is counted as positive could be debated. Should the analysis be more nuanced (or additional analysis) in terms of outcomes (grades of positivity), and if so what is the cost in statistical reliability vs an either/or statistic.
- In terms of outcomes (qualification awarded) how should they be grouped in terms of positivity. For instance: does it matter (and can we tell from the data) whether a student was aiming for a degree but left with a diploma; should undergraduate degree classification analysis group unclassified Medicine, Vet Medicine, 5 year MEng etc with 'Firsts' or be confined for clarity to 1st, 2.1, 2.2 and 3rd.

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

15 May 2025

Proposal for Thematic Review 2025/26

Description of paper

1. This paper sets out the proposal for a 'Student Support Thematic Review' from the Students' Association. The proposed topic for review is the experience of LGBTQ+ students. It contributes to the Strategy 2030 outcome, "We will have more user-friendly processes and efficient systems to support our work."

Fit with remit

Quality Assurance Committee	Y/N
In partnership with Edinburgh University Students' Association, ensure effective student engagement and representation of student voices in the University's quality framework.	Y
Identify areas for innovation and enhancement of the student experience and ensure that these inform Senate Education Committee's policy development.	Y

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is asked to approve the proposal.

Background and context

3. Thematic Review is the process by which the quality of the student experience is reviewed in relation to a particular theme or aspect of student support, rather than an individual service or academic area.
4. A Thematic Review has not taken place since the 2018/19 review of black and minority ethnic students.
5. The Students' Association has requested a review in the area of LGBTQ+ students based on feedback from students and staff regarding the student experience since 2022/23.

Discussion

6. As stated in the proposal paper, recent research conducted by the Students' Association highlighted various issues with LGBTQ+ students' experience at Edinburgh.
7. This includes but is not limited to, inclusive environments (classrooms, accommodation etc); microaggressions from staff; lack of representation in the curriculum and lack of staff awareness on resources specifically for this cohort.
8. Further, LGBTQ+ students have expressed a lack of trust and a view that the University is not willing to engage.
9. The LGBT+ Sub-Committee of the University's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee and members of the Staff Pride Network support the Thematic Review and are keen to contribute to the work.

10. Recent extraction of relevant student record data on LGBTQ+ students can help inform the Thematic Review of key academic areas to explore issues and experiences.
11. This Thematic Review will aim to holistically view and create actions to respond to LGBTQ+ students' experiences and to concerns about engagement and trust,

Resource implications

12. A Thematic Review requires resource from existing staff in Academic Quality and Standards, Registry Services and the Students' Association. Incentives or payment are needed for students to take part in focus groups and surveys.

Risk management

13. There is an expectation of media reporting due to local, national and global interest.
14. Failure to meet our legislative obligations carries reputational, legal and financial risk.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

15. This Thematic Review would support the SDG "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" as part of the strategic objective to improve student experience. The proposals would not hinder the achievement of any other UN SDGs or exacerbate the Climate Emergency. The policy contributes to Sustainable Development Goals 3 (Good Health & Wellbeing), 5 (Gender Equality), and 10 (Reducing Inequalities).

Equality & diversity

16. An EQIA is not required at this stage of the review, but will need to be undertaken once work is underway, and again if/when any recommendations from the review are taken forward.

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

17. The Thematic Review team appointed will report to SQAC regularly on its work, and present its findings at the end of the 25/26 academic year.

Author

Proposal: Robin Gay, EUSA
Indigo Williams, EUSA VP Welfare

Cover paper: Rebecca Shade, Policy & Projects Adviser, Students

Presenters

Robin Gay, EUSA
Indigo Williams, EUSA VP Welfare

Freedom of Information

Open

Thematic Review of support for LGBTQ+ students proposal

This paper proposes that the University of Edinburgh undertake a [Thematic Review of support for LGBTQ+¹ students in the academic year 2025/26.](#)

The national context

The 2021 census found that 3.2% of the UK population identified as LGB+ and 0.5% identified as a gender that differed from their sex registered at birth². That figure rises to 12.1% identifying as LGB+³ and 9% identifying as something other than “man” or “woman”⁴ in the 16-24 age group.

At the University of Edinburgh, this would suggest a cohort of over 6000 students who identify as LGBTQ+.

However, despite increasing visibility and acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community, queer students continue to face challenges in Higher Education. In 2014, Student Minds partnered with the National Union of Students (NUS) to produce *Education Beyond the Straight and Narrow*⁵ which identified a number of concerning trends:

- 79.4% of LGBTQ+ students did not feel completely safe on campus
- 1 in 5 LGB+ students and 1 in 3 trans students had experienced some form of bullying or harassment on campus, and less than half reported those experiences
- LGBTQ+ students felt less positive than their heterosexual and cisgender peers about University services and support, citing a lack of staff awareness and understanding of their experiences
- LGBTQ+ did not feel represented by their curriculum

¹ LGBTQ+ is “An acronym commonly used to describe people who are lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace. Other commonly used acronyms include LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi and trans), LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bi, trans and queer), and LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bi, trans and intersex).” (Stonewall (no date) *List of LGBTQ+ terms*. Available at: <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/resources/list-lgbtq-terms> (Accessed 28 February 2025)

² House of Common Library (2023) *2021 census: What do we know about the LGBT+ population?* Available at: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/2021-census-what-do-we-know-about-the-lgbt-population/> (Accessed 28 February 2025)

³ Office for National Statistics (2025) *Dataset: Sexual orientation, UK*. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/datasets/sexualidentityuk> (Accessed 28 February 2025)

⁴ Ipsos (2022) *Stonewall gender identity tables 2022*. Available at: <https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2022-10/stonewall-gender-identity-tables-2022.pdf> (Accessed 28 February 2025)

⁵ Student Minds and the National Union of Students (2014) *Education Beyond the Straight and Narrow*. Available at: https://www.studentminds.org.uk/uploads/3/7/8/4/3784584/education_beyond_the_straight_and_narrow_2014.pdf (Accessed 28 February 2025)

Data from the national Student Academic Experience Survey⁶ shows that LGBTQ+ students have worse mental health than their peers, are significantly lonelier, are less engaged with their studies, and more likely to consider withdrawing.

The University of Edinburgh context

The trends are echoed by more recent research⁷ conducted by the Students' Association on LGBTQ+ students' experiences at the University of Edinburgh, which highlighted that many LGBTQ+ students do not feel that University staff are proactive enough in creating an inclusive classroom environment, citing consistent microaggressions which are not addressed, a lack of representation in the curriculum, and the use of resources which include outdated and harmful stereotypes of queer people.

Recent dialogue regarding the University's new [Trans Policy \(Students\)](#) highlighted that some trans students are made to feel unwelcome on campus by a lack of appropriate facilities; unclear processes for updating their student record; transphobic microaggressions such as misgendering from students and staff; and perceived institutional support for perspectives that are critical of trans identities and rights.

LGBTQ+ students often communicate feeling a lack of trust in the University's ability and desire to act with consideration for their welfare, resulting in an unwillingness to engage with the institution.

Scope of the Thematic Review

The benefit of a Thematic Review is the opportunity it would provide to look beyond individual services or academic areas, and instead holistically explore students' experiences at the University, allowing them to share their priorities and recommendations.

However, based on existing data, we would suggest that the Review include consideration of:

- Staff awareness and understanding of LGBTQ+ students and their experiences
- Working in collaboration with the upcoming Dignity & Respect policy work in relation to behaviour and culture on campus; service and School offerings for LGBTQ+ students, and recommendations for future work; the systems and processes which enable LGBTQ+ students to share information about their identity with the University
- Campus facilities, and ensuring LGBTQ+ students have access to spaces
- The University's ability to provide material support to LGBTQ+ students, addressing barriers to student life
- Ways in which the University could proactively and consistently communicate its support for the LGBTQ+ community

Conclusion

⁶ HEPI and Advance HE (2023) *Students' improving academic experience overshadowed by cost-of-living crisis: HEPI / Advance HE 2023 Student Academic Experience Survey*. Available at: <https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2023/06/22/student-experience-academic-survey-2023/> (Accessed 28 February 2025)

⁷ Ash Scholz (2024) *LGBTQ+ Inclusive Classroom Practices at the University of Edinburgh*. Available at: https://ugc.production.linktr.ee/b9167f02-e50a-4c3f-8a0b-b9585aa7bda3_LGBTQ--Inclusive-Classroom-Practices-PDF.pdf . (Accessed 28 February 2025)

Previous Thematic Reviews for cohorts such as mature students, student parents and carers, and Black and Minority Ethnic students have provided valuable insights into the student experience for these communities, highlighting both areas of good practice and scope for enhancement.

The Students' Association therefore proposes that the University commit to conducting a Thematic Review of support for LGBTQ+ students in the 2025/26 academic year.

Robin Gay, EUSA

Indigo Williams, EUSA VP Welfare

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

15 May 2025

**Scotland's Rural College Accreditation Committee
Annual Report 2023/24**

Description of paper

1. This paper summaries the key areas of discussion from the Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) Accreditation Committee meeting of Tuesday 22 April 2025.

Fit with remit

Quality Assurance Committee	Y/N
Oversee the delivery and enhancement of the University's quality assurance framework, ensuring that it meets external requirements.	Y
Promote the quality assurance framework as an important part of the University's activities and ensure that the outcomes inform relevant University business.	Y
In relation to academic collaborations with partner institutions: maintain oversight of development, approval, monitoring and review / renewal processes; receive annual reports on activity and identify any areas where action is required to maintain academic standards and the quality of the student experience.	Y

Action requested / recommendation

2. This paper is for information.

Background and context

3. The Convenor of Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) convenes the annual accreditation meeting, with Academic Quality and Standards responsible for co-ordinating the process.
4. In April 2025 the Accreditation Committee met to review and affirmed continued accreditation of the following SRUC programmes:
 - BSc Environmental Management
 - PhD Agriculture, Rural and Environmental Studies (and with Placement)

Discussion

5. See attached paper.

Resource implications

6. Accrediting SRUC degree programmes has resource implications for Academic Quality and Standards

Risk management

7. In order to preserve the University's reputation, it is essential to ensure that degrees accredited by the University of Edinburgh meet the same high standards of academic quality and student experience that we would expect from our own

programmes. The annual SRUC Accreditation Committee provides a framework to ensure that the accredited programmes continue to meet these expectations.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

8. N/A

Equality & diversity

9. As this paper reports on past activity, there are no Equality and Diversity considerations and an EqIA is not necessary at this time.

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

10. As the paper is an update to provide information, there are no actions.

Author

Patrick Jack
Academic Quality and Standards
April 2025

Presenter

Professor Tina Harrison
Convener, Scotland's Rural College
(SRUC) Accreditation Committee

Freedom of Information: *Open*

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

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

**Minutes of the meeting of Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) Accreditation
Committee held on Tuesday 22 April 2025 at 10am via Microsoft Teams**

Present:

Professor Tina Harrison (Convener)	Deputy Vice-Principal Students (Enhancement), University of Edinburgh
Professor Andrew Barnes	Head of Department, Rural Economy Environment and Society, SRUC
Professor Matthew Bailey	Dean of Quality Assurance, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, University of Edinburgh
Dr Kyrsten Black	Registrar, SRUC
Audrey Channing	Quality Assurance Lead, SRUC
Brian Connolly	Academic Policy Manager, Academic Quality and Standards, University of Edinburgh
Toni Dismore	Head of Doctoral College & Academic Manager, SRUC
Professor James Hopgood	Dean of Quality and Enhancement, College of Science and Engineering, University of Edinburgh
Dr Andrew Innes	Senior Lecturer, Rural Economy Environment and Society, SRUC
Patrick Jack (Secretary)	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Quality and Standards, University of Edinburgh
Professor Antony Maciocia	University Lead for Postgraduate Research, Doctoral College, University of Edinburgh
Professor Jamie Newbold	Provost and Deputy Principal, SRUC
Catherine Stewart	Student Representative, Co-President of SRUC Students' Association
Professor Eileen Wall	Head of Research & Professor of Integrative Livestock Genetics, SRUC

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Convenor welcomed all attendees, particularly those colleagues who were new members to the Committee.

2. Membership of the Accreditation Committee 2024-25

The Committee noted the membership for 2024-25. Professor Antony Maciocia suggested that he should be replaced by the Dean of Postgraduate Research in the College of Science and Engineering (CSE), Professor Jamie Pearce, for future meetings of the Accreditation Committee. Members agreed to this replacement. The Secretary noted to update the title of CSE's Dean of Quality and Enhancement within the membership list.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 26 April 2024

The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting as a full and accurate record. It was noted that the minutes had also been previously submitted to the University of Edinburgh's Senate Quality Assurance Committee in May 2024, for information.

4. Matters Arising

The Convener SRUC noted that SRUC successfully attained taught degree awarding powers (TDAP) in October 2024 and congratulated SRUC colleagues in achieving this.

For Information

5. Memorandum of Agreement

The Committee noted the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA). The Convener highlighted that any future amendments to the MoA will likely only be required within the appendices of the MoA.

6. Students' Association Update 2023-24

The Committee discussed the update on key SRUC Students' Association (SRUCSA) activity since the last meeting. The Convener commended SRUCSA on the excellent quality of the report and the innovative work that SRUCSA undertakes with SRUC students.

Five key activities were highlighted to members:

- **Speak Week:** SRUCSA provided SRUC students with the opportunity to voice what they admire most about SRUC and areas for development. 205 responses were received with themes such as student finance and the cost-of-living crisis arising from feedback.
- **Elmwood Protests:** A series of student-led demonstrations advocating for significant issues at Elmwood in terms of building changes and course closures.
- **Student Societies:** Record levels of student involvement within student societies have been achieved.

- **Events:** Various events have been held successfully throughout the year including Welcome Week and Burns Night events, which have helped enhance student community across SRUC campuses.
- **Active Campus Co-ordinator:** A new Active Campus Coordinator role has been created. The role holder will operate in alignment with Scottish Student Sport strategy, which will be tailored around the unique culture and nature of SRUC and its student population.

The Committee further noted comments around SRUC's approach to closing the student feedback loop, enhancing student community and PGR cohort building via the launch of the PGR student association group.

For Discussion

7. Annual Report 2023-24

The Committee considered the Annual Report 2023-24. The Committee noted the excellent quality of the report and accompanying documentation, and commended the SRUC team responsible.

Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP)

The Committee were informed that SRUC attained TDAP in October 2024. SRUC have used TDAP to introduce a new veterinary programme based at its Aberdeen campus. TDAP abilities have also been used to develop a new PG Cert in Learning and Teaching within tertiary education. This will undertake formal validation later this academic year with the intention to admit its first cohort next academic year.

External Review

Members were informed that as part of SRUC's comprehensive quality review process, SRUC was reviewed by the QAA in April 2024 via its Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR). The Committee noted that the QESR review team commended SRUC's annual monitoring process and the role of annual dialogue meetings in quality enhancement and assurance.

The Committee noted the QESR recommendation for SRUC to consistently implement the framework supporting professional development for teachers and queried whether this also applied to supervisors. While the recommendation focuses more on postgraduate students who teach, work is being undertaken to enhance supervisor development via relevant training opportunities such as developing skills around providing feedback. A new online module is now available as a resource to all staff which covers relevant regulations and practices.

PhD Agriculture, Rural and Environmental Studies

The Committee noted that there were 13 fully-funded entrants to the PhD programme during 2024/25, with approximately 250 applications received.

Recruitment is ongoing for 2025/26 however over 200 applications have been received to date. SRUC will soon promote self-funded routes for PhD students. All PhD students were successful in their year-1 annual reviews.

SRUC colleagues were requested to provide details around enhancing student support for PGR. Members noted that, in line with TDAP, part of the development of new provision is to enhance student support for the wider student cohort and two additional staff members are being appointed to support this work. In addition, a new student services group has been established at SRUC to help ensure equitable access to student support irrespective of mode or location of study. The Head of this service is due to take up post in June 2025. This is welcomed in the PGR context due to the dispersed nature of SRUC PhD students. Supervisor representatives are appointed at each campus and PGR leads will be introduced from 2025/26.

The Committee discussed the consideration of a 1+3 PhD model, with a note of caution highlighted due to the challenges this model can present to international students and to students who do not succeed in their first year. SRUC have developed light-touch PhD research skills provision at SCQF level 11 which will be introduced as a more formalised module moving forward. Micro-credential distance learning modules have been launched this year; PhD students are able to undertake these courses to enhance their research training but not obtain credit. SRUC were encouraged to discuss options for PhD models with University of Edinburgh colleagues.

It was noted that final examinations for PhD students may commence next academic year. SRUC are keen to work with the University of Edinburgh to ensure that internal examiners are sufficiently trained prior to final examinations taking place. It was further noted that online training is available and that the practice of having non-examining Chairs is routine at the University of Edinburgh. The Convener noted that they would discuss this further with SRUC colleagues following the meeting.

BSc Environmental Management

The Committee noted SRUC's intention to overhaul this programme via the validation of a new programme under TDAP. Members were informed that the current 2+2 model of the programme is challenging, the high assessment load is unsustainable and attrition rates are high at pre-honours. It is hoped that a new, modernised programme will attract a more diverse range of students and boost student numbers. The Committee noted SRUC's preference that recruitment would stop to the current programme at the point that the new programme is validated, which is likely to be either 2026 or 2027. While it was noted that plans would need to be in place to teach-out the current programme, SRUC will explore the possibility of enabling students to migrate onto the new programme should they wish to do so. It was noted that 22 students commenced the programme this academic year.

In terms of student feedback, members noted that three formal student-staff liaison committee (SSLC) meetings are held each academic year, whereby

student representatives gather feedback from students and feed this back to staff. Students can also submit feedback forms for both the wider programme and their specific year group.

Student Voice

The Committee was informed that NSS, PTES, the student support and experience survey (aimed at further education students) and an internal SRUC-wide survey are all in place. This is complemented by a system within SRUC whereby students can raise queries or concerns at any given time. Ongoing work around student voice and community is now the responsibility of a single student voice team, who write a comprehensive annual student voice report detailing relevant activity from all areas of SRUC.

A focus for SRUC this year has been to hold student liaison groups in different formats in order to ensure inclusion for distance learners. The importance of these groups has been emphasised to staff which in turn has led to much higher levels of engagement and compliance. It was noted that similar work is being undertaken within the University of Edinburgh's College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. The College's Dean of Quality Assurance noted that he will discuss this further with SRUC colleagues following the meeting.

Annual Monitoring

Members noted that annual programme monitoring reports feed into the Annual Quality Dialogues (AQDs) during which aspects of programme delivery and management are discussed by the Board of Studies, with a panel of colleagues comprised of the Provost, Registrar, Head of Learning and teaching, SRUCSA Sabbatical and Quality Assurance Lead. SRUC colleagues noted that undertaking AQDs are resource-intensive but are valuable. SRUC undertakes approximately 7-8 AQDs each academic year, which each AQD meeting lasting roughly 3 hours. They are generally held between September-November in order to ensure that outcomes from AQD meetings can be fed into SRUC's Self-Evaluation Action Plan (SEAP) report.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The Committee noted that SRUC has established a working group on AI which has undertaken a lot of research around AI, its environmental impact and its implications on academic misconduct. SRUC seeks to ensure clarity throughout its assessments when AI can and cannot be used by students. AI is not permitted for use in SQA assessments.

AI has been actively introduced as a learning tool on the BSc Environmental Management programme, whereby students can use AI systems to draft research proposal ideas but are also encouraged to consider AI's limitations which helps prevent over-reliance on AI. It was queried whether BSc Environmental Management students have access to the Edinburgh Language Models (ELM) system. The link to ELM was provided and it was noted that this would be communicated to students.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

SRUC colleagues were congratulated on achieving the bronze level Athena Swan award.

Institution-led Reviews

The Committee were informed that, although an institution-led review of the BSc Environmental Management programme is yet to take place, other programme reviews have been undertaken. This activity has identified common themes such as supporting industry input into SRUC provision, encouraging student feedback and partnership working with students. A thematic review within SRUC was held on workplace learning and modern apprenticeships. It was noted that there has been a substantial increase in modern apprenticeships at SRUC, with a 50% increase over the past two years.

For Approval

8. Accreditation of BSc Environmental Management and PhD in Agriculture, Rural and Environmental Studies (and with Placement)

The Committee affirmed continued accreditation of the following SRUC programmes:

- BSc Environmental Management
- PhD Agriculture, Rural and Environmental Studies (and with Placement)

9. Any Other Business

TDAP: SRUC formally recognised the help and support provided by the University of Edinburgh during the TDAP application process and expressed a formal note of thanks to University of Edinburgh colleagues.

External Examiner: SRUC indicated that they are seeking to replace their external examiner and will communicate further with the University of Edinburgh on this in the coming weeks. The Convener noted this and highlighted that the University of Edinburgh has an extraordinary external examiner appointment process in place in order to address this challenge.

Research Degree Awarding Powers: The Convener noted that the University of Edinburgh will continue to support SRUC in their aim to obtain powers to award research degrees, as well as continuing to explore new collaborative opportunities between the two institutions.

10. Date of Next Meeting: TBC

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

15 May 2025

**Annual Monitoring and Internal Periodic Review Themes 2023-24:
University Level Actions**

Description of paper

1. This paper updates the Committee on University level actions agreed in response to issues identified as areas for further development in School Annual Quality Reports 2023-24 and themes that emerged from Internal Periodic Reviews held in 2023-24.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For information.

Background and context

3. Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) approved actions at University level in response to issues identified as areas for further development in School Annual Quality Reports 2023-24 and themes that emerged from teaching/postgraduate programme reviews held in 2023-24 (at the September 2024 SQAC meeting).

Discussion

4. See paper below.

Resource implications

5. Resource implications are considered as part of each action.

Risk management

6. Ensuring that students and staff are confident that the University listens to and acts on their comments and feedback is essential to ensuring their engagement with quality processes. This report represents an element of the feedback loop from the central University level to the local School and College levels.

Equality & diversity

7. The actions encompass equality and diversity issues.

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

8. Academic Quality & Standards will inform relevant areas.

Author

Brian Connolly

Academic Quality & Standards

Presenter

Brian Connolly

Academic Quality & Standards

Freedom of Information

Open

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

Annual Monitoring and Internal Periodic Review Themes 2023-24: University Level Actions

The following responses were received in relation to issues raised in the reports and reviews 2023-24:

Area for Further Development	Update
<p>Assessment and Feedback:</p> <p>Annual monitoring reports identified that Schools were looking for further guidance on Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and assessment to help with concerns around academic integrity. It was noted that Schools had started to develop their own approaches and in some areas this has resulted in a return to in-person exams. However, the positive opportunities of Generative AI as a tool were also recognised, particularly in regard to graduate attributes and the need for University of Edinburgh students to learn how to use AI tools responsibly.</p> <p>In relation to quality of feedback, the Convener confirmed that work is being undertaken with the Internal Audit team to develop an institutional framework for conducting audits on quality of feedback.</p>	<p>Response from Professor Tina Harrison, Deputy Vice-Principal Students (Enhancement) and Convener of the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group and the External Quality Review Oversight Group (May 2025):</p> <p>Professor Sian Bayne, Assistant Principal Education Futures, is leading work to revise the University-level Student Guidance on the use of Generative AI. The revised guidance will be informed by discussions being held with the College Education Committees, the AI Adoption Task Group, the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group, the Students' Association (approximately 60 students via SSLCs, rep gatherings and other forums) and the Doctoral College/PGR Deans. In May, Senate Education Committee will be invited to endorse a set of top-level principles which will be used as the basis for the final revised guidance due to be completed by end of June 2025.</p> <p>In terms of feedback quality, work is continuing with Internal Audit to template a process for feedback audit, with the School of GeoSciences actively involved in a pilot. Discussions will be held with the three Heads of College and the Student Experience Delivery and Monitoring Board (SEDaMOB) to identify how best to take this work forward.</p>

Student Support Model:

Through annual quality reports 2023-24, the Cohort Lead role had been identified as having had variable success; there were clear examples of individuals working well in the role and engaging with students but many Schools reporting that the role could be more effective. SQAC found that there was demand for enhanced central guidance on how to deploy the role and design events to best engage with students. It was identified that the role was felt to be working well in smaller Schools and tight academic areas. There were, however, challenges for students on joint programmes, with Schools concerned about gaps or inconsistency in the student experience. It was suggested that the issues with the student support model reflect the limits of the structures in place within the University, including issues around the teaching model and over-reliance on PGR tutors. These factors may help to explain the concern around the academic support gap and the expected role and responsibilities of cohort leads.

The Committee addressed a concern noted in some reports that some students do not know where to go for the appropriate support. Triaging through different services needs to work well, and whilst Student Advisors are a key contact for students, not everything has to go through this channel. Academic staff should also be aware of the services that students should be signposted to for support, and be available for contact

Response from **Marianne Brown, Head of Academic Planning, Registry Services** (April 2025):

- 1) Inconsistency in student experiences of support
 - SSCIG have prioritised a piece of work looking at variations in student support practices across Schools. This to understand what the variations are and why they are happening, with a view to agreeing what needs to be standardised or what requires a certain level of variation. This is to support students across all Schools, but in particular will benefit students on joint programmes through creating a more consistent experience.
 - Meetings with every School will be taking place across April and May to understand this further and will cover all aspects of the student support model
- 2) Cohort Lead role
 - In April, Registry Services and College colleagues worked together on a community event for Cohort Leads. This was attended by c. 70 Cohort Leads, and focussed on case studies from Cohort Leads. This is the second priority for SSCIG and will in part be explored through the School meetings.
- 3) Students knowing how to access support
 - SSCIG has worked with CAM to create a more consistent and structured approach to messaging around Student Advisers as first point of contact for support, in particular how this messaging is embedded in comms as standard. Examples of this include:
 - We highlight our student support messaging in our pre-arrival and Welcome Week comms, for example:
 - In our Welcome to the University emails: [Welcome to the University of Edinburgh](#)
 - School templates we provide: [Welcome to the School of ...](#) (CAM has no oversight of how these templates are used by Schools)

with students that does relate to academic matters. The Committee suggested it would be useful to track how often Student Advisors are connecting students with academic staff, and develop a better understanding of what good academic support means within the model.

- We also provide templates for Cohort Leads and Student Advisers to introduce themselves to new students (CAM has no oversight of how these templates are used by Schools)
- In our welcome videos shown at the Principal's Welcome Ceremony: [Student Support and Wellbeing at the University of Edinburgh - Media Hopper Create](#)
- Content featuring or created by our students shared via the University's main social media accounts:
- We also created a how-to-video on the topic of student support, building on the existing animation:
- [Look after yourself - Media Hopper Create](#)
- We remind students that their Student Adviser is their main point of contact in key emails from senior leaders, such as:
- This email to all returning students from Colm and Lucy before the start of the academic year: [Support for you this academic year](#)
- This email to all students from the Principal at the start of the academic year: [Welcome to the new academic year](#)
- We highlight student support in our Student Newsletters
- Where appropriate, we also encourage students to speak to their Student Advisers in more operational emails as a first point of contact.

4) Academic support

- Over April and May, SSCIG is undertaking further analysis with staff and students to understand more about academic support. Data has been collected from Schools in early 2025 to inform this work. This data will be used to identify indicators to test the assumption of that there is a "gap" in academic support through the new model.
- It is currently not possible to track connections between Student Advisers and academic staff due to the additional data collection requirement this would impose at a local level.

<p>Student Voice and Engagement: Schools continue to make significant efforts to provide opportunities for students to feedback on their student experience through locally organised student voice mechanisms, and provided examples of feedback mechanisms used. However, many Schools, particularly those using survey tools, reported issues with engagement and low response rates, with concerns regarding the utility of feedback derived from such low levels of engagement. It was common for Schools to report high student satisfaction with opportunities for providing feedback, but a much lower student satisfaction in terms of students feeling that feedback is valued and action taken as a result.</p> <p>The 2023-24 annual monitoring reports indicated that a barrier to closing the feedback loop may be due to the challenges of identifying and responding to issues at School level (which can be addressed and responded to locally) versus those that are not within the control of the School and which require institutional-level response and action. This can make closing the feedback loop more challenging at School level and may create a disconnect between students and decision makers.</p>	<p>Response from Marianne Brown, Head of Academic Planning, Registry Services (April 2025):</p> <p>To understand the experience of taught students further, a baselining exercise was undertaken in 2024/25 to learn more about student voice activity within Schools. Each School provided information on the delivery of course level feedback, Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLC), School mechanisms such as Townhalls/Student Forums and communications to student about feedback actions. The key insights from this work were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is variation in student voice practice across all core student voice mechanisms, including what mechanisms are used and who is responsible for them; • There is a lack of visibility, across and within Schools, of student voice practice, feedback outcomes and themes and methods for communicating to students about feedback; • There is a lack of clarity about what is expected across student voice practices and a lack of clarity across governance and escalation routes, in particular where feedback relates beyond the School (e.g. to the College or a central service); • There exists a skills gap in analysing feedback and effectively communicating the themes and actions derived from it. While efforts are being made to improve how feedback actions are communicated to students, there remains a lack of understanding about what constitutes effective communication in this context. Addressing this gap is crucial for ensuring students feel their voices are valued and their feedback leads to tangible changes. <p>To respond to this feedback from students and staff a package of work has been identified to support the enhancement of student voice across the University. A Student Voice Framework will be developed to provide clarity and</p>
--	---

	<p>consistency across core student voice practices, from data collection to communication to students. This will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish minimum requirements for each School and Professional Service in student voice practices, setting clear expectations for staff and students; • Establish roles and responsibilities across mechanisms, ensuring there is clear accountability across all parts of the process and at all levels of the University; • Establish clear reporting and escalation routes to enable the identification of key feedback themes and to ensure timely responses to feedback; • Enable timely, effective communications to students about feedback outcomes.
<p>Postgraduate Research Student Experience:</p> <p>Several themes emerged in 23/24 reports in relation to the postgraduate research (PGR) student experience, including completion times, training for PGR students who teach and the student support model not extending to PGR students. Responses around lengthening completion times reflect the trend in the sector to move to a 4-year funding model. It was acknowledged that this presents issues for Widening Participation (WP) students and those who are self-funding, who are expected to complete an unfunded period at the end of their studies. It was agreed that the University needs to improve its understanding and awareness of the scale of this issue.</p> <p>Another theme evident throughout the reports was training for PGR students who teach. Schools were</p>	<p>Response from Professor Antony Maciocia, University Lead for PGR and University Lead For T&D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University is developing a Strategy for PGRs to be completed summer 2025. This will set out the need to develop programmes which are sufficiently flexible to allow for additional training and to accommodate EDI factors such as the need to pick up additional courses or to allow for caring responsibilities. This comes on the back of a “green paper” which analysed the issue of completion rates amongst other factors. We are still short of good EDI data and we are looking to improve our systems to capture more reliable data. • Work is also underway to understand our scholarship portfolio better and provide more accurate management data to help with planning. • Work is also underway to look at how to extend some parts of the student support model to PGRs. Scoping work has been carried out in 24/25 to provide a complete picture of the support provided in all Schools with a view to networking a suitable subgroup of staff to the

asked to confirm that arrangements are in place for training for PGR students that teach. The Group noted that some reports may be conflating 'induction' with 'training', and that monitoring of the training undertaken by PGR students remains an area that lacks consistency across the institution.

wellbeing service/ These staff would play the role of student advisors for PGRs.

- Work has been completed to include significant changes to the way we administer stipends for funded students and update the terms and conditions of awards in line with the "New Deal" from UKRI whose new conditions come into force for 25/26. Extensive guidance documents have been produced and agreed across the Doctoral College.
- A Principal's Award project has been piloting Developmental Needs Analyses with two programmes with a view to providing a framework for the university and whose use will be mandated in the new PGR Strategy.
- The removal of additional fees beyond the prescribed period is now complete and significant changes have been approved to the fee regime more broadly to absorb the costs. New fee spines will come into effect in 26/27.
- Supervisor and examiner training has been significantly upgraded this year and rolled out across the institution. The supervisor training is seen as a good vehicle to help supervisors deal with difficult and unusual cases as well as help to keep students on a sensible timeline to aid completion.

The new governance body for Tutors and Demonstrators has begun working in 24/25. Work has been done to produce a spreadsheet for use to gather training information on all T&D staff on GH contracts. This will include PGRs. We expect this to be in place for 25/26. The group has also looked at data returns from the Schools to evaluate the stated level of support for T&D. Initial data shows that the T&D policy is now being observed and the is meaningful training in all Schools and T&D staff receive payment for the time spent undertaking the training. There is still a lot of scope for CPD type training which is considerably more patchy and there are discussions underway about just how much of the 9 hours core staff training should be mandated for GH staff

	and how much of this would/should be undertaken by PGR generally as a core part of their study programmes.
<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) & the Awarding Gap</p> <p>The 2023-24 templates included reference to student outcomes and progression. As a result, there was greater reporting on these areas and reflection on student outcomes. The reports led SQAC to query whether definitions of outcomes and progression vary across Schools and across the University. This action was referred to the Student Data Monitoring Task and Finish Group to explore the definitions used and look to develop guidance for how Schools should use the progression and outcome data that is available to them.</p>	<p>Response from Professor Tina Harrison, Deputy Vice-Principal Students (Enhancement) and co-convener of the Student Data Monitoring Task Group (May 2025):</p> <p>The Student Data Monitoring Task Group was established by SQAC in May 2024 and has the remit to explore methodological options and make recommendations to the Committee for a new systematic approach to monitoring student data at University level. The group has met 3 times so far in 2024/25 and members of the group have been undertaking activity throughout the year.</p> <p>One strand of ongoing work is establishing agreed definitions and characteristics to be used in relation to monitoring the awarding gap. Meetings have been held with colleagues from the Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS) and the Widening Participation (WP) Team to better understand our student population and the definitions, markers and characteristics which relate to our students. The agreed definitions are expected to be applied to data collection and analysis to facilitate greater understanding of our awarding gaps within the University.</p> <p>An enhanced analysis of degree outcomes for 2023-24 will be presented to and discussed by SQAC in May 2025. At the request of the task group, Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling have included data on low classification degrees and given focus to key groups of students who are more likely to experience the awarding gap. Discussion of this analysis will inform task group activity in the next academic year and the recommendations from the group around a systematic approach going forward. Work is ongoing to improve data</p>

	quality and collection before guidance can be issued to Schools around using available data to identify and address awarding gaps.
--	--

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

15 May 2025

Principal's Teaching Award Scheme: April 2025 report

Description of paper

1. The Principal's Teaching Award Scheme (PTAS) provides funding to support learning and teaching enhancement. It aligns with the Strategy 2030 goal that teaching will match the excellence of our research and will improve and sustain student satisfaction and wellbeing. The paper reports on PTAS project funding awarded, completed projects and project outcomes between October 2024 and April 2025.

Fit with remit

Quality Assurance Committee	Y/N
Identify areas for innovation and enhancement of the student experience and ensure that these inform Senate Education Committee's policy development.	Y

Action requested / recommendation

2. The committee are asked to note the activities outlined in the paper.

Background and context

3. The Principal's Teaching Award Scheme (PTAS) provides funding to support learning and teaching enhancement. This successful scheme has been running since 2007 with current annual funding of £160,000.

Discussion

4. Please see attached paper.

Resource implications

5. None at present, PTAS is currently fully funded by Development and Alumni and supported by IAD within currently existing resources.

Risk management

6. The paper is a report on activity and no risks are identified.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

7. PTAS does not contribute directly to the SDGs, but projects funded by the scheme may do so, particularly in the area of equality education.

Equality & diversity

8. Completing an Equality Impact Statement is part of the PTAS award application process and is considered by the PTAS awarding panel.

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

9. This paper presents a first update on PTAS to be noted. It is intended to regularly update the Committee after each PTAS funding round in April and November.

Authors

Neil Lent, Stella Bray & Cheryl Thomas,
Institute for Academic Development (IAD)
Date 21/04/2025

Freedom of Information Open

Principal's Teaching Award Scheme: April 2025 report

Authors: Neil Lent, Stella Bray & Cheryl Thomas
 Affiliation: Institute for Academic Development (IAD)
 Last updated: April 2025

Background

The Principal's Teaching Award Scheme (PTAS) provides funding to support learning and teaching enhancement. This successful scheme has been running since 2007 with current annual funding of £160,000. The scheme has involved over 400 members of staff and increasing numbers of students within project teams from across the University of Edinburgh (UoE). Project teams may be based solely within a particular school or may be interdisciplinary and/or include colleagues from professional services. All projects are focused on enhancing the student learning experience at UoE. Strategic priorities, such as 'supporting and promoting teaching', and 'understanding of the value of creativity, curiosity and even failure' (UoE Strategy 2030) are embedded in the PTAS priorities and approach taken, as well as within the guidance for PTAS teams.

The aims of PTAS are to:

- encourage new learning and teaching (L&T) practices, innovations, and inquiry
- share good L&T practices across the university and beyond
- promote and recognise L&T excellence
- raise the status of university L&T
- enhance the quality of student learning and student experiences
- enhance L&T scholarship capabilities across the institution

Awards Update

Since our last report in October 2024, we awarded funding to the following projects in tranche one of academic year 2024/25:

Principal's Teaching Award Scheme (PTAS): Semester 1 (October submission)

- Total number of awards: four Regular Grants, two Small Grants
- Total sum of grants awarded: £67,156.19

Lead applicant	School [College]	Project Title	Amount awarded (£)
Dr Brittany Blankinship	Usher Institute [CMVM]	Developing an Edited Volume and Online Resources for Programming Pedagogy Across Disciplines	17590.57

Dr Ellie Devenish-Nelson	Biomedical Science [CMVM]	Assessing the long-term impact of postgraduate online learning for alumni careers and capacity development	17908.80
Dr Fiona Morrison	MHSES [CAHSS]	Embedding children's rights in professional programmes – enhancing future duty bearers' readiness to develop children's rights practices and uphold children's rights	17986.80
Dr Jacqueline Karen Andrea Serra Undurraga	Health in Social Sciences [CAHSS]	Fostering Dialogue Across Racial Differences in Undergraduate Students: A Pilot Project	10323.19
Dr Aaron Allen	IAD [USG/CAHSS]	Experiencing the Past: Interdisciplinary Experiential Learning through Heritage-Based Workshops	2242.63
Dr Patrick Theiner	Health in Social Sciences [CAHSS]	Vulnerability of assessments in Politics and International Relations to Generative AI	1104.2

As you can see from the projects, there are a range of projects that align with University of Edinburgh strategic aims, particularly around accessibility, equality, diversity and inclusion. The growing sector-wide concern over the use of generative artificial intelligence is the focus of one of the funded projects. This growing interest continues to be reflected in the March applications with two AI-related submissions in this round. Both submissions relate to using AI tools to enhance students' learning rather than the more exploratory project proposals we have previously received which tended to focus on possible threats as well as opportunities presented by Generative AI more generally.

For our second tranche of funding awards, to be decided at committee in April 2025, we have received 12 submissions for 'regular' grants and four submissions for 'small' grants, totalling a request of funding of £187 058.10. It is unlikely that we will fund all projects but look forward to reading about the range of new activities applicants have put forward. We are pleased with the representation from all the Colleges and also, one from EUSA which is good to see. We are looking forward to the committee decision-making process which is underway.

Completed Projects & Broader Impact

We received the following completed project reports over the winter period. The completed projects were focussed on seeking to enhance students' engagement and reflection with the complexity of learning to tackle 'real world' issues by researchers mostly based in the Colleges of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Science and Engineering.

Crossing the Line: Developing an Interdisciplinary Toolkit for Higher Education
David Overend with Clare Cullen, Andy Cross, Seongsook Choi, David Jay, Jenny Scoles, Maddie Winter

The project investigated the practices, methods and experiences of interdisciplinary learning and teaching by researching the inaugural delivery of the MA (Hons) Interdisciplinary Futures programme at Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI). The research involved a comprehensive, mixed-methods approach to observe, document, and critically reflect on the experiences of both learners and educators within the new programme. They considered the distinctions between multi-, inter-, and trans-disciplinarity, recognising the fluidity and adaptability of these terms. The project also examined different modes of interdisciplinary practice, from challenge-led learning focused on complex global issues (inequality and sustainability, for example) to exploring interdisciplinary environments like the contemporary city. The project culminated in publications in journals and books, and the creation of the Toolkit for Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching (TILT), a resource designed to support and enhance the work of learners and educators in this expanded field. TILT offers a collection of different methods, focuses, activities, and principles to inspire new approaches and ways of working. The toolkit is the key practical output of the research, translating theoretical findings into readily applicable resources for the university community and beyond. The project's insights and resources can inform the development of other programmes and courses, providing a framework for evaluating and improving existing interdisciplinary initiatives. It offers best practices for teaching and learning in interdisciplinary contexts and promotes the use of the *Toolkit for Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching* across the university. The project's findings also encourage cross-departmental collaboration and knowledge sharing and can inform staff development related to interdisciplinary teaching. The TILT resource includes recommendations and activities for ethical interdisciplinary teaching and learning, which will be shared with other part of the university through further presentations and collaborations. A dedicated launch event for the *Toolkit for Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching* was held at the Edinburgh Futures Institute in November 2024. In addition to the launch of the toolkit, the project team published two journal articles and two book chapters, six external conference presentations/workshops and two internal presentations / workshops at the Learning and Teaching Conference and two other workshops at UoE.

The Toolkit for Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching is available at:
<https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/tilt/crossing-the-line/>

Decolonising Counselling and Psychotherapy: Reflections from Psychosocial Perspectives
Dr Nini Kerr, Rhea Gandhi, and Dr Mariya Levitanus

This project aimed at challenging the Eurocentric lens that informs traditional therapeutic approaches and developing more politically progressive and decolonial alternatives to practice, training, and research, in line with the university-wide decolonising initiatives. The project team delivered a series of four public-facing seminars and one final community engagement event, bringing together academic staff and students from across disciplines, stakeholders, as well as wider therapeutic communities in Edinburgh and beyond. The seminars exemplified the value of culturally diverse perspectives and were inherently transdisciplinary, critically intersecting counselling and psychotherapy with sociology, critical childhood studies, queer studies, political and cultural analysis, and critical studies. The seminar series was well-attended, attracting a highly diverse audience from various fields and professional backgrounds. Each seminar was followed by group discussions, encouraging participants to engage with learning through the prism of lived experiences and interpersonal reflections as they unfolded in the here and now. The project applied these reflections and learning to critically assess not only what we teach but also *how we teach*, foregrounding the

relational dynamics at play and the power structures that expose historical influences. These insights extend beyond counselling and psychotherapy, including the University as a social institution more broadly. The project raised crucial questions: *How is learning shaped not only by the classroom but also by the relational dynamics constantly unfolding within it? What roles do we take up, and what affordances come with those roles?* The project benefits the wider university community not by offering solutions or 'expert' views but by extending an ongoing invitation to rethink knowledge production as inseparable from the empirical domains of experience, observation, and interpretation - domains deeply shaped by cultural and theoretical habits which sanction a 'proper' way to think, to be. Ultimately, the project advocates for a space of reflection where the task is not to seek certainty of knowing but to sit with the discomfort of examining our own role in sustaining the oppressive norms. The project team have produced two journal articles and delivered three external presentations at two conferences and one seminar for the Guild of Psychotherapists.

Evaluating institutional approaches to support students in recognising the value of personal and professional development with science students

Dr Alison Cullinane, Dr Ruth Deighton and Mr Niccolo Tiangco, with Dr Sarah Gretton (University of Leicester) and Dr Nigel Page (Kingston, University, London)

This collaborative project involved three UK universities and aimed to incorporate reflective practice into the bioscience curriculum to enhance students' learning and preparedness for professional careers. The project investigated the impact of credit-bearing reflective portfolios aimed to encourage students to critically examine their knowledge, skills, and personal growth, and to articulate this in to enhance their professional and or academic development.

Embedding reflection from an early stage, using planned reflection points over the course of programmes was found to be important for students to understand the value of reflective practice. Portfolios encouraged the students to recognise how their growing knowledge connected with real-life applications, thus enhancing their readiness for work and also further study. Helping students to see the purpose of the portfolio to their development at an early stage was important to get them engage with the process.

Students reported enhanced awareness of their skills development in critical thinking, self-assessment, and key competencies valued in professional settings. To maximise success, the following features were identified as important:

- Adequate training and ongoing support for students and faculty are crucial for the successful implementation of reflective practices.
- Adaptive approaches to portfolio design and assessment are essential to accommodate diverse student needs and different disciplinary and institutional contexts.
- Maintaining learning opportunities and enabling introduction to establish a research community or community of practice.

The project demonstrated substantial benefits of incorporating reflective portfolios into bioscience undergraduate courses, that can be adapted for use in other disciplines. There have been five conference presentations and there is a publication in preparation. Two resources have been co-created with students: a Portfolio, FAQs and a Skills Matrix Handbook.

PTAS Programme updates

The annual Learning and Teaching Conference is back this year. We do not yet have been full information on the programme but, at the time of writing, there are two presentations and one demonstration based on PTAS work that have been accepted.

Teaching Matters Blogs:

In the last six months, six Teaching Matters blogs, based on PTAS work have been published.

[From PgCAP to PTAS: Co-creating a new Development Needs Analysis for PGRs](#)

Anna Pilz

[Decolonising counselling and psychotherapy: Reflections from psychosocial perspectives](#)

Nini Kerr, Rhea Gandhi, and Mariya Levitanus

[An Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching Manifesto](#)

Jenny Scoles, Maddie Kurchik and Clare Cullen

[Introducing the Toolkit for Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching \(TILT\)](#)

Clare Cullen, Maddie Kurchik, David Overend and Jenny Scoles

[How online learning can help tackle global injustices](#)

Sam Spiegel

[Insights on co-creating a new Development Needs Analysis](#)

Majdouline El hichou

Other outputs:

"Degrees of Inequality", *Living and Studying at Home (Great Debates in Higher Education)*

This book uses material from the PTAS sponsored projects led by Sheila Riddell and colleagues.

Full reference:

[Riddell, S.](#), [Tett, L.](#), [Christie, H.](#), [King, R.](#) and [Shan, S.](#) (2024), "Degrees of Inequality", *Living and Studying at Home (Great Debates in Higher Education)*, Emerald Publishing Limited, Leeds <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83549-498-120241019>

Thank you

We once again thank the University of Edinburgh Development Trust for supporting PTAS and for the financial support agreed already for academic year 2024/25 and for the Development and Alumni Financial Team support in helping PTAS projects have the flexibility over the financial years to enable projects to be carried out. We are always happy to discuss the ongoing provision of the PTAS programme and if there are any projects or PTAS project teams that you would like to know more about, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

15 May 2025

Membership and Terms of Reference 2025/26

Description of paper

1. The paper outlines Senate Quality Assurance Committee's (SQAC) Membership and Terms of Reference for 2025/26.

Fit with remit

Quality Assurance Committee	
Oversee the delivery and enhancement of the University's quality assurance framework, ensuring that it meets external requirements.	X
In partnership with Edinburgh University Students' Association, ensure effective student engagement and representation of student voices in the University's quality framework.	X
Promote the quality assurance framework as an important part of the University's activities and ensure that the outcomes inform relevant University business.	X
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.	X

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Membership and Terms of Reference are presented to SQAC for members to note and advise of any forthcoming changes not already highlighted.

Background and context

3. The membership for SQAC 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 SQAC 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 SQAC webpages will be updated with membership once all positions are confirmed.
8. The SQAC Terms of Reference remain unchanged and are published via the following Academic Quality and Standards webpage:
<https://registryservices.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/quality-assurance/terms-reference>

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

Author

Sinéad Docherty
Academic Quality and Standards
April 2025

Presenter

Professor Tina Harrison
Deputy Vice-Principal Students
(Enhancement)

Freedom of Information: *Open*

Name	Position	Term of Office
Professor Tina Harrison (Convener)	Deputy Vice-Principal Students (Enhancement)	Ex Officio
Dr Emily Taylor (Vice-Convener)	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS)	Ex Officio
Professor Matthew Bailey	College Dean of Quality (CMVM)	Ex Officio
Professor James Hopgood	Dean of Quality and Enhancement (CSE)	Ex Officio
Dr Neneh Rowa-Dewar	School representative of CMVM (Director of Quality)	
Faten Adam	School representative of CSE	
Dr Anne Desler	School representative of CAHSS (Director of Quality)	
Professor Laura Bradley	Representative of Doctoral College	
Professor Catherine Bovill	Representative of Institute for Academic Development	Ex Officio
Professor Nazira Karodia	Deputy Vice Chancellor and Vice Principal of Learning & Teaching, Edinburgh Napier University (external member from within the Scottish H.E. sector with experience in quality assurance)	1 August 2023-31 July 2026
Katya Amott	Vice President Education, Edinburgh University Students' Association	Ex Officio
Callum Paterson	Academic Engagement & Policy Coordinator, Edinburgh University Students' Association	Ex Officio
Brian Connolly	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Academic Quality and Standards	Ex Officio
Marianne Brown	Co-opted member (Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling)	1 August 2024 – 31 July 2027
TBC – election outcome not yet known	Representative of Senate	1 August 2025 - 31 July 2026
TBC – election outcome not yet known	Representative of Senate	1 August 2025 - 31 July 2026
TBC – election outcome not yet known	Representative of Senate	1 August 2025 - 31 July 2026
Sinéad Docherty	Committee Secretary	

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

15 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 forwards, 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.

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

Freedom of Information

Open

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

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

15 May 2025

Internal Periodic Review

Description of paper

1. Reports and responses from the Internal Periodic Review (IPR) process.
2. Fit with remit:

Quality Assurance Committee	
Oversee the delivery and enhancement of the University's quality assurance framework, ensuring that it meets external requirements.	Y
Maintain oversight of the outcomes of the quality assurance framework, ensuring that actions are addressed, and support the sharing of good practice.	Y
Promote the quality assurance framework as an important part of the University's activities and ensure that the outcomes inform relevant University business.	Y

Action requested / recommendation

3. The Committee is invited to note and approve:
 - the IPR report from the 2024/25 cycle
 - the progress reports provided in the year-on responses.

All reports are available here on the Committee SharePoint: [IPR reports and responses](#)

Background and context

4. IPRs form part of the standing items within SQAC business.
5. The IPR reports and responses have been made available to Committee members via the Committee SharePoint and the College Deans of Quality tasked with reviewing the documentation relevant to their College.

Discussion

6. Committee members should be assured that the scrutiny of the College Deans of Quality will identify areas of good practice to share and any recommendations to be tracked through existing quality processes.
7. The College Deans will be invited to highlight themes and issues from the reports and responses relevant to their College.
8. The Committee will be invited to discuss and approve the reports and responses in the light of the College Deans' comments.

Resource implications

9. No additional resource implications.

Risk management

10. The paper does not require a risk assessment.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

11. This paper does not contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a regulatory requirement.

Equality & diversity

12. An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the IPR process. Equality and diversity will be considered as part of any proposed actions.

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

13. Comments will be reported back to the School/Subject Area and the reports and responses published on the Academic Services website.

Author

*Sinéad Docherty
Academic Policy Officer
Academic Services*

Presenter

*Brian Connolly
Academic Policy Manager
Academic Services*

May 2024

Freedom of Information Open