

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Periodic Review

Year on response report

Internal Periodic Review of: Deanery of Clinical Sciences Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Provision

Date of review: 26-27 February 2024

Date of 14 week response: 08 August 2024

Date of year on response: 02 May 2025

The School/Subject Area is responsible for reporting on progress with all recommendations, including those remitted to other areas of the University for action.

If any recommendation has been fully addressed please record the action taken and date completed. Any barriers to progress should be highlighted on this report.

Recommendation no	Recommendation	Timescale for completion	Comment on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion	Completion date
1	The Deanery develops a strategy and implementation plan to facilitate the sharing of good practice and innovation in teaching and supporting learning across programmes.		Academic and administrative forums continue to be held monthly to share best practice. Although the 14-week response report stated that there were plans to hold more interactive workshops for sharing of good practice and creating a vision for PGT programmes going forward, these have not progressed. The main barrier to completion is that the Deanery of Clinical Sciences will be dissolved from August 2025. Taught postgraduate and undergraduate programmes from Biomedical Sciences, Clinical Sciences and Medical Education will be brought together into a single, cohesive entity, the new Edinburgh Medical School. The new school will develop its own strategy for supporting learning and achieving innovation across programme. As the head of the new school only took up their post in January 2025, management structures, strategies and implementation are just beginning to emerge. Progress also been impacted by wider institution-level events including a teaching portfolio review across the University.	N/A
2	The Deanery develops a strategy for the orientation of staff to relevant University learning and teaching policies, processes, and structures. Staff would include those who are teaching, supervising, and/or have a support for learning roles.		The Student and Academic Services Manager, together with Clinical Sciences Teaching Organisation (CSTO) professional services staff, has been putting together documentation for programme administrators to ensure that they have induction information on arrival. Work is ongoing towards ensuring that training materials are open to all administrators. The majority of training is carried out as self-learning. Work is ongoing looking at central processes and obtaining additional training as required.	Ongoing

			<p>The Director of Teaching chairs monthly Academic Fora. These have been key to delivering training and have delivered on several areas including aspects of quality assurance, exceptional circumstances policies, academic misconduct, effective feedback and marking schemes. Staff teaching and orientation materials have been shared including in an initial welcome from the Director of Teaching outlining expectations. The Deanery has regarded College training for Boards of Examiners as essential mandatory attendance, and these initiatives will remain important for consistency as teaching activities of Deaneries merge into the new school organisation.</p> <p>The Director of Teaching has recently agreed with staff from the Biomedical Teaching Organisation (BMT0) that BMT0 "Tutor and Demonstrator Support" and "New Teacher Orientation" materials will be shared with CSTO and integrated into the new organisational structures.</p> <p>BMT0 also have a dedicated group to support staff with HEA accreditation. In the new structure it is hoped that CSTO staff can join this group.</p>	
3	The Deanery facilitates Cohort Leads to share experiences and develop an approach applicable to the Deanery programmes and context.		<p>The Director of Students designed and circulated a Cohort Lead survey to gather insights into Cohort Lead activities within the Deanery, identifying areas of strength and opportunities for further support or guidance. Following this, a Cohort Lead Focus Group was established in October 2024, which informed the development of a Cohort Lead workshop held in December 2024. The workshop provided a platform for staff to share best practice and reflect on their experiences in the role, highlighting a strong willingness among colleagues to collaborate and share resources. In response, a Cohort Lead Hub is being developed on SharePoint to facilitate resource sharing. The Deanery's initiatives have been recognised at College level, and the proactive efforts of the Deanery's Cohort Lead representative led to a University-wide Cohort Lead Event in April 2025, where the Deanery was invited to present a case study showcasing good practice.</p>	Ongoing
4			The Deanery's Student Support Manager and Director of Students have prioritised access to relevant training opportunities, ensuring	2024/25

	The Deanery facilitates ongoing professional development training for Student Advisers as the role develops.		that Student Advisers are able to participate in workshops and development activities. All members of the Student Support team have completed both PAPYRUS Suicide Prevention Training and Widening Participation Training. At College level, the Student Support Oversight Group has introduced dedicated forums and workshops for Student Advisers, Student Support Managers, and Directors of Students, with at least one session held each term. These sessions serve as a space to share good practice, gather feedback, and hear from guest speakers across the University, including colleagues from the Student Disability and Learning Support Service and the Exceptional Circumstances team.	
5	The Deanery considers the introduction of a Workload Allocation Model (WAM) to inform and improve staff experience.		Deanery and the teaching organisation have not yet adopted a WAM as this is a decision for the new School. This point was made at the time of the IPR. The restructure will address this in the coming months, and we will encourage all staff to participate in these processes.	N/A
6	The Deanery prioritise the engagement of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) lead to develop internal EDI structures (e.g. through the establishment of an EDI committee)		The most important step forward has been with Student Support staff (see point 7 below). EDI considerations are embedded in Learning and Teaching, Board of Studies and student support decision making and processes. In the Deanery, there was early and then continued strong engagement with Athena SWAN that has been important for staff, but filters through to students. EDI has been discussed specifically at Academic Forum but is also a recurring theme across topics. The aim will be in the School restructuring to bring together all EDI good practice.	N/A
7	Student Support staff such as student advisers are able to access specific EDI training opportunities given the diverse student intake of the Deanery.		<p>The Director of Students, Student Support Manager, and Student Advisers participated in a workshop titled <i>“Culture and Race – Supporting Chinese Students”</i>, and some Student Advisers have also completed the FutureLearn course <i>“Understanding Mental Health in Muslim Communities”</i>.</p> <p>The Deanery has highlighted to colleagues within the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine the need for dedicated EDI training for Student Support staff. While the Deanery has not implemented its own EDI training programme, it remains committed to ensuring that Student Support staff are given the opportunity to engage with all relevant training offered across the wider University.</p>	2024/25

	Please report on steps taken to feedback to students on the outcomes of the review	Outcomes of the review haven't yet been communicated to students. The Director of Teaching plans to do so via a Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) meeting in May 2025.		
For Year on response only	Any examples of a positive change as a result of the review	<p>The review has led to several positive developments, particularly in relation to Student Support, including the Cohort Lead role, and delivery to online part-time PG students. The work undertaken within the Deanery has had a tangible impact, contributing directly to initiatives at both College and University level, including the establishment of wider events and resource sharing platforms. Additionally, the increased recognition of the need for EDI training for Student Support staff—especially in relation to supporting the online postgraduate student cohort—has been a significant and beneficial outcome.</p> <p>The review also led to a thorough and comprehensive review of postgraduate taught programmes within the Deanery, starting with the long-established five surgery ChM programmes. The Director of Quality initially raised some issues relating to operation of Board of Examiners and assessment practices. This prompted a deeper review which revealed issues including: SCQF level, credits awarded, alignment with University assessment and feedback principles, and with long term financial viability of the programmes.</p> <p>As a result of the review, the College committed funding for a new post to project manage transformation and modernisation of the ChM programmes. Following a detailed scrutiny of each ChM programme, a decision was made at College level to pause 2025/26 academic year entry of new students to all ChM programmes while their longer-term future is considered.</p> <p>Insights gathered from review of the ChM programmes have informed enhancements for other programmes within the Deanery (e.g. a review of all student records; guidance for, and oversight of, Board of Examiners; monitoring of assessment and feedback practices).</p> <p>Meanwhile, a wider portfolio review of programmes is underway to map out PGT provision across the School and College and to achieve clarity about the quality and financial viability of all programmes. It is anticipated that the wider portfolio review will bring positive change that enhances teaching, student experience and financial sustainability of teaching within Edinburgh Medical School.</p>		