

The University of Edinburgh

**Senate Quality Assurance Committee**

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2026, 2-5pm**  
**Hybrid meeting: Boardroom, Business School, George Square**  
**and Microsoft Teams**

**AGENDA**

1.	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	
2.	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>December 2025</li></ul>	SQAC 25/26 3A
3.	<b>Matters Arising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Convener's communications</li></ul>	Verbal Update
<b>SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS</b>		
4.	<b>Annual Reports 2024-25:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Conduct</li><li>Appeals</li><li>Complaints</li></ul> <p>For discussion.</p>	SQAC 25/26 3B SQAC 25/26 3C SQAC 25/26 3D <b>CLOSED PAPERS</b>
5.	<b>Student Support Evaluation - Annual Report 2024-25</b> <p>For discussion.</p>	SQAC 25/26 3E
6.	<b>Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy</b> <p>For discussion.</p>	SQAC 25/26 3F
7.	<b>Annual Monitoring</b> – templates for 2025/26 submission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Programme</li><li>School</li><li>College</li></ul> <p>For discussion and approval.</p>	SQAC 25/26 3G
<b>ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NOTING</b>		
8.	<b>Short Courses Annual Report 2024-25</b> <p>To note.</p>	SQAC 25/26 3H
9.	<b>Committee Priorities</b> - mid-year progress update To note and comment.	SQAC 25/26 3I

<b>11.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
<b>12.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b> Thursday 23 April 2026 2-5pm, Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House and Microsoft Teams	

**The University of Edinburgh**  
**Senate Quality Assurance Committee**

**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2025, 13:30 – 16:30**  
**Hybrid meeting: Charles Stewart House Cuillin Room**  
**and Microsoft Teams**

## 1. Attendance

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Position:</b>
Professor Tina Harrison	Deputy Vice Principal, Students (Enhancement) (Convener)
Faten Adam	School Representative of CSE
Professor Matthew Bailey	Dean of Quality, CMVM
Dr Michael Barany	Senate Representative
Professor Cathy Bovill	Head of Programme Development and Teaching Enhancement, Institute for Academic Development
Marianne Brown	Head of Academic Planning, Registry Services (co-opted)
Brian Connolly	Academic Policy Manager, Academic Quality and Standards, Registry Services
Professor Ramon Grima	Director of Quality, School of Biological Sciences, CSE (co-opted)
Professor James Hopgood	Dean of Quality and Enhancement, CSE
Heather Innes	Academic Engagement and Policy Co-ordinator
Professor Nazira Karodia	Deputy Vice Chancellor and Vice Principal of Learning & Teaching, Edinburgh Napier University
Dr Jill Mackay	School Representative of CMVM
Dr Sari Pennings	Senate Representative
Professor Carol Richardson	Senate Representative
Dr Neneh Rowa-Dewar	Director of Students, EFI (co-opted)
Dr Emily Taylor	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Validation, CAHSS
Sinéad Docherty	Committee Secretary, Academic Quality and Standards, Registry Services
<b>In attendance:</b>	
Meg Batty	Academic Quality and Standards Manager, Academic Quality and Standards, Registry Services
Olivia Hayes	Head of Committees and Governance, Academic Quality and Standards, Registry Services
<b>Apologies:</b>	
Katya Amott	Vice President (Education), Students' Association
Professor Matthew Bailey	Dean of Quality, CMVM
Professor Laura Bradley	Doctoral College Representative (CAHSS, PGR)
Dr Anne Desler	School Representative of CAHSS

## 2. Welcome and introductions

The Convener noted the apologies from those members unable to attend and welcomed new members to the Committee: Professor Ramon Grima, co-opted from the School of Biological Sciences within the College of Science and Engineering (CSE); Dr Jill Mackay as a School Representative (Vet School) within the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM); and Professor Carol Richardson from the Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) within the College of Arts and Humanities (CAHSS) filling the remaining vacant elected Senate member position.

## 3. Minutes of previous minutes (SQAC 25/26 2A)

The Convener informed members that some amendments had been made to the minutes prior to the meeting, following circulation and feedback on the initial draft.

In response to some queries that had been received in advance of the meeting, the Convener confirmed that the QAA Institutional Liaison Meeting (ILM) does consider the SEAP and is a holistic review of all of our quality activity. There is also an annual meeting with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), the body to which the SEAP is ultimately submitted. Therefore, the SEAP is considered by both the QAA and SFC.

Additional edits were agreed to sections 6.2, 8, 9 and 10.

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2025.

**Action: Committee Secretary to amend minutes to reflect the agreed changes and publish on Committee webpage.**

## 4. Matters Arising

### Institute for Academic Development (IAD)

The IAD was discussed, after a member had raised a query about how actions previously referred to this area would be taken forward in light of the recent decision by the University to disband the unit.

Members were advised that although the IAD will not continue as a separate organisational unit, the functions of the IAD will continue, with different areas of IAD joining existing services and departments in the University to which they are closely aligned. It was noted that there is a perception that with the restructure of the IAD that the functions performed by IAD would cease to exist. The core functions and services that IAD provided, including staff development and student development functions, will continue to be provided, but from within other Departments and Service area of the University. Some IAD colleagues will be joining Academic Quality and Standards as an Academic Development Team, others will join the Careers Service, providing support to students, and others will join the Research Office, primarily including PGR support. A small number of colleagues opted for voluntary severance and a small number of roles have been made redundant as a result of the restructure.

The Committee noted the importance of clear communication regarding the changes to IAD and continued visibility of its functions, in order for staff to utilise and refer to the services provided. In the last two external reviews, the only commendations received were levelled at the IAD and it is important that this good work continues to be recognised. The Committee noted its thanks to all IAD colleagues for the valuable work they undertake.

### **QAA Institutional Liaison Meeting (ILM)**

The Convener confirmed that the University had recently received its outcome letter from the QAA, following the ILM held in August 2025. This communication gave feedback on the ILM discussion and recognised the action that had been taken to address the QESR recommendations, noting that a number of these were considered by the QAA to be complete. The letter acknowledged the action that had been taken to address assessment & feedback and noted that the monitoring of this as well as work to address the awarding gap are still ongoing. QAA will hold the next ILM before the end of academic year 2025/26.

### **Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP)**

The Committee were updated on the activities shared with other institutions and taking place within STEP with a focus on awarding gaps. The strands within this work include hearing student voice through interviews (with these to be arranged for February 2026 by EUSA), benchmarking how the sector manages student data and looking at interventions for awarding gaps which have already been successfully trialled or embedded in the sector. The objective is to create a good practice resource that will be made available on the QAA website.

It was confirmed that the next STEP event will take place at the end of January 2026 and will be hosted by the University of Edinburgh.

### **Learning & Teaching Workstream**

Following a L&T workstream meeting earlier in the day, the Convener informed the Committee that an implementation timeline for the course selection and timetabling project was being considered, within the already approved 2027-29 timeframe. It was noted that this brings forward the initial timeframe by one year. It was acknowledged that simplification of programmes and courses will need to be part of this work for the project to be effective, alongside system enhancement.

### **Boards of Examiners Project**

Members were informed that the January pilot of this project is going ahead, with participating Schools being confirmed and training and support being developed. A "Critical Friends" group and APRC members will be involved in feeding back to those involved in pilot activity. The intention is to scale up the activity in time for the June exam boards. The project team has expressed its commitment to evaluation and learning from the pilots as it moves forward. It was clarified that the pilot and evaluation activity is continuing with Schools who have already opted-in.

The Dean of Quality and Enhancement for CSE advised members that Schools within CSE had been strongly encouraged to opt-in to the pilot, with the concession that they could focus on elements that they wanted to test, i.e. decision trees or asynchronous boards. A concern that had previously been raised by members of Senate was the challenge of piloting all parts of the process at once. The project board have taken on that feedback and worked with College Deans and Schools to gain consensus on the best approach and allow for Schools to pilot certain elements of their choosing.

**Action: Worked examples of pilot activity from a range of Schools will be made available to colleagues once the pilots are complete. The project team will be responsible for sharing these examples.**

## 5. College Annual Quality Reports 2024/25 (SQAC 25/25 2B)

### College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

The Dean of QA and Curriculum Validation for CAHSS highlighted that the College has made much progress against previously identified actions over the last year, particularly with the sustained focus on Assessment and Feedback within the College. The timeliness of feedback has improved, as evidenced by the data collected, and a set of assessment benchmarks has been developed, with the objective to create equity between courses and Schools. The College identified some cases of overassessment but none of underassessment.

Committee members were assured that the College is seeking to establish an efficient approach to assessment. The working group has done a great deal of benchmarking and is looking to establish College-wide tariffs that can guide Boards of Studies within Schools. Where significant changes are needed at programme-level to reduce assessment the College will endeavour to apply a light-touch approval process to avoid unnecessary burden on Schools.

The College had reflected on the quality of the student experience in their report, highlighting that Schools had reported concerns about the impact of budget freezes and their efforts to prioritise the student experience and particularly students' concerns. The College highlighted the importance of transparency around financial decisions and clear communications to better reassure students of any changes.

It was reported that CAHSS had been unable to progress with planned work on HR and payroll issues raised during the previous reporting cycle due to the overarching priority of University finances.

During discussion it was noted that CAHSS had identified within their report some elements of the Curriculum Transformation Programme (CTP) that they would like to take forward now that the overall programme had been discontinued, whereas the other two Colleges did not reflect on CTP in the same way.

On behalf of Senate elected members, it was shared with the Committee that members found this report to be informative and useful and felt that it would be beneficial for it to be shared more widely amongst colleagues.

As a final point, there was consideration of the actions that CAHSS had set out for the year ahead and those which had been requested of the University. The A&F actions are all in development and the Generative AI work is being taken forward by the University. Actions and feedback around managing change and operational enhancement can be fed back to the relevant University workstream and UIPB which is reviewing how University-wide projects are managed and phased.

### **College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM)**

On behalf of CMVM, the School Director of Quality for the Veterinary School spoke to the College QA report. It was highlighted that a key area for CMVM is the new modernisation structure that took effect at the beginning of 2025/26. All taught programmes now sit within either the Medical School or Veterinary School, although some staff from other Schools within CMVM will continue to teach on Medical/Vet School programmes. Research students and staff are located across all Schools throughout the whole College. Within the new structure, where teaching is consolidated into two Schools, it is expected that there will be greater efficiency and oversight of teaching.

As a result of the modernisation, the QA structure within the College is changing, particularly so within the Medical School, and portfolio management work is ongoing. Some colleagues in QA roles voiced concern that the QA functions within the new structures had not been fully considered. While new Director of Quality post(s) are to be advertised, clarity is needed on where these will sit within the new structure.

It was highlighted that a large number of clinical, non-University staff form a key part of the teaching team and there can be challenges with involving these clinical members of staff with University initiatives such as Assessment & Feedback turnaround times.

In relation to CTP, it was reported that CMVM always faced unique challenges with how to align the project with professionally accredited programmes and how it would be applied to taught programmes within the College. There is one known example of a challenge course from within the CMVM portfolio that will be taken forward. The Veterinary School has had considerable involvement in curriculum innovations and in providing opportunities for students out with the College.

It was also highlighted through the report and discussion that there are staffing concerns within the College and this has been the case for a number of years. Low staffing numbers has affected the capacity to engage with some wider initiatives and there is concern that things will become more stretched and difficult going forward. In addition to this, it was reported that industrial action is having a greater effect now within CMVM than in previous years and this may affect teaching provision.

The Committee were supportive of the actions and priorities set out by the College for the year ahead. The Convener did note to members that there were no identified actions around Assessment & Feedback and the role of clinical staff. It was recognised there are challenges but felt that if feedback turnaround times are dependent on external (NHS) colleagues it would be beneficial for the College and Schools to explore how to capture that.

### **College of Science and Engineering (CSE)**

The Dean noted that the CSE QA report largely aligned with themes already identified in other QA reports and in the Self-Evaluation Action Plan (SEAP) (item 25/26 2E). Efforts to establish consistent availability and use of rubrics within the College has shown success with evidence of rubrics visible through IPR and external accreditation processes. The Assessment & Feedback monitoring has been largely effective, although some areas report greater variation in the turnaround time. It was noted that there may be evidence in some areas of a more casual approach to PGT turnaround times.

An issue particular to CSE Schools is the student and staff experience at the Kings Buildings campus. The College highlighted recurring issues with physical space and environment, facilities, transport and the sense of connectivity with main campus. These issues often come up through student voice mechanisms, although it was felt by Committee members that it would be helpful to understand the impact of this and whether it leaves students feeling isolated or whether it is seen as a barrier to coming to KB campus.

CSE drew particular attention to the use of Generative AI and potential effects on language proficiency for some international students. There will be continuing work in this space, alongside work on Board of Examiners, Student Support and responding to the financial context of the University. It was recognised that these themes align with existing University groups who are already taking forward these areas of work.

## **6. Student Data Monitoring (Awarding Gaps) Task Group (SQAC 25/26 2C)**

The Committee were asked to review the terms of reference for its Student Data Monitoring Task Group. The Group was established at the end of 2023/24 but there is a need to move beyond assessing data and analysing the gaps in data, and therefore new terms for the Group were proposed. It was stated by the Committee Convener, who is also a Co-Convener of the task group, that the awarding gaps are clear and there is enough data to move forward and take action. The Committee were asked to approve the Group being refreshed and refocussed with actions and interventions in mind.

It was confirmed that the EUSA VP Education will co-convene the group and that exact membership is still to be agreed. It was suggested that the Academic Registrar be approached to identify the most suitable colleague from Registry Services to join the Group and the Committee were supportive of the Group liaising with the University EDI Lead and colleagues working in Widening Participation teams. It was agreed that it is key for the Group to have the appropriate level of expertise and experience represented within the membership, as well as being informed through consultation with different areas of the University. It was confirmed that School level representatives could be in Professional Services roles and highlighted that colleagues within Schools can support the College Deans in taking forward action, to ensure effectiveness and activity beyond only those directly involved within the Groups.

**Action: Committee Secretary to update membership to reflect the EUSA VP Education's role as Vice-Convener.**

**Action: Committee Secretary to approach colleagues with membership invites.**

**Action: Committee Secretary to communicate with members of the existing Student Data Monitoring Task Group as to whether they will continue as members.**

The Head of Quality from AQS emphasised to Committee members that this Group aligns well with the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF) and the Group remit should make clear reference to this. Members were also reminded that the Group's work would complement QAA Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP) work, in which the University is looking to take a leading role within the sector in addressing awarding gaps.

The Committee noted that rigorous piloting and opportunities to learn is needed for this Group to be most effective. It is understood that well intentioned interventions in other institutions have had negative or neutral outcomes. The objective of this group will be to test and evaluate different approaches and interventions in order to assured of the effectiveness of any mechanisms adopted.

The Committee endorsed and approved the new TOR and the revised membership of the task group. An update on timeframe and plans for the Group will be shared at the next meeting of the Committee.

## **7. Responses from University Level Actions (SQAC 25/2 2D)**

The Committee discussed the various responses to the University level actions provided by colleagues and key services.

With regard to the Student Support Model (SSM), the Head of Academic Planning that the Cohort Lead role is a key priority for the SSM project board. Attention will be focussed on gathering and analysing feedback from staff and students, addressing challenges with the Cohort Lead role and the academic advice aspect within the model. The EUSA VP Education is leading focus groups with students to gather their feedback. This will inform an SSM meeting to be held at the end of semester two, which will seek to establish the support needed for Cohort Lead roles in the short term and also explore how the role should operate in the longer term to make it most useful for students. Clearer identification of what the role should be is the objective, and it is expected that progress will be made ahead of the next external review.

In relation to the update from colleagues working in the Careers Service, the Committee confirmed they were happy with the information provided in what was considered to be a thorough and comprehensive response.

On the topic of PGR Student Experience, the Committee had some further questions following the update from the University PGR Lead. Members expressed their concerns about the reduced availability of Tutor and Demonstrator roles in the current financially constrained context and the implications for offering career development for PGR students who may experience fewer teaching opportunities.

The Committee noted that the PGR response referred to data collection around rates of training across T&D staff. The Committee requested an update including that data to ensure a robust report in this area, which will also be required by the External Review Oversight Group.

**Action: Committee Secretary to feedback to University PGR Lead and request further response including data report on training undertaken by T&Ds and clarification on responsibilities.**

On the topic of student English language skills, Senate elected members raised concerns in the context of increasing use of live translation software and AI tools. Staff highlighted impacts on workload, group work, peer learning, academic misconduct investigations, alongside concerns that PGT progression data may not capture the issue effectively. This was not a question of entry standards not being met, but an impact on language development. The Committee called for clearer University-wide expectations of English language development as part of academic progression, alongside stronger evidence, clearer accountability, and coordinated action involving relevant academic and student leadership.

**Action: Convener to remit this item to Associate Principal and Deputy Secretary, Students for further exploration and response back to the Committee.**

The Committee discussed the response to matters raised under Staff and Student Experience. Members noted that the update provided was considered to be a holding statement rather than a specific response and sought a more detailed response.

The Convener reflected that the request may not have been sufficiently specific and invited members to clarify the aspects on which a response was sought, in order to refine the request. In response, members identified: the evidence that QA processes have identified inconsistency in the way School are applying budget cuts in relation to the student experience; disconnect between centrally defined timelines for change and assigned workstreams leading on change projects; impact on PGR experience; risk of more staff departing and leaving gaps in teaching, research and support; student support teams carrying very high caseloads; impact on peer assisted learning activities, which are in increased demand and valued by students (especially WP students); and feedback previously received from students concerning unpredictability of courses due to staff availability changing at short notice.

**Action: Committee Secretary and Convener to send further communication to Assistant Principal and Deputy Secretary, Students to continue dialogue on the theme of Staff and Student Experience.**

The final response related to the Learning and Teaching Infrastructure theme that had arisen through the School Quality Reports. The Convener of the L&T workstream had provided a response outlining the range of activities and projects within this area. During discussion, members were reminded that the School reports were retrospective and not taking into account the breadth of current activity led by the workstream.

There was discussion of the comment included in the update, which referred to a “values system shift where both research and teaching are valued to support an improved student experience.” The Committee Convener reminded members that this is in line with Strategy 2030 and the commitment to ensuring student experience is equal to research excellence within the University. This is in response to the perception that research has historically outweighed teaching within the institution. The role of QA is to ensure that

teaching is supported as well as research, and that both are valued equally by the University.

## 8. Self-Evaluation Action Plan (SEAP) (SQAC 25/26 2E)

The Committee discussed the Self-Evaluation Action Plan (SEAP) which is the annual report submitted to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). It is a summary report which includes self-reflection and action plans from across the University. It was submitted to the SFC in November 2025 following approval from the Principal, although it is designed to be a live document and continuously updated throughout the year.

The Committee discussed the best way to share this document with colleagues more widely and how best to raise awareness of ongoing QA activities. It was confirmed that the SEAP will be shared within College Quality Assurance (QA) committees and it was proposed that Directors of Quality could share it with School Education Committees. Colleagues in EUSA are leading on initiatives to involve students through dedicated events. It was agreed by members that it is vital for colleagues to understand and feel part of the actions committed to, even if they are not directly involved. This awareness can enhance the sense of involvement across the University.

On behalf of Senate elected members, it was reported that the SEAP does not feel like a live document and it was proposed that colleagues should be involved in evaluating and discussing the document more widely, rather than noting it. The SEAP includes input from all university areas through various committees and processes, yet some in the College and Senate feel their roles and perspectives are not adequately represented. It was suggested that effective engagement relies on involving these groups sooner, as activities and processes unfold, rather than at the final stages of reporting.

In response to this, the Convener emphasised that the SEAP is a report which is responding to priorities and concerns set by the SFC. Therefore, colleagues may not see all their concerns or experiences captured in the report if they do not address the key principles and questions set by the SFC. There is a balance to be found between reporting on what colleagues would like to highlight and meeting the requirements of a report to be submitted to an external funder and regulator. Furthermore, the SEAP is designed to be an overview of a variety of activities across the University; granular details concerning day-to-day actions and challenges are not included in a high-level document.

Recognising that it is difficult for colleagues who are unfamiliar with QA activities and frameworks to understand the relevance of the SEAP, discussion returned to how best to communicate the report. Channelling through College QA Committee was proposed as the best approach, and highlighting actions may help to establish the relevance of the document. It was emphasised that there are no new actions in the SEAP; all will have been communicated through other groups and mechanisms. It may be useful to position the SEAP as an institutional map which reassures colleagues of the breadth of actions being taken across the University in different areas of responsibility.

**Action: College Deans to include SEAP on upcoming College QA Committee agendas.**

## 9. Internal Periodic Review: Reports and Responses (SQAC 25/26 2F)

The College Deans of Quality were invited to comment on the IPR reports and responses within their College. The Dean for CSE noted that Schools within the College had provided comprehensive responses and updates. Earth Sciences, within the School of GeoSciences, were commended for their strong approach to dealing with recruitment in their area. No areas of further action were identified by the College.

The Dean for CAHSS highlighted that the School of Social and Political Sciences (SPS) had drawn attention to employability concerns for PGR students as they complete their programme of study, as well as the need for post-programme support in this area. This is felt to be a pervasive concern for PGR students and there may be a need for collective review of PGR within the University ecosystem to better articulate the responsibilities towards this cohort. It was also noted that there is ongoing WP data work within SPS and agreed that this should be brought to the attention of the Data Task Group.

**Action: Committee Secretary to communicate SPS WP data work to the Data Task Group.**

As the Dean of Quality for CMVM had sent apologies ahead of the meeting, it was agreed that the Committee Secretary would follow up with MVM to identify any areas for further attention of action.

**Action: Committee Secretary to liaise with CMVM College Dean of Quality to address any outstanding IPR business relevant to Schools within the College.**

## 10. A.O.B.

A member had requested that the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DPRS) system be discussed in the context of information management. It was requested that clearer instructions for DPRS information be issued in revised University guidance, and that the DPRS be considered within the review of the Programme and Course Approval and Maintenance Policy.

**Action: Convener to raise DPRS updates in relevant workstream and feed into the upcoming review of the PCAM policy.**

On behalf of CSE, the Dean of Quality and Enhancement reported that some External Examiners had experienced challenges with accessing the reporting system (EERS) and getting through the University's Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) process. As a result, CSE had experienced an increase in offline submissions in 2024/25 and wish to understand how widespread an issue this is. It may be that a communication to EEs about using MFA would help.

**Action: AQS to follow up with College QA colleagues to understand scale of issue and set guidance for communicating with EEs.**

## 11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2026, 2-5pm.

## Senate Quality Assurance Committee

26<sup>th</sup> February 2026

### Student Support Evaluation Report 2024/25

#### Description of paper

(1) This paper summarises the outcomes of the 2024/25 student support evaluation at the University of Edinburgh. Improving our student experience and satisfaction remains a strategic priority; a consistent, high-quality model of student support is critical in supporting students from all backgrounds offering accessible, responsive and efficient personal, pastoral and professional support.

#### 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
In partnership with Edinburgh University Students' Association, ensure effective student engagement and representation of student voices in the University's quality framework.	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) This paper is for discussion.

#### Background and context

(3) Senate Quality Assurance Committee is responsible for overseeing the quality assurance of student support at the University of Edinburgh.

- (4) This report is the first of its kind, providing a summary of centrally available data relating to student support for taught students across 2024/25. Learnings regarding the quality, availability and timeliness of data have been included in this report to inform future evaluation approaches.
- (5) The Student Support Continuous Improvement Group is responsible for prioritising activities emerging from the evaluation to ensure the continuous development of student support provision across the University. Appendix A summarises activities which the group have undertaken.

## **Discussion**

- (6) Detailed evaluation outcomes are included within the accompanying paper.

### *Student Support Teams*

- (7) Student Advisers and Student Support Teams continue to be effective in providing a strong first line of support to students. Student satisfaction outcomes for both undergraduate and postgraduate taught students have increased across relevant measures; and student appreciation for the support provided is evident in the thematic analysis of student feedback. The key priority moving forward is to maintain and build capacity within these teams, with a particular focus on supporting a shift from a predominantly reactive model to a more proactive, personalised approach.

### *Cohort Leads and Teaching Teams*

- (8) Findings relating to academic roles and support are mixed. Ongoing challenges remain regarding the clarity and effectiveness of the Cohort Lead role, which require further attention. There are concerns about the time and effort spent by both professional and academic colleagues in organising and running cohort events, which are often poorly attended, as well as concerns regarding future funding for events and the disparity in availability of funds across the University.  
More broadly, there is significant variability in students' experiences of academic support across programmes and teams. The report also highlights perceived gaps in more holistic academic support, particularly in relation to professional skills and careers development, which may represent an area of opportunity. The Student Support Continuous Improvement Group (SSCIG) is focusing on the development of the Cohort Lead role in semester 2 2025/26; SSCIG is seeking to bring consistency to the areas of welcome, induction and transition, academic support and community building.

Undergraduate students achieving a high classification award decreased by 1.7% from the previous year, while postgraduate taught students achieving Merit or Distinction increased by 3.1%. Both changes are statistically significant.

### *Wellbeing and Support Services*

(9) Wellbeing and specialist support services are generally well regarded by students, with students reporting positive experiences and recognising the care and commitment shown by staff. However, recurring themes relate to accessibility and the need for more tailored and personalised support, particularly for students from minority groups. Variations between the way services operate can pose challenges for staff and students (for e.g. the Student Wellbeing Service and Residence Life). Students have fed back they have awareness of support available; however are not always sure how to access relevant support.

*Peer support*

(10) Peer support is identified as an area where there is a perceived gap at an institutional level. There is also limited data to support robust evaluation. While some Schools are undertaking significant peer support activity, this work is inconsistent and not systematically captured or evaluated. Strengthening both practice and data collection in this area is a key consideration for future reporting.

**Resource implications**

(11) The Student Support Continuous Improvement Group is responsible for prioritising activities arising from evaluation outcomes.

**Risk management**

(12) Failure to provide quality student support structures for students risks student wellbeing, student outcomes and carries a reputational risk for the University.

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

(13) N/A

**Equality & diversity**

(14) This report considers the taught student population, while also highlighting areas where specific student groups have raised distinct issues or feedback. Further analysis of equality, diversity and inclusion and widening participation groups is currently underway through regular SQAC reporting (awarding outcomes.)

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

(15) This report will be discussed by the Student Support Continuous Improvement Group to identify specific actions and priorities.

**Author**

Marianne Brown

Head of Academic Planning (Registry Services)

**Presenter**  
 Marianne Brown

**Freedom of Information**  
 Open

**Appendix A: Student Support Continuous Improvement Group**

The Student Support Continuous Improvement Group provides ongoing oversight and development of student support. This table summarises priority areas for 2024-25 and activities undertaken by the group, in response to evaluation outcomes and other gathered feedback.

Enhancement areas	Activity
Understanding of School variations	Interviews undertaken with Schools in 2024/25 academic year with report published in December 2025 <a href="#">Student Support – Report 2025 (final).pdf</a>
Cohort Lead development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve understanding of role</li> <li>• Improve good practice examples/guidance</li> <li>• Development of training/skills framework</li> </ul>	Differences explored through variations analysis Cohort Lead event to share good practice. Feedback from the event highlight <b>Small working group taking forward review of cohort lead model</b>
Academic support definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student feedback sessions on academic support</li> <li>• Academic feedback on academic support</li> <li>• Development of CAHSS Academic Guidance principles for 2025-6</li> </ul>
Lack of Student Adviser time for proactive work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explored through variations analysis</li> <li>• Work on-going on proactive support tools (Student Analytics for Student Support)</li> <li>• Continuing awareness raising that maintaining professional boundaries when working with students can create more capacity for proactive work</li> </ul>

Student Adviser Known as First Point of Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communications development with Communications and Marketing team</li></ul>
Peer Support Consistency of Paid Roles	Explored through variations analysis shows this area is underdeveloped and requires attention
Support for Student Advisers (continued from 2023/24)	RestorEd Pilot completed in June 2025; summary report of pilot completed in December 2025.

# Student Support Evaluation – Report 2024/25

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University of Edinburgh | January 2026

## 1. Description of paper

This report provides a summary of student support evaluation outcomes at the University of Edinburgh across 2024/25 academic year.

## 2. Background and context

The University's student support model for taught students was fully implemented across all areas in the 2023–24 academic year. Following implementation, it was agreed that a structured approach was required to ensure ongoing oversight, consistency, and continuous improvement of student support arrangements.

In addition to the role of the established governance group (Student Support Continuous Improvement Group - SSCIG), which considers issues and areas for enhancement throughout the academic year, an evaluation approach was approved to provide a systematic overview of how the model is operating in practice. This approach includes the production of an annual report bringing together key indicators, data, and insights relating to student support provision across the University.

This is the inaugural annual report under that agreed approach. It provides a summary of student support arrangements during the 2024-25 academic year and is intended to support reflection, assurance, and ongoing development of the student support model.

As this represents the first year of reporting under the agreed approach, it has also provided important learning in relation to data quality, consistency, and availability across the institution. These insights will inform refinements to data collection for in future reporting.

## 3. Evaluation approach and data sources

The evaluation is guided by the evaluation and monitoring framework which was developed to assess the effectiveness of the student support model at the University of Edinburgh on an ongoing basis.

### 3.1 Inputs included in evaluation framework:

- Key institutional indicators as identified by Student Support Logic Model
- Student feedback - open comment analysis from institutional and sector surveys
- Supplementary dataset from institutional and sector surveys
- School Annual Monitoring Reports (2024/25)
- Edinburgh University Students' Association annual member survey
- Student Wellbeing Service Evaluation Report

**.2 Inputs not available:**

The following input from the evaluation and monitoring framework was not available at the time of report creation therefore are not included in the report:

- Student Support Services Annual Review – process under review, not available for 2024/25

**4. Key Measures**

Key measures were agreed as part of the development of the Student Support Logic Model. These measures have been amended where needed due to quality and availability of data (Appendix A) and will be reviewed as part of on-going quality assurance of the model to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Appendix B provides key measures by School, where data is available.

† denotes where change from previous year is statistically significant - note SLS not included due to low response rate

**4.1 Key measures: Undergraduate**

Source	Key measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	+/-
NSS	Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of my programme	70.8%	70.4%	74.3%	+3.9%†
SLS	I feel comfortable in reaching out to my Student Adviser for support	-	66.3%	74.5%	+8.2%
Student Record	% high classification degrees awarded <sup>1</sup>	89.2%	90.3%	88.6%	-1.7%†
SLS	Opportunities for building connections with other students	-	71.6%	73.9%	+2.3%

**4.2 Key measures: Postgraduate taught**

Source	Key measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	+/-
PTES	Overall satisfaction improved	74.3%	79.1%	83.3%	+4.2%†
SLS	I feel comfortable in reaching out to my Student Adviser for support	-	-	80.7%	-
Student Record	% high classification degrees awarded <sup>2</sup>	72.0%	70.8%	73.9%	+3.1%†

- <sup>1</sup> 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)

<sup>2</sup> High classification is defined as follows:

- Distinction or Merit: Target award is the same as the awarded qualification

SLS	UoE provides opportunities for building connections with other students	-	-	74.7%	-
PTES	I feel part of a community of postgraduate taught students	56.9%	57.1%	61.2%	+4.1%†

## 5. Student feedback

This section presents a thematic analysis of feedback received through student experience surveys which relate to aspects of the student support model. The analysis focuses on identifying recurring positive, negative, and mixed themes within students’ qualitative responses to confirm and contextualise patterns in the student experience. This analysis was supported by partnership with Student Voice AI (Appendix C).

### 5.1 Student Life Survey thematic analysis

The Student Life Survey was sent to all taught students; analysis below confirms emerging themes across all respondents collectively.

Analysis of student feedback received through the Student Life Survey shows that while many students appreciate the existing support services, there is a need to continue to develop the provisions of accessible resources that cater to a diverse student body’s evolving needs. Students would like support (whether academic, pastoral or administrative) to be more personalised, efficient and accessible. This summary is based on analysis of 364 comments.

*Question: Are there ways in which we can improve the support we provide to you?*

Theme	Feedback summary
Personalised support	A need for more personalised interactions with advisers and tutors. Requests for tailored support for different student groups e.g. international, online, and disabled students, ensuring equitable opportunities and thorough inclusion in all academic activities.
Efficiency and responsiveness	Calls for more responsive administrative support in handling student queries and problems / Requests for reduced bureaucracy and more straightforward processes for student services.
Community and social engagement	A clear need for more social activities and networking opportunities, especially for online and international students. Suggestions to foster a more inclusive community that integrates students across various disciplines and backgrounds

Wellbeing and mental health support Improved mental health services, including more counselling sessions. Requests for more proactive and comprehensive health services, both physical and mental

*Question: Are there ways in which your learning experience, and the academic support you receive, could be improved?*

Theme	Feedback summary
Support for coursework	Requests for more feedback on coursework and clearer communication regarding academic requirements and resources. There is a demand for more visible and accessible assistance from academic staff.
Professional development and career guidance	Enhanced career support services, internship opportunities, and real-world application of academic theories were suggested to better prepare students for professional environments.
Peer and collaborative learning	There were suggestions to foster more collaborative learning environments and peer support systems to enhance academic experiences and learning outcomes.

## 5.2 National Student Survey (NSS) thematic analysis

Students completing the NSS are asked “looking back on the experience, are there any particularly positive or negative aspects you would like to highlight?”

All students surveyed will have experienced the personal tutor model and the new student support model therefore comments may relate to either.

The numbers relate to the number of comments classified positive, negative or mixed/neutral.

### 5.2.1 Sentiment classification

Theme	Definition	Positive	Negative	Mixed / neutral
Academic support	References to <b>academic support</b> , defined as any mention of teaching staff, tutors, supervisors, feedback, academic guidance, or access to academic help.	391	286	324

Student support	References to <b>student support</b> , defined as any mention of wellbeing support, disability or adjustments, counselling, student services, pastoral care, advisers, or access to non-academic support.	386	133	359
Learning community	References to <b>learning community</b> , defined as experiences of belonging, peer connection, cohort identity, staff–student community, collaborative learning, and feeling part of an academic or social learning environment.	298	176	239

**5.2.2 Thematic analysis**

Academic support

Analysis of student open comment feedback confirms that academic support is highly valued and often experienced positively at an individual level; however, it is also characterised by significant inconsistency. While many students report supportive and approachable staff, particularly in one-to-one contexts, a substantial proportion highlight uneven access to support, variable feedback quality, and insufficient availability at key pressure points. These findings suggest that strengths in individual practice are not consistently translated into an equitable, institution-wide academic support experience.

Positive Theme	Description	No. of comments
Supportive and approachable staff	Staff described as kind, understanding, and willing to help beyond minimum requirements	~260
Effective one-to-one academic support	Positive experiences of teaching staff, tutors, supervisors, and tailored guidance	~210
Constructive and useful feedback	Feedback that is timely, clear, and supports improvement	~180
Academic challenge with support	Students value being stretched academically when adequate support is in place	~120
Negative Theme	Description	No. of comments
Inconsistency of academic support	Variability between staff, courses, or programmes; perceived “luck of the draw”	~240

Limited availability or responsiveness	Difficulty contacting staff; delayed responses; limited meeting access	~210
Poor quality or late feedback	Feedback described as unclear, generic, or received too late to inform learning	~200
Insufficient support at pressure points	Gaps in support during transition, assessment periods, or dissertation stages	~170
Lack of clarity about support routes	Uncertainty about who to contact or how academic support is structured	~130

**Student Support**

Analysis of student feedback confirms that student support services are widely valued and frequently experienced as compassionate and well-intentioned. Many students report positive interactions with individual staff and effective support when access is timely. However, these strengths are offset by recurring concerns about inconsistency, delays, and limited capacity across services. A significant proportion of comments describe support as reactive rather than preventative, with students experiencing uncertainty about access routes and, in some cases, receiving support only after difficulties had intensified.

Positive Theme	Description	No. of comments
Supportive and caring staff	Staff described as kind, empathetic, and genuinely concerned about student wellbeing	~270
Effective disability and adjustment support	Reasonable adjustments and disability support enabling participation and progression	~210
Accessible wellbeing and pastoral support	Positive experiences of advisers, wellbeing teams, or pastoral conversations	~180
Feeling listened to and taken seriously	Students valuing being heard and believed when raising concerns	~140

Negative Theme	Description	No. of comments
Inconsistency of student support	Variable experiences depending on service, staff member, or School	~230

Slow processes and delays	Long waiting times for responses, appointments, or support implementation	~200
Lack of capacity or resourcing	Perception that services are overstretched or under-resourced	~170
Poor communication or unclear processes	Confusion about how to access support or what support is available	~160
Support arriving too late	Students receiving help only once issues had already escalated	~120

**Learning Community**

Student feedback indicates that a sense of learning community plays a significant role in shaping student experience. Many students describe strong peer relationships and value staff who actively foster inclusive and interactive learning environments. However, a proportion of comments report feelings of isolation, fragmented cohort identity, or limited opportunities to connect, particularly for commuter, online, or placement-based students. These findings suggest that while learning communities emerge organically in some contexts, they are not experienced consistently across programmes or modes of study.

Positive Theme	Description	No. of comments
Sense of belonging and connection	Students feeling part of a cohort or course community	~230
Peer support and friendship	Mutual support, shared learning, and informal peer networks	~210
Staff contributing to community	Staff who foster inclusive, welcoming, and relational learning spaces	~160
Collaborative and interactive learning	Group work, discussion, and shared problem-solving supporting connection	~140
Negative Theme	Description	No. of comments
Weak or fragmented learning community	Students feeling isolated or disconnected from peers or course	~200

Limited opportunities to connect	Lack of structured opportunities to meet peers, especially beyond first year	~180
Commuter / online / placement-related isolation	Barriers to community for non-campus-based students	~150
Inconsistent cohort identity	Community varies by module, year group, or teaching approach	~140

**5.3 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) thematic analysis**

Students completing PTES have opportunities to provide free text comments after each “theme” in the survey (*“If you have any additional comments about \_\_, please write them in here”*) as well as provide comment in response to *“What one thing would most improve your experience of your course”* at the end of the survey. Due to this different approach, the comment count is not included as in the NSS thematic analysis due to analysis cutting across multiple questions.

This analysis focusses on comments relating to academic support, student support and learning community.

**5.3.1 Thematic analysis**

Academic support

Overall, views on academic support were largely positive, with many students highlighting approachable and responsive academic staff, high-quality interactions with tutors, and clear guidance on academic expectations and assessments. Where support worked well, students felt known as individuals and valued the commitment and consistency shown by teaching staff. However, experiences were not universal. Some students reported variability in the quality and availability of support, with academic help perceived as uneven across courses or tutors. A smaller number of comments pointed to limited staff capacity, delays in responses, and uncertainty about who to contact for academic issues, with support sometimes described as more reactive than proactive.

Positive Theme	Description
Accessible and responsive staff	Many students highlighted academic staff being approachable, responsive, and willing to provide clarification or guidance when needed. Timely replies to emails and availability for meetings were frequently noted as strengths.

Quality of tutor– student interaction	Students valued meaningful engagement with tutors, including one-to-one support, constructive discussions, and feeling known as individuals rather than anonymous cohort members
Clear academic guidance	Positive comments referenced clear explanations of academic expectations, assessment requirements, and course content, helping students feel confident in their learning.
Consistency and commitment of teaching staff	Where support worked well, students described staff as invested in their success, knowledgeable about the programme, and consistent in their approach across the year.

Negative/Mixed Theme	Description
Variable experiences of support	A recurring issue was inconsistency: while some students experienced excellent academic support, others reported limited access, unclear points of contact, or uneven quality between courses or tutors.
Limited availability or capacity	Some comments pointed to staff being overstretched, slow to respond, or having limited time for individual support, particularly at peak assessment periods.
Unclear roles and processes	A minority of students expressed uncertainty about who to contact for academic issues or what support was available, suggesting gaps in communication or signposting.
Reactive rather than proactive support	Support was sometimes described as effective only once problems arose, with less emphasis on early or preventative academic guidance.

### Student support

Overall, student feedback on support is largely positive, particularly regarding the dedication and responsiveness of Student Advisers and other staff supporting students (roles and team structures vary per School). Concerns persist around capacity and clarity of provision. Students highlight the importance of timely, accessible, and consistent support, with particular attention needed for students with complex needs and those studying online or at a distance.

Positive Theme	Description
Responsive support	Students frequently praised support services for responding promptly and clearly when contacted.
Dedicated student advisers	Student advisers were often described as helpful, approachable, and committed, particularly when dealing with academic or personal difficulties.
Wellbeing support	Positive feedback highlighted staff persistence and care when supporting students with complex needs, including mental health or personal issues.
Accessibility of staff	Students appreciated being able to contact support staff and advisers easily, especially when clear points of contact were provided.

Negative/mixed	Description
Limited capacity / delays	Students reported delays in receiving support, often attributed to staff workload, large caseloads, or slow response times.
Inconsistent experiences	Support quality was reported to vary across Schools or programmes, leading to unequal experiences for students.
Lack of clarity who to contact	Some students were unsure where to go for help or which role was responsible for different types of support.
Perceived lack of authority	Students noted that support staff were sometimes unable to resolve issues directly, leading to frustration or prolonged problems.

**Learning Community**

Views on the learning community were mixed. Some students described a positive sense of belonging, highlighting supportive peer relationships, opportunities to engage with others, and feeling part of a welcoming and inclusive cohort. These experiences were often associated with smaller groups, in-person teaching, or structured opportunities for interaction. However, many comments were neutral or mixed, reflecting variability in students' experiences of connection. A minority of students reported feelings of isolation or limited engagement with peers, particularly where courses were

largely online, cohorts were large, or opportunities to build relationships were less structured. Overall, the learning community was experienced unevenly and appeared to be shaped by programme design and mode of study.

Positive Theme	Description
Sense of belonging	Students described feeling part of a cohort or academic community, with a shared identity and mutual support among peers.
Supportive peer relationships	Positive comments highlighted peer encouragement, collaboration, and informal support networks that enhanced the learning experience
Inclusive and welcoming environment	Some students noted that their course fostered an inclusive atmosphere where students felt comfortable contributing and engaging.
Opportunities for interaction	Structured group work, discussions, and in-person teaching were seen as helpful in building connections and sustaining engagement.
Cohort cohesion	Smaller or stable cohorts were associated with stronger relationships and a clearer sense of community.

Negative/Mixed Theme	Description
Inconsistent experience of community	Many comments reflected variation in the strength of learning community across courses, modules, or modes of study.
Feelings of isolation	Some students reported loneliness or disconnection, particularly those studying online, part-time, or at a distance.
Limited opportunities to connect	A lack of structured opportunities for peer interaction made it harder for some students to form relationships.
Large or fragmented cohorts	Larger class sizes or fragmented teaching arrangements were seen as barriers to building meaningful connections.
Community reliant on individual effort	Several comments suggested that a sense of community depended largely on students' own initiative rather than being actively facilitated.

6. Supplementary Data

**6.1 Student satisfaction: Undergraduate**

Source	Measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	+/-
SLS	I feel comfortable in reaching out to my Student Adviser for support	-	66.3%	74.5%	+8.2%
	The University provides opportunities for building connections with other students	-	71.6%	73.9%	+2.3%
	I have access to the academic support I need to succeed at University	-	66.1%	66.3%	+0.2%
	I know how to find out about the student support services the University offers	-	67.9%	74.0%	+6.1%
NSS	Overall satisfaction	70.8%	70.4%	74.3%	+3.9%†
NSS	How well communicated was information about your university's mental wellbeing support services	59.9%	64.2%	67.9%	+3.6%†
NSS optional	There is sufficient welfare and student services to meet my needs / information advice has been helpful	47.9%	51.1%	57.1%	+6.0%†
	When needed, the information and advice offered by welfare and student services has been helpful	51.2%	55.2%	58.6%	+3.4%

**6.2 Student satisfaction: Postgraduate taught**

Source	Measure	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	+/-
SLS	I feel comfortable in reaching out to my Student Adviser for support	-	-	80.7%	-
	The University provides opportunities for building connections with other students	-	-	74.7%	-
	I have access to the academic support I need to succeed at University	-	-	83.8%	-

	I know how to find out about the student support services the University offers	-	-	80.6%	-
PTES	Overall satisfaction	74.3%	79.1%	83.3%	+4.2%†
	Aware of student support services			82.4%	
	I feel part of a community of postgraduate taught students	56.9%	57.1%	61.2%	+4.1%†
	The support for academic skills meets my needs	74.4%	75.9%	79.8%	+3.9%†
	The support for my health and wellbeing meets my needs	70.2%	73.1%	74.3%	+1.2%
	There are sufficient opportunities to interact with other postgraduate taught students	51.8%	52.2%	58.4%	+6.2%†
	I feel a sense of belonging at my institution	57.2%	58.9%	63.0%	+4.1%†

## 7. School Annual Monitoring Thematic Analysis

Schools have the opportunity to outline the effectiveness of their student support provision within the annual monitoring reports. These reports outline the success of Student Advisers (and accompanying Student Support Teams) in effectively supporting students. A number of Schools confirm ways in which students have expressed appreciation for their Student Advisers, for example through nominations for recognition awards.

School reports continue to highlight challenges with understanding and effectiveness of the Cohort Lead role. Schools report continued low attendance at cohort events, despite significant effort in in organisation and communication.

A number of Schools have adapted the Cohort Lead title or input new roles (e.g., Academic Advisors, Professional Mentors and Progression Officers) to provide academic support to students due to perceived gap in support provision.

### 7.1 Student Advisers and Student Support Teams

Theme	Type	Summary
Responsiveness	Positive	High praise for effective support provided
Engagement with new students	Positive	Helps with transition and early connection
Support with complex cases	Positive	Dedicated and helpful guidance

Limited authority	Negative	Can't always enact decisions directly
High workload	Negative	Caseload size reduces capacity and timeliness

**7.2 Teaching Teams**

Theme	Type	Summary
Supportiveness	Positive	Accessible and encouraging academic teams
Active support	Positive	Active involvement in academic support through direct interactions during courses
PT transition	Negative	Some students report loss of regular academic guidance

**7.3 Cohort Leads**

Theme	Type	Summary
Community building	Positive	Activities support sense of belonging
Structured engagement	Positive	Regular meetings enhance student experience
Low event engagement	Negative	Attendance and relevance concerns
Resource constraints	Negative	Budget/logistics limit activity quality

**7.4 Peer Support**

Theme	Type	Summary
Social & academic integration	Positive	Helps students connect and feel supported
Innovative approaches	Positive	Locally tailored and effective models
Recruitment issues	Negative	Difficulty securing volunteers

## 8. Peer Support

### 8.1 School variations

The Student Support Continuous Improvement Group undertook analysis in 2024/25 to understand variations in the implementation of the student support model. The following summarises findings on peer support:

*The Peer Support Framework developed during the implementation of the model required Schools to allocate a member of staff with responsibility for oversight of peer support activities. Schools had the option to recruit a student Peer Support Student Coordinator role, according to a standard job description, to help support schemes and work with students to understand what types of peer support would be most beneficial. The Review noted this is the area with most variation from the Framework with less than half of Schools recruiting to this position.*

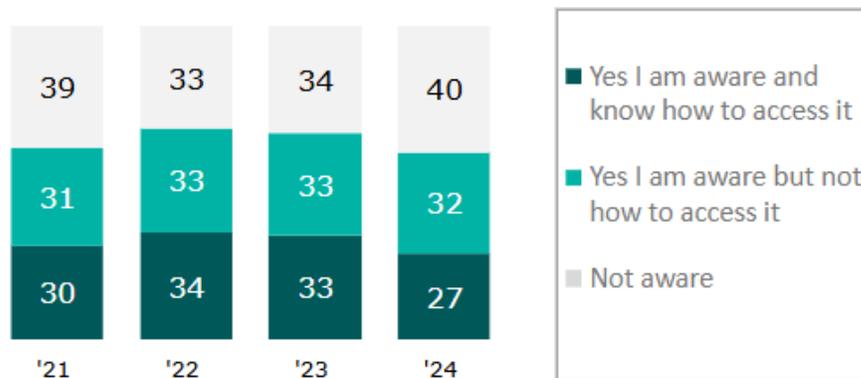
*It was also noted that there is variety in peer support schemes available to students, contributing to differences in the opportunity of experience available to students. Some areas had well established peer support provision for undergraduates prior to the introduction of the new model of support, e.g. Peer Assisted Learning Schemes (PALS) in pre-honours courses like Economics 1, while higher levels of study were less likely to have this provision. However more traditional PALS are not suitable for all subjects or modes of learning within the institution. The nature of student employment in the PSSC role on fixed term contracts can lead to challenges in continuity and many Schools are reporting difficulty in funding this position.*

*Student expectations of peer support are changing; the Business School reported more students looking for peer support to help navigate AI within their studies and less interest in their traditional schemes.*

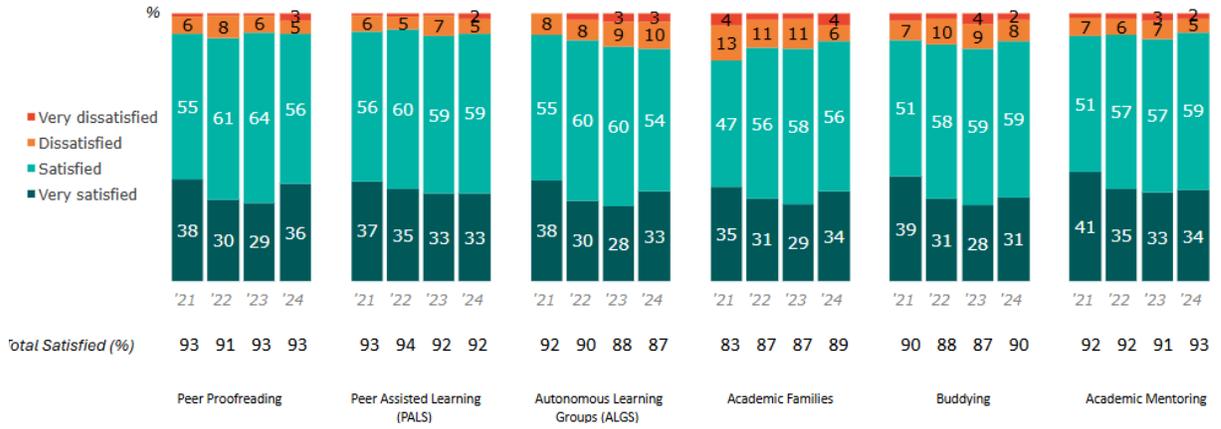
### 8.2 EUSA

The EUSA annual member survey asked students their awareness of Peer Learning and Support (PLS) service. The survey had a 9.1% response rate.

% of respondents aware of PLS



**Service satisfaction (among those able to rate each service) – Peer Learning and Support Services**



**Appendix A: Update on key measures**

Data source	Key measure	Comments on inclusion
Student Life Survey (SLS)	I feel comfortable in reaching out to my Student Adviser for support	SLS was staggered across 5 points in academic year in 2024/25, with varying response rates. Response rates can be viewed <a href="#">here</a> .
Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)	There are people and services to support me	Response rates available <a href="#">here</a> .
Matriculation tracker	Course enrolment processing	Reporting approaches not robustly in place
Annual monitoring datasets	Student outcomes are maintained/improved	Awarding outcomes from annual degree classification analysis (SQAC)
NSS / PTES	Overall satisfaction improved	NSS response rates <a href="#">here</a> and PTES response rates available <a href="#">here</a> .
Student Life Survey  PTES	The University provides opportunities for building connections with other students  I feel part of a community of postgraduate taught students	SLS response rates <a href="#">here</a> .  PTES response rates <a href="#">here</a> .
Staff engagement survey	I am satisfied with the support in place to help me manage my health and wellbeing at work	Data was unable to be broken down to role holders therefore is not included
Staff engagement survey	My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment	Data was unable to be broken down to role holders therefore is not included
People and Money	Recommended training is undertaken	P&M reporting insufficient therefore is not included
Student voice mechanism	Student feedback on experience	Student open comments

**Appendix B: Key Measures – School Level**

School level data provided in this appendix is provided dependent on data sample available (e.g. sufficient response rates). For example, the Student Life Survey data is not included at School level due to low responses.

## 1. Undergraduate – NSS – Overall satisfaction by School

School	Responses	2023	2024	2025	+/- 2024	+/- 2023
<b>College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences</b>						
Business School	266	69.9%	66.5%	72.7%	6.2%	2.8%
Divinity	40	81.8%	61.0%	85.0%	24.0%	3.2%
Economics	214	64.3%	68.8%	71.1%	2.3%	6.8%
ECA	464	69.5%	72.6%	75.4%	2.8%	5.8%
EFI	56	83.3%	76.0%	85.7%	9.7%	2.4%
HiSS	317	66.3%	67.7%	76.4%	8.7%	10.1%
HCA	172	74.3%	77.2%	76.9%	-0.3%	2.6%
Law	355	64.1%	60.9%	68.4%	7.5%	4.3%
LLC	152	67.2%	80.4%	86.8%	6.3%	19.6%
MHSE	304	63.3%	68.6%	70.5%	2.0%	7.2%
PPLS	326	65.3%	65.5%	73.0%	7.5%	7.7%
<b>College of Science and Engineering</b>						
Biological Sciences	161	82.4%	80.9%	81.4%	0.5%	-1.0%
Chemistry	57	73.3%	75.4%	87.7%	12.4%	14.4%
Engineering	290	71.1%	66.3%	72.8%	6.5%	1.7%
GeoSciences	157	71.1%	76.1%	82.7%	6.6%	11.6%
Informatics	169	-	65.3%	68.6%	3.3%	-
Mathematics	163	70.2%	66.9%	67.7%	0.8%	-2.5%
Physics & Astronomy	111	78.4%	58.8%	72.1%	13.2%	-6.3%
<b>College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine</b>						
Biomedical Sciences	161	80.6%	75.4%	77.8%	2.4%	-2.8%
Edinburgh Medical School	217	75.3%		58.6%	-	-16.7%
Vets' School	146	87.6%	91.9%	90.3%	-1.5%	2.8%

## 2. Undergraduate - awarding outcomes by School

		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	YoY Change
<b>CAHSS</b>	BUS	93.9%	94.2%	88.2%	91.7%	91.5%	-0.2%
	DIV	98.6%	95.5%	93.5%	98.3%	93.8%	-4.5%
	ECA	88.7%	91.2%	86.2%	86.1%	85.3%	-0.8%
	ECN	88.8%	86.4%	84.1%	87.8%	79.4%	-8.4% <sup>†</sup>
	EDU	94.7%	77.5%	81.4%	80.9%	78.9%	-2.0%
	HCA	97.5%	89.5%	87.5%	87.0%	89.8%	2.9%
	HEA	95.6%	93.6%	84.6%	83.1%	87.9%	4.8%
	LAW	96.3%	93.4%	87.0%	89.1%	86.9%	-2.2%
	LLC	99.1%	97.1%	94.9%	95.7%	94.1%	-1.6%
	PPL	91.9%	88.2%	90.3%	91.7%	89.4%	-2.4%
	SPS	95.0%	91.1%	91.2%	93.3%	91.8%	-1.5%
<b>CSE</b>	BIO	93.9%	90.9%	87.4%	84.5%	82.7%	-1.8%
	CHE	96.2%	89.6%	88.5%	88.9%	90.8%	1.9%
	ENG	92.5%	87.6%	82.7%	88.8%	85.4%	-3.4%
	GEO	93.4%	90.5%	88.4%	93.3%	90.7%	-2.6%
	INF	94.2%	87.3%	87.3%	90.0%	94.2%	4.2%
	MAT	90.5%	88.8%	92.0%	82.1%	78.9%	-3.2%
	PHY	93.2%	83.6%	84.7%	82.5%	77.1%	-5.4%
<b>CMVM</b>	EMS	95.2%	95.9%	94.3%	94.6%	93.5%	-1.1%
	VET	100.0%	99.5%	98.8%	99.4%	99.3%	-0.1%

<sup>†</sup> The YoY/5Y difference is statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval

### 3. Postgraduate Taught – PTES - Overall satisfaction

School	Responses	2023	2024	2025	+/-2024	+/-2023
<b>College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences</b>						
Business School	265	81.3%	80.4%	80.5%	0.2%	-0.8%
Divinity	24	94.4%	88.0%	91.3%	3.3%	-3.1%
Economics	531	60.0%	80.4%	71.9%	-8.6%	11.9%
ECA	32	77.5%	84.0%	83.3%	-0.7%	5.8%
EFI	286	40.0%	61.2%	82.7%	21.5%	42.7%
HiSS	75	50.3%	66.0%	73.8%	7.8%	23.5%
HCA	81	75.0%	74.4%	80.2%	5.8%	5.2%
Law	262	82.2%	82.4%	87.0%	4.7%	4.8%
LLC	232	58.8%	74.6%	79.3%	4.7%	20.5%
MHSE	87	71.3%	82.0%	89.1%	7.2%	17.8%
PPLS	65	66.3%	87.6%	80.0%	-7.6%	13.7%
SPS	161	60.6%	78.4%	85.1%	6.7%	24.4%
<b>College of Science and Engineering</b>						

Biological Sciences	64	80.6%	91.4%	90.6%	-0.8%	10.0%
Chemistry	26	100.0%	76.5%	96.2%	19.7%	-3.8%
College of Science and Engineering	17	85.0%	89.7%	75.0%	-14.7%	-10.0%
Engineering	23	81.8%	56.3%	69.6%	13.3%	-12.3%
GeoSciences	50	65.9%	66.7%	62.0%	-4.7%	-3.9%
Informatics	82	65.3%	77.1%	76.8%	-0.3%	11.5%
Mathematics	54	80.6%	81.6%	88.9%	7.3%	8.2%
Physics & Astronomy	39	66.7%	70.6%	79.5%	8.9%	12.8%
<b>College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine</b>						
Biomedical Sciences	70	75.9%	75.9%	87.0%	11.0%	11.1%
Clinical Sciences	94	88.8%	86.9%	94.7%	7.8%	5.9%
Edinburgh Medical School	24	97.8%	77.3%	87.5%	10.2%	-10.3%
Molecular & Clinical Medicine	65	79.1%	80.2%	95.4%	15.2%	16.3%
Vets' School	107	84.8%	86.3%	84.9%	-1.3%	0.1%

#### 4. Postgraduate Taught – PTES – I feel part of PGT student community

School	Responses	2023	2024	2025	+/-2024	+/-2023
<b>College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences</b>						
Business School	265	70.5%	70.3%	72.5%	2.2%	2.0%
Divinity	24	66.7%	88.0%	43.5%	-44.5%	-23.2%
Economics	531	70.0%	65.2%	65.6%	0.4%	-4.4%
ECA	32	66.7%	69.9%	74.0%	4.0%	7.2%
EFI	286	36.0%	58.2%	50.7%	-7.5%	14.7%
HiSS	75	34.6%	45.7%	48.1%	2.4%	13.5%
HCA	81	46.5%	42.4%	58.0%	15.7%	11.5%
Law	262	60.7%	51.3%	55.6%	4.3%	-5.1%
LLC	232	56.7%	39.4%	54.0%	14.6%	-2.7%
MHSE	87	52.6%	66.8%	64.1%	-2.7%	11.5%
PPLS	65	38.8%	51.7%	61.5%	9.9%	22.8%
SPS	161	39.6%	53.2%	55.9%	2.7%	16.3%
<b>College of Science and Engineering</b>						
Biological Sciences	64	64.5%	68.6%	70.3%	1.7%	5.8%
Chemistry	26	90.0%	66.7%	73.1%	6.4%	-16.9%
College of S&E	17	59.0%	46.4%	41.2%	-5.3%	-17.8%

Engineering	23	63.6%	53.3%	56.5%	3.2%	-7.1%
GeoSciences	50	64.0%	57.1%	58.0%	0.9%	-6.0%
Informatics	82	42.9%	47.1%	42.0%	-5.2%	-0.9%
Mathematics	54	67.7%	55.3%	66.7%	11.4%	-1.1%
Physics & Astronomy	39	53.3%	58.8%	69.2%	10.4%	15.9%
<b>College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine</b>						
Biomedical Sciences	70	58.5%	39.2%	49.3%	10.0%	-9.3%
Clinical Sciences	94	68.0%	55.5%	62.0%	6.5%	-6.1%
Edinburgh Medical School	24	76.1%	54.5%	50.0%	-4.5%	-26.1%
Molecular & Clinical Medicine	65	56.4%	52.3%	58.5%	6.1%	2.1%
Vets' School	107	41.8%	42.3%	50.9%	8.6%	9.2%

5. Postgraduate outcomes

		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	YoY Change
<b>CAHSS</b>	BUS	91.4%	90.8%	89.8%	88.7%	92.4%	3.6%†
	DIV	100.0%	86.2%	86.0%	86.1%	83.6%	-2.5%
	ECA	82.7%	78.7%	69.4%	64.1%	70.2%	6.0%†
	ECN	70.7%	73.3%	74.1%	72.1%	72.3%	0.2%
	EDU	66.3%	63.6%	53.0%	51.7%	54.4%	2.8%
	HCA	86.6%	74.4%	68.9%	74.0%	72.9%	-1.0%
	HEA	87.8%	86.5%	74.6%	74.5%	72.7%	-1.8%
	LAW	64.1%	63.9%	63.5%	59.2%	58.3%	-0.8%
	LLC	90.5%	86.5%	83.7%	85.1%	81.6%	-3.5%
	PPL	89.5%	86.4%	82.8%	91.0%	89.6%	-1.4%
	SPS	79.3%	74.2%	74.2%	70.5%	74.1%	3.6%
<b>CSE</b>	BIO	89.7%	85.4%	85.7%	76.1%	74.3%	-1.8%
	CHE	96.8%	81.6%	84.1%	87.0%	82.5%	-4.4%
	ENG	78.9%	88.8%	54.3%	60.5%	72.0%	11.5%†
	GEO	87.2%	86.1%	90.0%	86.0%	88.1%	2.1%
	INF	73.1%	84.3%	72.2%	66.3%	74.3%	8.0%†
	MAT	76.0%	85.4%	74.8%	81.9%	88.1%	6.2%
	PHY	91.4%	88.6%	82.1%	63.4%	73.7%	10.3%
<b>CMVM</b>	EMS	80.4%	78.1%	60.9%	63.8%	70.6%	6.8%
	VET	52.8%	68.2%	70.2%	70.5%	83.3%	12.9%

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

**Appendix C: Student Voice AI thematic analysis**

Summary of Student Voice AI approach to thematic coding of open comments. Note that for this analysis, only data within targeted student support themes have been included.

*The Student Voice AI's Generated Report offers a concise synthesis of students' open text feedback. Summaries are generated entirely by Student Voice AI's proprietary large language model pipeline, running on Student Voice AI owned hardware within our UK data centre estate. Before any summarisation occurs, raw comments are anonymised, deduplicated, then processed through the same theme tagging framework and sentiment engine that underpin all other Student Voice AI outputs; only subsets of these already categorised, sentiment scored texts reach the summariser.*

*Categories reflect the language students use across surveys at Student Voice AI's 12 UK partner universities. To keep the taxonomy current, Student Voice AI periodically applies unsupervised clustering to the full comment dataset, identifying emerging topics and updating categories where patterns persist.*

*No third party providers or models ever analyse student comments.*

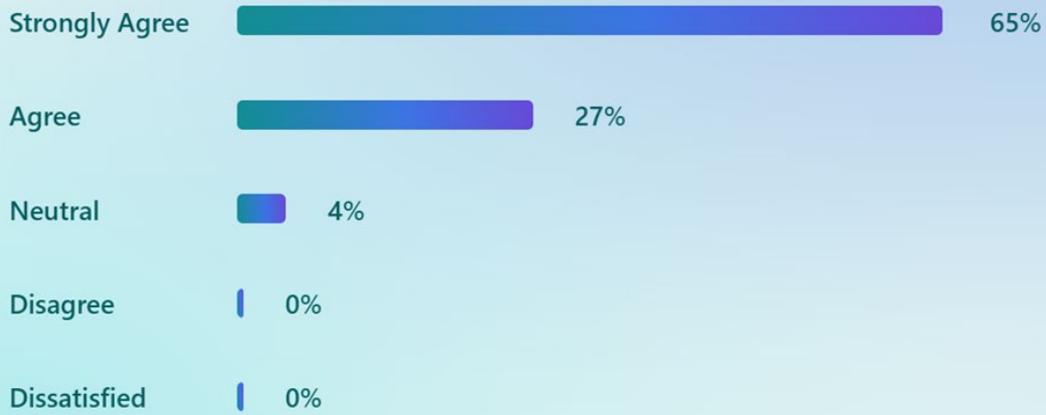
Counts reflect the number of comments in which a theme was present. As qualitative comments may reference multiple aspects of academic support, individual comments can contribute to more than one theme.

Comments were coded thematically for references to student support. As qualitative responses may address multiple aspects of support, individual comments may contribute to more than one theme. Counts therefore reflect theme presence rather than mutually exclusive categorisation.

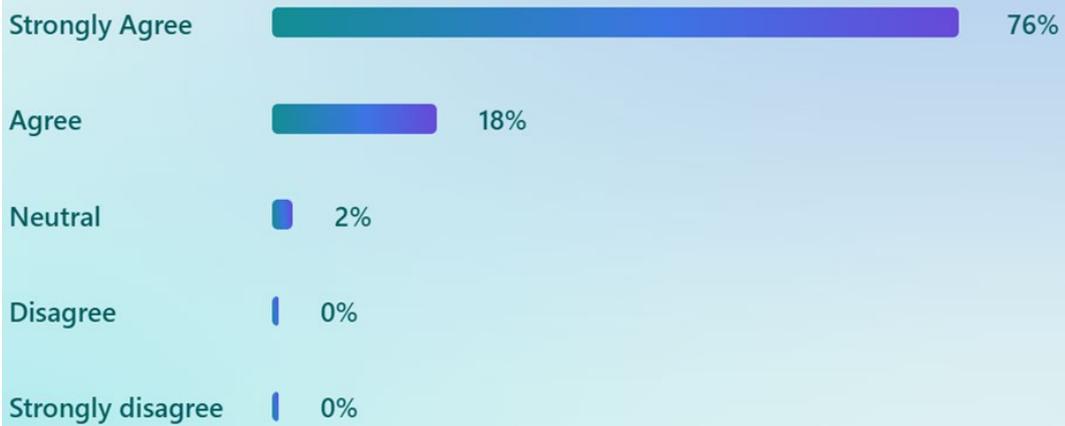
**Appendix D: Wellbeing Service Evaluation Report 2024/25****Evaluation Survey Report: September 2025**

Students engaged with SWS and allocated a Wellbeing Adviser are asked to complete a brief evaluation survey which they are sent shortly after case closure. **1539** students have received surveys this previous academic year (2024/25) and there has been a response rate of **8.5%**. The survey is anonymous, but students can leave contact details if they wish. The headline results to date are as follows:

The Wellbeing Adviser helped me to identify strategies I can use to support my own wellbeing.



The Wellbeing Adviser helped me to identify resources or connect to services to support my wellbeing.





### What did we do well/what worked?

A strong theme in this year's responses was the value students placed on having a safe, non-judgemental space where they could talk openly and feel heard. Several students also noted that they felt supported in engaging with their studies. Other recurring themes included receiving helpful advice and signposting, reassurance, prompt responses, clear communication, and a consistent display of professionalism, empathy and kindness. Representative comments are provided in the box below.

*“My Well-Being advisor went above and beyond their role to help me. They worked with my university contacts on a regular basis which was immensely helpful. I have taken consecutive interruptions of studies and **without my wellbeing advisor I doubt I would have been able to continue my studies.**”*

*“I believe the wellbeing advisor has greatly assisted me during our sessions in organising my ideas and thoughts, which was **crucial for both my personal life and my studies.** It was helpful to talk to the advisor about various issues that I could not discuss with others.”*

*“The wellbeing advisor I worked with was brilliant, she **understood my problems very well and helped me produce strategies to mitigate these.**”*

*“My student wellbeing advisor was incredibly empathetic and understanding during a particularly challenging moment. Their kindness, combined with practical strategies to manage stress and improve focus, helped me navigate the situation with greater confidence. I truly appreciated their professionalism and the genuine care they showed in offering personalized guidance. **It made a significant difference in my wellbeing during a tough time.**”*

*“Listened and didn't make me feel judged at all. Provided me with resources and helped me when I was struggling to get in contact with people. **Kept me engaged with the school,** both in regards to my studies and my mental health.”*

## **5. What would you say are the parts of our service which need to improve? Do you have any ideas or suggestions that would help us to improve the service?**

As in previous years, a significant proportion of respondents replied to this question with “n/a”, “none” or an equivalent comment indicating that they did not believe improvement was needed. Of the smaller number of responses which contained developmental feedback, the main theme was a desire to have access to support for a longer term.

### **Response Rate**

For six months of the academic year entry to a draw to win a voucher was offered in an attempt to boost the response rate. This did not elicit a demonstrable improvement so was discontinued. For the coming year we will explore any other ways to gather feedback and boost the response rate.

***Kate Armit, Assistant Head Student Wellbeing Service, 16th September 2025***

## Senate Quality Assurance Committee

26 February 2026

### Proposed key changes to the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy

#### Description of paper

1. This paper proposes key changes to the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy, as part of its periodic review. A number of proposed changes aim to make the policy more user-friendly, which aligns with the Strategy 2030 outcome 'We will have more user-friendly processes and efficient systems to support our work.'

#### Fit with remit

<b>Quality Assurance Committee</b>
Oversee the delivery and enhancement of the University's quality assurance framework, ensuring that it meets external requirements.
In partnership with Edinburgh University Students' Association, ensure effective student engagement and representation of student voices in the University's quality framework.
Maintain oversight of the outcomes of the quality assurance framework, ensuring that actions are addressed, and support the sharing of good practice. 2.4 Promote the quality assurance framework as an important part of the University's activities and ensure that the outcomes inform relevant University business.
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.
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.

#### Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is asked to discuss proposed changes to the structure and scope of the policy, as well as key policy changes, as part of its periodic review.

#### Background and context

3. The policy was previously the responsibility of the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC). However, following consultation, APRC agreed in May 2025 that responsibility for the policy should be transferred to this Committee, given that issues relating to the quality and management of programmes and courses are generally considered by Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC). As such the policy is a better fit with the remit of SQAC, rather than APRC.
4. The policy is due for periodic review in 2025/26. Consultation for the policy review was conducted between June-December 2025, and included:

- College Offices, as staff who make frequent use of the policy
- Deans of Quality and Deans of Education
- Communications and Marketing
- Legal Services
- Edinburgh Global
- Educational Design and Engagement (Information Services)

**Discussion**

5. The consultation with College Offices indicated that staff in Schools find the policy to be disjointed, long and difficult to navigate. Staff also raised a number of points, including minor vs major changes, how to include external expertise in programme development, timescales and documentation for new programmes. The issues raised by staff are addressed with proposed amendments in the table below (8).
  
6. The policy review has been conducted in alignment with principles in the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education 2024, particularly Principle 7 - Designing, developing, approving and modifying programmes.
  
7. A number of proposed amendments relate to the policy **structure**, including:
  - **A more coherent document structure with distinct sections** for:
    - i. the development and approval of new programmes and courses, and the processes associated with these
    - ii. the management of programme and courses, including monitoring and review, approval of minor and major amendments, and the processes associated with these
  - **Removal of sections which are guidance, rather than policy.** An alternative approach would be to keep some of the high-level guidance within text box, as we do for example with the Taught Assessment Regulations, and remove unnecessary detail.
  - **Include numbered paragraphs**, in order to follow the formatting of other policies, and to help the referencing of particular sections, and reformatting of tables, to make the information clearer
  
8. The Committee is invited to discuss whether or not to maintain the information regarding the remit, composition, governance and operation of **Boards of Studies within the scope of the policy**, or whether this should be a separate, stand-alone policy.
  
9. The table below summarises the proposed key changes:

<b>Section of policy</b>	<b>Amendment</b>
Cover sheet and introduction	Clarify that the policy should be read alongside the Curriculum Framework and Models for Degree Types, rather than simply refer to the AQS webpages
Key issues to address / documentation for proposals	Potentially remove references to the Degree Programme Specification. This is still under discussion with colleagues from Legal Services, Student Systems and other teams in Registry.

Programme proposals – external engagement	Clarify that external engagement can be sought at the development stage of a new programme, or that an external member of staff may be part of the College Curriculum Approval Board / Validation Panel.
Programme proposals – business case	Suggest removing this section, as it is likely to change frequently, and include it in guidance for the development of new programmes.
Boards of Studies	Remove and consolidate some of the operational detail, as it is unnecessarily long. Potentially move content into a separate, stand-alone policy (for discussion).
Key Issues to Consider when Scrutinising Proposals	Remove section and include it in guidance for the development of new programmes.
Major and minor changes to programmes	Consultation suggests this section causes significant confusion for Schools, particularly the expression of % of credit volume. Proposed amendment to express this as number of credits affected (e.g. 60 credits or more) rather than as %
Simplification of timescales	Remove detail from this section, particularly the information for new programmes, which should be included with information on new programme development.
Arrangements for publishing information	Clarify that accurate published information is required for compliance with Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)  Remove references to print brochures  Remove detail from information required for Degree Finder, as this is likely to change more frequently than the policy, and may become out of date
Programme closure – Responsibilities to Students	Amendments to existing text which is outdated and should reflect current practice. Add text regarding consideration of obligations to current and prospective students.
Skills for Success Framework	Replace references to Graduate Attributes with the Skills for Success Framework as needed
Remote delivery	New section to cover UKVI requirements around remote delivery
Non-credit bearing provision	Consultation suggests there is mixed practice regarding the governance of non-credit bearing provision. The requirements should be incorporated to the policy throughout, rather than having a stand-alone section at the end.
Programme and Course Management – Responsibilities	Amendments to include responsibilities for regular review of programme and courses  Amendments to responsibilities of Course Organiser to the only include aspects relevant to this policy (i.e. monitoring and reviewing courses, proposing amendments), linking to Course Organiser Outline of Role for a full description of responsibilities.
Staff Support and Development	Remove section as this is for guidance rather than policy.

10. Further consultation will be undertaken regarding the governance, approval and management for short courses, non-credit bearing courses and Digital Badges, in order to inform the draft policy which will be presented to the Committee at its next meeting.

### **Resource implications**

11. The proposed policy amendments do not require additional resource, with the exception of the inclusion of regular review of courses and programmes. However, this is already standard practice in most Schools and Colleges, and should not therefore result in additional resource. The points of clarification and improved document structure should result in a reduced number of enquiries, and more efficient use of staff time.

### **Risk management**

12. The consultation indicated that staff find the policy to be disjointed, long and difficult to navigate, which increases the risk of inconsistent implementation. The current policy is also significantly out of date, which increases the risk of our practices not aligning with our policies. The proposed amendments address these risks.

### **Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

13. The proposed amendments do not contribute to the response to the Climate Emergency or the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Equality & diversity**

14. The proposed amendments to make the policy more coherent and user-friendly are anticipated to provide benefits from an equality and diversity perspective. An updated Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) will be conducted in order to assess the impact on equality and diversity of any policy changes, and will be presented alongside a proposed draft policy to the next meeting of this Committee.

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

15. Following the discussion of the proposed amendments, Academic Quality and Standards will continue to draft an updated policy, and present this for approval to the next meeting of this Committee.

### **Author**

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Academic Quality and Standards  
February 2026*

### **Presenter**

*Cristina Matthews*

**Freedom of Information Open**

The University of Edinburgh  
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

26 February 2026

**Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting:  
Reporting Templates 2025/26**

**Description of paper**

1. Seeks approval of changes to the Programme, School, and College annual reporting templates for 2025/26.
2. Fit with remit:

<b>Quality Assurance Committee</b>	<b>Y/N</b>
Oversee the delivery and enhancement of the University's quality assurance framework, ensuring that it meets external requirements.	Y
In partnership with Edinburgh University Students' Association, ensure effective student engagement and representation of student voices in the University's quality framework.	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

**Action requested / recommendation**

3. To discuss/approve the proposed changes to the reporting templates.

**Background and context**

4. Each year, programme and School templates are issued throughout Schools for completion over the summer. The Committee considers the School level responses in its September meeting and the College level response in its December meeting.
5. The proposed changes have been informed by discussions at the September 2025 meeting of the Committee and a meeting with the Deans of Quality and College quality teams held on 12 February 2026.

**Discussion**

6. The following key changes are proposed for the Programme, School, and College annual reporting templates for 2025/26:

7. **Institutional Priorities:**

The following Institutional Priority response boxes are proposed for the 2025-26 reports: **Learning and Teaching Strategy; Assessment and Feedback; Student Voice; Student Support; Generative Artificial Intelligence.**

8. **School Report template:**

- Additional Institutional Priority box focusing on the implementation of the new Learning and Teaching Strategy.
- Revised guidance to draw out Student Voice practices and any variations.
- The Student Outcomes box has been revised with greater emphasis on Awarding Gaps.
- Previous guidance questions have now been separated into sub-boxes for each section to ensure consistent reporting on each element across all reports.
- Proposed changes to text have been highlighted in yellow.

9. **Programme template:**

- Aligned with the School template changes.

10. **College template:**

- No proposed changes.

**Resource implications**

11. The changes are relatively minor and focused on supporting colleagues completing the current reporting templates and making greater use of the data contained within the reports.

**Risk management**

12. There are risks associated with ineffective monitoring, review and reporting. There are also risks associated with making the data within the reports more widely available.

**Equality & diversity**

13. An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the normal process. The templates encourage reflection on key institutional reporting priorities and demographic data is available on these in PowerBI.

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

14. Academic Quality and Standards will work with College Deans of Quality and College quality contacts to continue to communicate with colleagues in key roles at appropriate times. The 2025-26 annual monitoring process (including the

templates) will be a key item on the agenda at the next meeting of the Directors of Quality Network on Thursday 16 April 2026.

**Authors**

Brian Connolly and Sinéad Docherty  
Academic Quality and Standards

**Presenter**

Brian Connolly and Sinéad Docherty  
Academic Quality and Standards

**February 2026**

**Freedom of Information**

Open

## Programme/Programme Cluster Annual Report 2025/26

All programmes, **taught** and **research**, must be monitored annually and reports provided to the School Director of Quality in time to inform the preparation of the School Annual Quality Report (due on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026).<sup>1</sup>

**Scope:** Your School will decide on the optimum clustering of programmes to enable effective reflection whilst avoiding duplication of effort. Your report should cover all credit-bearing provision, including collaborative and credit-bearing continuing professional development (CPD) provision (where applicable).

**Length:** Your report should be brief (see word count guidance in each reporting box) and use bullet points where possible.

**Data:** Your report should include reflection on relevant data available via the following links (also see data guidance in each reporting box):

- [Data to Support Annual Quality Processes](#)
- [Data Insights Hub](#)
- [Data Help Videos](#)
- [Student Analytics, Insights & Modelling](#)

Please note that reports should not contain information which identifies any individual – [Data Protection Policy](#)

**Deadline:** To be determined by your School.

<b>Programme(s):</b>	
<b>Report written by (include contributors):</b>	
<b>Date of report:</b>	

### 1. Actions from the previous year.

Please report on progress with the actions you identified in last year's report and planned to take in 2025-26.

#### **Guidance:**

Your answer should refer to last year's report. If there are no actions on which to report, please explain why.

(100-200 words)

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/annualmonrevreppolicy.pdf>

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**2. Institutional Priority: Learning and Teaching Strategy**

Please report on activities to align existing practice with the University [Learning and Teaching Strategy](#).

**Guidance:**

Your answers should address the three key purposes of the [Learning and Teaching Strategy](#): to stimulate developments to our educational offer, ensuring it remains fit to equip our students for the futures they will be entering; to promote and support inspiring teaching and supervising; to engage and empower our students to become lifelong learners and make a meaningful impact in the world.

(approx. 400-500 words)

**2.1 What practices or strategies do you already have in place within your programme(s) that contribute to the Learning and Teaching Strategy?**

--

**2.2 What activities are planned within your programme(s) to better align provision with the Learning and Teaching Strategy?**

--

### **3. Institutional Priority: Assessment and Feedback**

Please report on activities to align existing practice with the [Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities](#).

#### **Guidance:**

You should include evidence of how you have taken action to ensure that the [Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities](#) are fully implemented, and that feedback turnaround times and quality are monitored effectively.

Your answer could include reference to Subject-Area Learning and Teaching meetings, including Programme- or Subject Area-level review and development of assessment and feedback practices. It should include analysis of student surveys and, where possible, compare this year's data with previous years' data.

(approx. 400-500 words)

**3.1 How are you ensuring that the Principles and Priorities have been implemented in assessment and feedback? What changes are still needed and what is the timeframe for these?**

**3.2 What is your rate of return within the three-week turnaround for 2025-26, and what steps are you taking to improve this in 2026-27?**

**3.3 What strategies do you have to ensure quality of feedback? How do students rate feedback?**

**3.4 Has marking criteria (including any marking rubrics or detailed grade descriptors) been applied to all courses within the School?**

**3.5 What steps have you taken to address assessment challenges? What changes are still needed and what is the timeframe for these?**

**3.6 Any further comments on Assessment & Feedback.**

**4. Institutional Priority: Student Voice**

Please report on your approach to engaging students in dialogue about their learning and wider experience of the University, including evidence of closing the feedback loop and alignment with the University's Student Voice Policy.

**Guidance:**

It is expected that Schools comply with University policies around, Student Voice, course feedback and SSLCs. Your answers to the below questions should include analysis of data from student surveys (NSS, PTES, PRES), course feedback and Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meeting minutes. Where possible, compare this year's data with previous years' data. Please also include details of actions taken in response to issues identified from student feedback.

(approx.300-400 words)

**4.1 What deviations, if any, are in place on your programme(s)?**

**4.2 What enhancements, if any, are in place on your programme(s) to strengthen dialogue with the Student Voice?**

**4.3 How do you measure and evaluate the effectiveness of these Student Voice opportunities?**

**4.4 What methods do you use to close the feedback loop to your students (e.g. 'you asked, we did')?**

### **5. Institutional Priority: Student Support**

Please report on the effectiveness of student support arrangements.

#### **Guidance:**

Your answers should include analysis of data from student surveys ([NSS](#), [PTES](#)), School annual programme reviews, course feedback and SSLC meeting minutes. Where possible, compare this year's data with previous years' data.

For PGR, your answer should include evidence of the effectiveness of academic PGR student support arrangements (such as supervisor training, induction and training for annual reviews and vivas, support with career development/employability) and the approach to the wider PGR student experience (specifically in relation to community building, student satisfaction and possible differences between on-campus and online students)

(approx. 200-300 words)

**5.1 What feedback did you receive from NSS, PTES and PRES in relation to student support in 2024-25 and what actions have you taken in 2025-26 in response (building on good practice, addressing challenges)?**

**5.2 How do you know if these actions have been successful?**

**5.3 Do you have any other comments on the student support arrangements within the School and/or University?**

**6. Institutional Priority: Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)**

Please report on any activities or initiatives focused on integrating or adapting to GenAI in learning, teaching, and assessment.

**Guidance:**

Where possible, please include specific examples and data.

(approx. 200-300 words)

**6.1 What innovations or changes to practice in learning, teaching and assessment have been implemented on your programme(s) as a result of GenAI?**

**6.2 What specific challenges, if any, have you encountered on your programme(s) as a result of these developments?**

**6.3 Please also comment on the University's Generative AI Guidance for Staff and Students. Does the guidance address the key issues? If not, please be specific about additional guidance needed.**

## 7. Student Outcomes and Awarding Gaps

Please report on how your programme(s) monitors data to ensure all students are supported to succeed at key stages in the student lifecycle.

### Guidance:

Your answer should include analysis of key student lifecycle data (e.g. student assessment, progression and awarding data etc) for all student demographic groups (e.g. gender, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic background etc) within your School. Where possible, compare this year's data with last year's data.

For PGR, your answer should include analysis of outcomes of annual reviews (e.g., what % have repeat reviews or are downgraded), time to completion, completion rates and degree outcomes on your programme(s) and factors that might have impacted on them either positively or negatively.

(approx. 200-300 words)

**7.1 Have you identified any particular issue (e.g. an assessment, progression or awarding gap etc) as adversely impacting a particular student demographic group (e.g. gender, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic background)?**

**7.2 What action are being taken by your School to specifically address awarding gaps within the School? How do you know if these actions are successful?**

## 8. What has worked well this past year?

Please give specific examples of good practice within your programme from this last year that you would like to highlight and share.

### Guidance for UG/PGT/PGR:

Your answer should highlight particularly innovative or creative practice within your programme(s).

(100-200 words)

--

**9. What challenges have affected the quality of teaching and student experience in the past year? What could have worked better?**

Please identify specific examples of challenges and context that have impacted the quality of the learning experience for students in the past year.

**Guidance:**

Your answer should identify any School, College or University level challenges that have impacted programme delivery and the student experience. This may include such things as financial context, industrial action, University infrastructure etc. **Please be specific about the impact of decisions made and the effect on School and/or students.** Please identify any areas for improvement as well as any challenges or barriers to improvement.

(150-250 words)

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**10. Please use this free text space if there is anything you would like to reflect on or highlight that has not been addressed elsewhere in the report.**

(100-200 words)

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**11. Actions for the coming year.**

Please identify actions you intend to take during the next year (up to 5 bullet points).

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## School Annual Report 2025/26

The University is responsible for its academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience. The School Annual Report is a key part of the University's commitment to reflecting on and systematically reviewing its provision and taking action to enhance it.<sup>1</sup> The report will also inform the University's [Self Evaluation Action Plan](#), the annual institutional report to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on activities to effectively manage quality assurance and deliver on enhancement.

**Scope:** Your report should cover all credit-bearing provision, including collaborative and credit-bearing continuing professional development (CPD) provision (where applicable).

**Length:** Your report should be brief (see word count guidance in each reporting box) and use bullet points where possible.

**Contributors:** Your report should include input and contributions from colleagues across your School.

**Data:** Your report should include reflection on relevant data available via the following links (also see data guidance in each reporting box):

- [Data to Support Annual Quality Processes](#)
- [Data Insights Hub](#)
- [Data Help Videos](#)
- [Student Analytics, Insights & Modelling](#)

Please note that reports should not contain information which identifies any individual – [Data Protection Policy](#)

**Deadline: Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026**

<b>School/Deanery:</b>	
<b>Report written by:</b>  (Include name and role for author and contributors)	
<b>Confirmation that programme level monitoring has taken place</b>	

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/annualmonrevreppolicy.pdf>

<b>and has informed the School report:</b>	
<b>Confirmation that the Head of School has approved the report:</b>	
<b>Comment from the Head of School on the report:</b>	
<b>Date of report:</b>	

**1. Actions from the previous year.**

Please report on progress with the actions you identified in last year's report and planned to take in 2025-26.

**Guidance:**

Your answer should make reference to last year's report (see Aide Memoire from Academic Quality and Standards). If there are no actions on which to report, please explain why.

(approx. 100-200 words)

**2. Institutional Priority: Learning and Teaching Strategy**

Please report on activities to align existing practice with the University [Learning and Teaching Strategy](#).

**Guidance:**

Your answers should address the three key purposes of the [Learning and Teaching Strategy](#): to stimulate developments to our educational offer, ensuring it remains fit to equip our students for the futures they will be entering; to promote and support inspiring teaching and supervising; to engage and empower our students to become lifelong learners and make a meaningful impact in the world.

(approx. 400-500 words)

**2.1 What practices or strategies do you already have in place within your School that contribute to the Learning and Teaching Strategy?**

**2.2 What activities are planned within your School to better align provision with the Learning and Teaching Strategy?**

**3. Institutional Priority: Assessment and Feedback**

Please report on activities to align existing practice with the [Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities](#).

**Guidance:**

Your answers should include analysis of data from student surveys ([NSS](#), [PTES](#)), School Education Committee and Board of Studies minutes and annual programme reviews to inform your report. Where possible, compare this year's data with previous years' data.

(approx. 400-500 words)

**3.1 What actions has your School taken to ensure that the [Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities](#) are fully implemented? What changes are still needed and what is the timeframe for these?**

**3.2 What is your School's rate of return within the three-week turnaround for 2025-26, and what steps is your School taking to improve this in 2026-27?**

**3.3 What strategies do you have as a School to ensure quality of feedback? How do students rate feedback in your School?**

**3.4 Has marking criteria (including any marking rubrics or detailed grade descriptors) been applied to all courses within your School? **How is this audited at School level?****

**3.5 What steps has your School taken to address assessment challenges? What changes are still needed and what is the timeframe for these?**

**3.6 Do you have any further comments on Assessment & Feedback?**

**4. Institutional Priority: Student Voice**

Please report on the School's approach to engaging students in dialogue about their learning and wider experience of the University, including evidence of closing the feedback loop and alignment with the University's [Student Voice Policy](#).

**Guidance:**

Your answers to the below questions should include analysis of data from student surveys ([NSS](#), [PTES](#), [PRES](#)), School annual programme reviews, course feedback and Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meeting minutes. Where possible, compare this year's data with previous years' data. Please also include details of actions taken in response to issues identified from student feedback.

(approx.300-400 words)

**4.1 It is expected that all Schools comply with the University's [Student Voice Policy](#). What deviations, if any, are in place within your School?**

**4.2 What enhancements, if any, are in place within your School to strengthen dialogue with the Student Voice?**

**4.3 How do you measure and evaluate the effectiveness of these Student Voice opportunities?**

**4.4 What methods do you use to close the feedback loop to your students (e.g. 'you asked, we did')?**

### **5. Institutional Priority: Student Support**

Please report on the effectiveness of the School's student support structures and mechanisms and how they align with the University's [Student Support Framework](#).

#### **Guidance:**

Your answers should include analysis of data from student surveys ([NSS](#), [PTES](#)), School annual programme reviews, course feedback and SSLC meeting minutes. Where possible, compare this year's data with previous years' data.

(approx. 200-300 words)

**5.1 What feedback did you receive from NSS, PTES and PRES in relation to student support in 2024-25 and what actions have you taken in 2025-26 in response (building on good practice, addressing challenges)?**

**5.2 How do you know if these actions have been successful?**

**5.3 Do you have any other comments on the student support arrangements within your School and/or the University?**

### **6. Institutional Priority: Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)**

Please report on any activities or initiatives focused on integrating or adapting to GenAI in learning, teaching, and assessment.

#### **Guidance:**

Where possible, please include specific examples and evidence.

(approx. 200-300 words)

**6.1 What innovations or changes to practice in learning, teaching and assessment has your School implemented as a result of GenAI?**

**6.2 What specific challenges, if any, has your School encountered as a result of these developments?**

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**6.3 Does the University's Generative AI Guidance for Staff and Students address the key issues? If not, please be specific about additional guidance needed.**

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## **7. Student Outcomes and Awarding Gaps**

Please report on how your School monitors data to ensure all students are supported to succeed at key stages in the student lifecycle.

### **Guidance:**

Your answer should include analysis of key student lifecycle data (e.g. student assessment, progression and awarding data etc) for all student demographic groups (e.g. gender, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic background etc) within your School. Where possible, compare this year's data with last year's data.

For PGR Student Outcomes please see Question 8.

(approx. 200-300 words)

**7.1 Has your School identified a particular issue (e.g. an assessment, progression or awarding gap etc) impacting a particular student demographic group (e.g. gender, disability, ethnicity, socio-economic background)?**

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**7.2 What actions are being taken by your School to specifically address awarding gaps within the School? How do you know if these actions are successful?**

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## 8. Postgraduate research (PGR) provision

Please report on the effectiveness of your arrangements for supporting PGR students.

### Guidance:

Your answers should include analysis of data from student surveys ([PRES](#)), School annual programme reviews, course feedback, SSLC meeting minutes, annual progress reviews/vivas and completion rates. Where possible, compare this year's data with previous years' data.

(approx. 200-400 words)

**8.1 What percentage of students in your School complete within (a) the prescribed period of study, and (b) the maximum period of study? What is the average time to completion in your School?**

**8.2 What percentage of students have completed an annual review? What percentage of students are downgraded? What factors might have impacted student outcomes either positively or negatively?**

**8.3 The University's [Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators](#) requires that all postgraduate research (PGR) students who teach are trained before engaging in teaching activities. What percentage of your PGR students who teach have been trained? What system does your School have in place to monitor this training and what changes are still needed to ensure that all PGRs who teach are systematically trained and fully supported?**

**8.4 What system does the School have in place to ensure that supervisors are adequately trained, and how is this monitored?**

**8.5 What approach does your School take to the wider PGR student experience specifically in relation to community building, student satisfaction (including contributing factors such as resources/facilities), EDI, career development and possible differences between on-campus and online students?**

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**9. What has worked well this past year?**

Please give specific examples of good practice within your School from this last year that you would like to highlight and share.

**Guidance:**

Your answer should highlight particularly innovative or creative practice within your School.

(approx. 100-200 words)

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**10. What challenges have affected the quality of teaching and student experience in the past year? What could have worked better?**

Please identify specific examples of challenges and context that have impacted the quality of the learning experience for students in the past year.

**Guidance:**

Your answer should identify any School, College or University level challenges that have impacted programme delivery and the student experience. This may include such things as financial context, industrial action, University infrastructure etc.

**Please be specific about the impact of decisions made and the effect on School and/or students.** Please identify any areas for improvement as well as any challenges or barriers to improvement.

(approx. 150-250 words)

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**11. Please use this free text space if there is anything you would like to reflect on or highlight that has not been addressed elsewhere in the report.**

(approx. 100-200 words)

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<b>12. Actions for the coming year.</b> Please identify actions for your School during the next year (up to 5 bullet points).
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## College Annual Report 2025/26

The University is responsible for its academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience. The College Annual Report is a key part of the University's commitment to reflecting on and systematically reviewing its provision and taking action to enhance it.<sup>1</sup>

**Scope:** Your report should cover all credit-bearing provision, including collaborative and credit-bearing continuing professional development (CPD) provision (where applicable).

**Length:** Your report should be brief (see word count guidance in each reporting box) and use bullet points where possible.

**Contributors:** Your report should include input and contributions from colleagues across your College.

**Data:** Your report should include reflection on relevant data available via the following links:

- [Data to Support Annual Quality Processes](#)
- [Data Insights Hub](#)
- [Data Help Videos](#)
- [Student Analytics, Insights & Modelling](#)

Please note that reports should not contain information which identifies any individual – [Data Protection Policy](#)

**Deadline:** **Monday 23 November 2026**

<b>School/Deanery:</b>	
<b>Report written by (include contributors):</b>	
<b>Date of report:</b>	

### 1. Actions from the previous year.

Please report on progress with the actions you identified in last year's report and planned to take in 2025/26.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/annualmonrevreppolicy.pdf>

**2. Please use this free text space as an opportunity for general reflection on the past year.**

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**3. Actions for the coming year.**

Please identify actions or areas for improvement for the College and at University level during the next year (up to 5 bullet points each).

**Actions identified for the College:**

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**Actions requested of the University:**

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**Senate Quality Assurance Committee  
26 February 2026**

**Short Courses Annual Report 2024-25**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper provides a summary update to the Senate Quality Assurance Committee of short online course related activities since the November 2024 update.
2. Fit with remit:

<b>Quality Assurance Committee</b>	<b>Y/N</b>
Oversee the delivery and enhancement of the University's quality assurance framework, ensuring that it meets external requirements.	<b>Y</b>
Maintain oversight of the outcomes of the quality assurance framework, ensuring that actions are addressed, and support the sharing of good practice.	<b>Y</b>
Promote the quality assurance framework as an important part of the University's activities and ensure that the outcomes inform relevant University business.	<b>Y</b>
Identify areas for innovation and enhancement of the student experience and ensure that these inform Senate Education Committee's policy development.	<b>Y</b>

**Action requested / recommendation**

3. The Quality Assurance Committee are asked to;
  - **note** the update on Short Online Courses activities

**Background and Context**

4. Governance of Short Online Course portfolio is provided by the Short Course Strategy Group which was formerly the MOOC Strategy Group (see [Appendix 1](#) for current membership). This group meets every six months to discuss the existing portfolio and to review proposals for new Short Online Courses, formerly known as MOOCS, which are delivered on partner platforms (Coursera, edX and FutureLearn).
5. Following the successful launch of the new Short Courses Platform, the group now provides the forum for representatives across the university to provide strategic support and consistency across platform partners and non-curricular courses.
6. The Short Courses Platform (SCP) provides a platform to surface and deliver not-for-credit short courses which are delivered across the institution; academic schools and professional service departments. These courses, not aligned to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, bring lifelong learning, continuing professional development and executive education courses together. This brings a new platform to our learning platform ecosystem to ensure our courses are delivered on the most appropriate system depending on the audience and their

requirements (see [Appendix 2](#) for Platform Strategy overview). Users on the SCP will benefit from consistent browsing, enrolment and learning experience whilst providing institutional compliance for platform, integration and resource licences.

7. Quality Assurance of all short courses aligns with the Programme and Course Approval Management Policy with all short courses hosted on the Short Courses Platform requiring Board of Studies or equivalent for Professional Services course approval.
8. As MOOCs are hosted on global platforms reaching millions of learners, therefore incurring greater reputational risk, they follow additional approval by the Short Courses Strategy Group which includes a MOOC Proposal form which demonstrates the following points:
  - The course would be suitable as a short online course and that there is demand.
  - Agrees production effort and responsibilities.
  - Ensures the academic team effort is understood and committed.
  - Confirmation of school or department support.
  - Initial conversations with MOOC platforms to understand which platform is best suited to the subject area.
9. As part of the service offered by the Online Course Production Service, additional checks are completed during course build and during the run of the course. These include:
  - Alignment with course description and learning outcomes.
  - Copy editing content and scripts to ensure consistency in design and language.
  - Accessibility, copyright and inclusion (diversity in images) checks.
  - Review by MOOC Partner.
  - Regular reviews by an Instructional Designer of learner feedback and course design to provide suggestions of improvements for future iterations.
10. The University continues to benefit from partnering with the three MOOC partners; [Coursera](#), [edX](#) and [FutureLearn](#). Having a range of platforms allow us to host courses in variety of different languages. On edX we have Nitrogen: A Global Challenge available in English and 11 other languages ranging from Bengali to Sinhalese. Coursera have invested in machine translations which our Learning for Sustainable Futures courses are trialing to enable them to reach a wider audience.

## **For information**

### **Short Online Courses Platform Update**

11. The University's new Short Courses Platform launched in June 2025 providing the opportunity to bring together all non-credit bearing courses, such as continual professional development and lifelong learning courses from the University. The new solution includes a web catalogue for learners to browse the extensive offering of short courses delivered by the University

- (<https://shortcourses.ed.ac.uk>). A course and learner management platform, which allows course teams to manage course offerings, enrolments, reporting and financial reconciliation and finally a learning platform for courses which are delivered either fully online or in a hybrid format.
12. This launch followed a year-long early adopter phase where involved course teams tested the learning platform and helped to define good practice for the full rollout.
  13. In relation to the remit of this Committee the quality assurance process from course initiation at course approval stage to the course review was a key focus of the SCP Teaching & Learning Steering Group to ensure cross institution engagement and adoption.
  14. Course teams are required to follow School level approval process for non-credit bearing courses ([Key Considerations when planning a short course](#)) which align with University Policy. The [Programme and Course Approval Management policy](#) does cover non-credited courses although it is currently quite vague on how this should be applied. The Short Course Strategy Group and Short Course Platform project team are continuing to work with Academic Services to improve the guidance.
  15. In addition to the formal School level course approval processes in place, the short courses platform team have published guidance and course checklist which is available within the course template and in the published good practice guidance in SharePoint ([SCP Course Launch Checks](#)). The checklist includes pedagogical and practical checks to ensure the course description, clear learning outcomes and timetable information are included. It also checks that the course includes tutor biographies, alternative format statements, clear learner instructions for learning activities and closed captions and subtitles included with videos to ensure consistent and inclusive learner experiences.
  16. Following learner feedback sessions in focus groups with learners on Early Adopter courses, we have tested and adapted end of course surveys. These are part of the standard course template to encourage staff to seek learner feedback and action, where relevant, any suggested changes as part of the feedback process.
  17. While the full platform was launched in June, new and existing courses have moved to the new platform as part of a phased rollout. Existing courses including the extensive Open Studies and Languages for All portfolios from the Centre for Open Learning are now fully taught on the platform alongside others such as the Clinical Educator Programme and courses from Usher, the Law School, Health and Safety and the Clinical Research Facility. A full summary of areas, courses and learners using and currently joining the platform are detailed in [Appendix 3](#).
  18. Including early adopter courses, 476 courses have been published on the new Platform and more than 6,700 unique learners have made 11.4k enrolments. This is within our target to migrate in the region of 500 courses to the Short Courses Platform within the first year of the launch and that number will continue to grow.

19. From 2026, the Short Courses Platform Service will report to the Senate Quality Assurance Committee on strategic portfolio-wide activity, total numbers of courses, enrolments and initiatives, actions which take place at a platform-wide level and impact all courses. Ownership of individual course reporting will sit with individual departments who currently provide reports on their individual portfolios to SQAC.

### **Course Production Update**

20. Since 2013, we have produced a portfolio of over 120 MOOCs (for a summary of new courses, please see [Appendix 4](#)) and have surpassed 5 million learners. These numbers affirm that our MOOCs are still popular both with learners and within the University as a mechanism to disseminate our expertise to a wide audience through free, open education platforms.

### **21. MOOC Learner Feedback**

Over 2025, the OCP team have taken MOOC learner feedback, gathered from optional end of course surveys to review feedback, and provided suggestions of changes course teams could make, to continue to improve the course. This has been done over a 6-month period however the aim is to make these an annual report to course teams.

22. The surveys have been consistently applied over all three platforms, edX, Coursera and FutureLearn, to enable us to compare comparable data points to drive consistency. The feedback can also help inform us when a course may have reached the end of its life and should be retired.

23. The summaries sent to staff provide feedback from learners on whether the course met their expectations, if they have applied their learning and if they have shared their learning with others. We use ELM to help collate the qualitative data, in some case with thousands of responses per course which is then reviewed by the member of the team for accuracy. The summaries are reviewed by an Instructional Designer to suggest improvements that could be made to address learner feedback and incorporate latest learning design principles. An example of a summary is available to review in [Appendix 5](#). This course is an example of MOOC that has been developed to become a Level 7 course and turned into a successful e-book which has been downloaded over 50,000 times and is preparing a second edition to be published early 2026.

24. In all platforms we can view learner feedback which is added to the platform following the conclusion of a course. Examples of learner feedback are available to view in [Appendix 6](#) and demonstrate the high level of learner satisfaction.

### **25. MOOC to Masters: Promoting degrees to short course learners**

With more than 5 million enrolments, our short online course partners provide us with a substantial and engaged audience for promoting further study at the University. We continue to follow the structured approach we outlined in last year's report:

- Increase awareness of online PG degrees and their benefits
- Drive MOOC learners to attend online learning Open Days as these events are a key tool in our recruitment activity

- Communicate regularly with MOOC learners to make them feel more connected to the University community
- Gather feedback and testimonials from MOOC learners to help us promote short courses further to new learners.

See [Appendix 7](#) for an example email communication sent to MOOC learners.

Evidence of the impact of our activity:

- A pilot on FutureLearn in 2024, which promoted a selection of our online masters, provided us with 546 leads who wanted more information about studying an online degree at Edinburgh. 12 of these leads applied for an online degree and 5 matriculated in 24/25.
- Coursera is a major source of registrants for online learning open days and rivals our paid advertising campaign as one of the top sources for traffic.
  - 51% of visits to the October online learning open day landing page were from Coursera.
  - 14% of online learning open day registrants in 2025 were former/current MOOC learners.
- Emails to Coursera UoE learners also drive web traffic, with more than a quarter of traffic on the postgraduate online website coming via this route.
- Finally, we ask applicants to PG degrees how they heard about their programme. Those citing 'via a MOOC' as their answer has remained steady year-on-year at around 1%. Hearing about their degree via a MOOC is more common for Schools with MOOC portfolios, for example PPLS, who have a large suite of philosophy courses: *"Searching for a course to follow my BA Theology. This led to a Coursera short course series of the same name. Philosophy and Science, Philosophy and Religion."* - degree applicant

Due to the high volume of learners on UoE MOOCs, this community of learners is a valuable pipeline for the University to nurture. Although much smaller numbers apply and matriculate, the MOOC platforms remain valuable sources for leads and for generating wider interest in the University and its degrees.

### **Resource implications**

26. There are no specific resource implications from this paper.

### **Risk management**

27. There are no specific risks directly resulting from this paper.

28. All Short Online Courses production projects includes risk and issue management appropriate for that course.

### **Equality & diversity**

29. There are no specific Equality and diversity issues resulting directly from this paper.

30. All Short Online Courses production projects consider equality and diversity within the design and build of the courses.

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

31. Production of each course will continue and promotion and communication of individual Short Online Courses launches will be managed with each project.

**Authors**

*Fiona Buckland, Mark Mather, Nikki Stuart, Lauren Johnston Smith and Luke Howard (19-11-2025)*

[course-production-team@ed.ac.uk](mailto:course-production-team@ed.ac.uk)

**Freedom of Information - Closed - Commercial in Confidence**

## Appendix 1: Short Course Strategy Group Membership 2025

The current membership of the Short Course Strategy Group which oversees all of the University's non-credited short course portfolios:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>
Melissa Highton	Chair Assistant Principal Online and Open Education
Jenny Hoy	Co-Chair Head of School, Centre for Open Learning
Heather MacBain	Interim Deputy Director of Marketing, CAM
Laura Wardrop	Vet School Representative - CPD Officer
Liz Grant	Assistant Principal Global Health
Stuart Nicol	Head of eLearning
International Deans (TBC)	Vice Principal International
Marion Thain (TBC)	College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences representative
Chris Sangwin	Science and Engineering Rep
Laura Cattell	Head of Widening Participation
Rachelle Norry	Alumni representative
Gemma Gourlay	Head of Social Impact, Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability.
Jenny Britton	Head of Executive Development, Business School
Michelle Evans	USHER Institute
Helen McMillan	Una Futura (formerly Una Europa) Portfolio
Nichola Kett	Academic Policy Manager & head, Enhancement Team, Academic Services
Robbie Bickerton	Bayes Centre

## Appendix 2: Platform Strategy



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

### Learning Platform Strategy

Matching the right platforms to your learning activities

People and Money Learning Platform	Short Courses Platform	MOOC Platforms Coursera, edX and FutureLearn	Learn VLE
<p><b>Course type</b> Online or in-person training courses and resources for staff, including mandatory and compliance training and digital skills.</p> <p><b>Who learns here?</b> University of Edinburgh staff only.</p> <p><b>Benefits to staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All HR-related functions, including training, in one place.</li> <li>• Can link to HR record.</li> <li>• Easy access via People &amp; Money.</li> </ul> <p><b>Benefits to University</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Automatic recording of course completion and update to staff member's HR record.</li> <li>• Managers can push relevant courses to employees.</li> <li>• Effective reporting on training, including mandatory and compliance training.</li> </ul> <p><b>Size and scale</b> One-stop shop for staff learning, with 800+ courses delivered by our Learning Providers (including Digital Skills).</p>	<p><b>Course type</b> A University-run service for all lifelong learning and continuing professional development courses with multiple delivery modes.</p> <p><b>Who learns here?</b> Local or global learners seeking non-credited courses.</p> <p><b>Benefits to learners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-stop shop for all short courses.</li> <li>• Learners can search, create an account, enrol and pay.</li> <li>• Purpose-built platform for non-credited courses.</li> </ul> <p><b>Benefits to University</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No visitor account required for non-matriculated learners, reducing the administrative burden.</li> <li>• Platform enables reporting on this area of business.</li> <li>• Income retained in-house</li> </ul> <p><b>Size and scale</b> 500+ existing short courses will move to this new platform from 2025 and any new courses will be added here in the future.</p>	<p><b>Course type</b> Online not-for-credit courses designed for learning at scale. Open-licensed and strategically-aligned. Provided in partnership with external providers.</p> <p><b>Who learns here?</b> Global online learners.</p> <p><b>Benefits to learners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some course content free to learners, with option to upgrade for a certificate.</li> <li>• Study anywhere in the world.</li> <li>• Learners can engage with and learn from a global community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Benefits to University</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global marketing reach of partner platform.</li> <li>• Wide reach, knowledge dissemination and impact.</li> <li>• Scale - facilitates delivering learning to large numbers of learners at one time.</li> </ul> <p><b>Size and scale</b> A growing learner base of over 5 million learners on 100+ courses, across Coursera, edX and FutureLearn.</p>	<p><b>Course type</b> All credited and co-curricular courses that are part of University undergraduate and postgraduate programmes (on campus, blended, online and fusion).</p> <p><b>Who learns here?</b> Matriculated University of Edinburgh students only.</p> <p><b>Benefits to students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designed specifically for matriculated students.</li> <li>• Integrated with core teaching and learning tools.</li> <li>• Extensive and dedicated academic and technical support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Benefits to University</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated with core student systems such as timetabling and lecture recording.</li> <li>• Courses automatically created and students, course organiser and secretary automatically enrolled.</li> <li>• A hub for teaching credited courses at the University.</li> </ul> <p><b>Size and scale</b> Hosts 6,000 courses with 40,000 daily logins from students engaged in on-campus, online and hybrid studies.</p>

Get in touch to discuss your course needs further: [is.help@ed.ac.uk](mailto:is.help@ed.ac.uk)

August 2025

[You can view a larger version of this graphic online here](#)

### Appendix 3: Summary of Schools/Departments delivering and onboarding courses on to the Short Courses Platform

School/Dept	College/Service Group	Courses	Runs	Enrolments
Bayes Centre	CSE	6	12	192
Business School including Executive Education	CAHSS	2	2	45
Centre for Open Learning	CAHSS	426	868	7963
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Corporate Services Group	2	8	87
Edinburgh Global	University Secretary's' Group	1	2	173
Clinical Education	CMVM	7	19	1352
Clinical Research Facility	CMVM	6	9	80
Usher Institute	CMVM	10	19	1523
Learning, Teaching and Web Services	Information Services Group	1	1	20
Moray House School of Education and Sport	CAHSS	6	9	63
Social and Political Science	CAHSS	1	1	10
Health in Social Sciences	CAHSS	2	2	14
Law	CAHSS	6	8	104
<b>Total</b>		<b>476</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>11626</b>

#### Areas currently onboarding to SCP

School/Dept	College/ Service Group	Status
Confucius Institute	Affiliation to Edinburgh Global /	Trained and Seeking Board of Studies Approval for portfolio of courses.
Bioresearch and Veterinary Services	Corporate Service Group	Trained and setting up courses on the platform.
CALL Scotland (MHSES)	CAHSS	Trained and starting to set up courses.
Vet School	CMVM	Trained and setting up courses on the platform

## Appendix 4: Short Online Courses Portfolio overview, November 2025

### Portfolio summary data

Number of courses, learner enrolments and certificates for each Short Online Courses platform until end of September 2025.

	Sept 2024			Mar 2025			Sept 2025		
Platform	Courses	Enrolment	Certificates	Courses	Enrolment	Certificates	Courses	Enrolment	Certificates
Coursera	53	4,412,770	49,564	53	4,543,815	51,525	54	4,645,317	53,634
Edx	38	428,549	20,569	38	20,991	20,991	38	461,940	21,774
FutureLearn	29	326,036	4,005	29	4,075	4,075	29	331,246	4,051
	<b>120</b>	<b>5,167,355</b>	<b>74,138</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>5,321,404</b>	<b>76,591</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>5,438,503</b>	<b>79,459</b>

### New courses launched in 2024-2025

Name	School / Centre	Platform	Started	Enrolments to Sept 25	Certificates to Sept 25
Climate Change: Carbon Capture and Storage (Chinese)	School of GeoSciences	edX	5/11/24	347	17
		Coursera	5/11/24	72	0
Climate Solutions: Mexico	School of GeoSciences	Future Learn	26/02/24	145	1
		Coursera	7/10/24	106	1
Learning for Sustainable Futures	Moray House School of Education and Sport	Coursera	06/10/25	546	0
Learning for a Sustainable Future: Live at COP30	Moray House School of Education and Sport	Coursera	10/11/25	463	0
Learning for a Sustainable Future: Live at COP29	Moray House School of Education and Sport	Coursera	11/11/24	4,843	18
Observing Earth from Space	School of GeoSciences	Future Learn	25/10/21	1,948	53
		Coursera	28/04/25	739	17

Approved courses in production to be launched 2025-26

Name	School/Centre	Status	Launches	Platform
Teaching Teachers: Strategies for Mentoring Student Teachers	Moray House School of Education and Sport	In-dev	Spring 2026	Future Learn
Responsible AI Innovation for SMEs	Bayes Centre	In-dev	Jan 2026	Coursera and EdX

## Appendix 5: Example MOOC Learner Course Feedback Summary

### Fundamentals of Music Theory – Learner Feedback

Platform – Coursera

Feedback Period – February 2025 – July 2025

Total number of respondents - 233

#### Summary

Learners found the course enriching, with many gaining a strong foundation in music theory and improving their ability to read and analyse music. While some felt the course became a bit challenging toward the later modules, they still appreciated the instructors' expertise and the depth of the content. Despite challenges, the course generally inspired learners to continue exploring music theory and to apply their knowledge in both practical and creative ways.

#### ID Recommendations

Based on learner feedback indicating that the course becomes particularly challenging in the later modules, it would be beneficial to review the content with a focus on providing clearer explanations and simplifying certain elements where possible. Since this is a beginner's course, more advanced topics could be offered as supplementary materials for learners who wish to explore these concepts in greater depth.

To support learners from the outset, adding the Glossary at the beginning of the course would be helpful, allowing them to familiarise themselves with key terms early on. Providing a downloadable version of the glossary could also serve as a handy reference throughout the course.

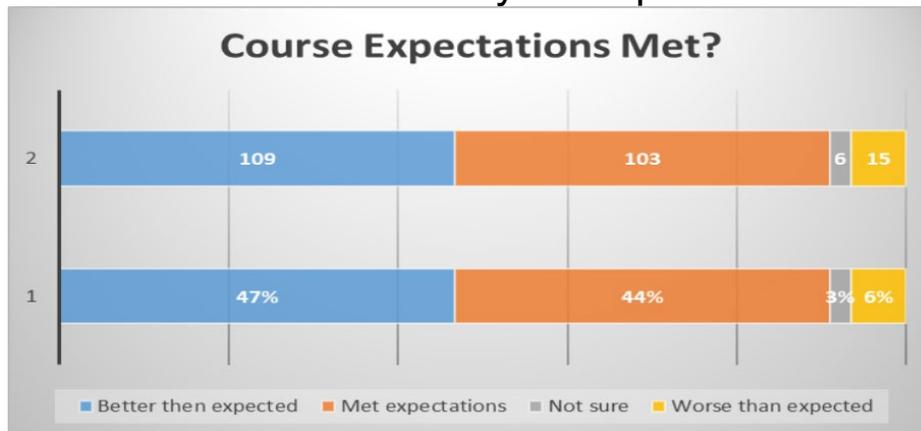
In addition, incorporating more interactive elements such as ThingLinks would enhance understanding, especially for complex diagrams and images.

Lastly, for an improved learner experience, we recommend introducing regular, short formative assessments at the end of each week. A graded assessment could be scheduled for week 3, followed by the final assessment in week 6, to better support learner progress and confidence.

Also, there is a fair bit of 'Item Feedback' that can be found in the course by navigating to Educator Admin > Course > Analytics > Item Feedback. If you select the yellow button as shown below, you will be able to read through the learners' comments on individual course items and how these might be improved.

<https://www.coursera.org/teach/edinburgh-music-theory/authoringBranch~Df6SuzYWEuTvgpDRAXyEQ/analytics/content-feedback>

### Did the Course Meet your expectations?



Most learners felt that the course met or exceeded their expectations. Some highlighted feedback includes:

- Many learners appreciated the depth and thorough explanations as well as the hands-on practices, feeling they gained significant knowledge.
- Some thought the course provided a solid introduction to key concepts like scales, harmony, and rhythm.
- Some found the course challenging, mentioning that parts felt advanced for a "fundamentals" course. A few noted that the course became difficult quickly, which could be overwhelming for beginners.
- Some found the course too focused on piano, which made it harder for those using other instruments like guitar.
- Some feedback highlighted the need for more detailed explanations and examples, especially in the later modules.

### Did you gain new knowledge or skills by taking the course?



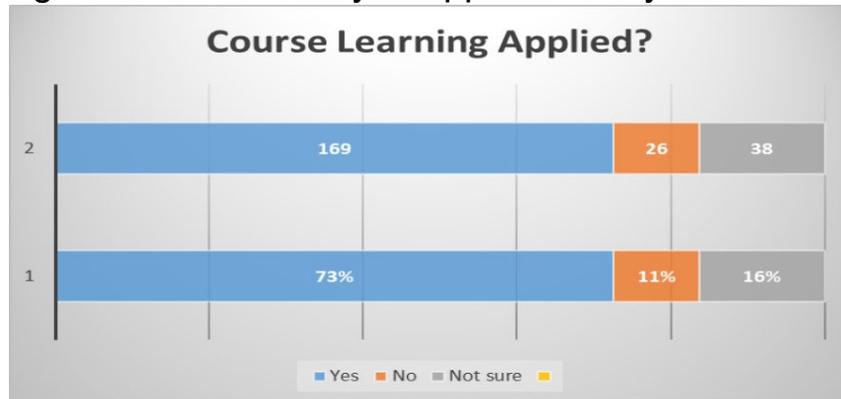
Almost all learners stated they gained new knowledge and skills of music theory concepts.

A few other points of feedback include:

- Many mentioned improved practical skills (e.g., reading sheet music and playing their instrument) which has led to improvements in playing.

- Some noted how the course helped in analysing or composing music.
- Learners often highlighted increased confidence in music skills.
- A few noted challenges in applying new knowledge without further practice.
- Some mentioned again that they found the course challenging, particularly toward the later modules (e.g., module 5).

Since starting the course, have you applied what you learnt?



A majority of learners stated that they had applied what they learned in practical settings. Some feedback from those who had applied what they had learned include:

- Many used new skills while practicing their instruments such as playing piano or composing music.
- Some applied theory knowledge to better understand and analyse music pieces.
- A few noted they hadn't had the chance to apply what they learned yet.
- Some shared their knowledge by teaching or discussing with peers.

What if anything would you like to learn next in this subject area?

Learners expressed interest in deeper exploration of:

- Specific areas of music theory, such as advanced harmony, modulation, and chord progressions. Some were particularly interested in exploring how these elements contribute to composition and arranging.
- A significant number of respondents were keen on improving their instrumental skills, with a focus on things like ear training and techniques for playing by ear.
- There were several mentions of wanting to study jazz harmony and improvisation, indicating a desire to explore music theory in different genres and styles.
- Some participants highlighted an interest in the history of music, expressing a wish to understand how theoretical concepts have evolved over time and how they apply across different musical traditions.

- A few respondents mentioned wanting to learn more about music production and how theoretical knowledge could enhance their skills in arranging and creating music digitally.

What are the key takeaways from this course for you, and how do you plan to apply them in your personal or professional life?

- Many learners found that the course provided a solid foundation in music theory, equipping them with the skills to better analyse and interpret music. This allowed them to approach music with more confidence and creativity, whether in playing, composing, or teaching.
- A number of respondents highlighted their improved ability to read sheet music and recognise musical structures. This skill enabled them to assist others in learning and appreciating music.
- Some participants emphasized the importance of theoretical knowledge in enhancing their practical skills. They noted improvements in tasks like sight-reading, chord identification, and understanding harmonic progressions, which have become integral to their musical practice.
- The course inspired several individuals to continue exploring music theory, as it deepened their appreciation for the art form. It provided motivation to further their studies and apply this knowledge to more advanced musical projects.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Learners expressed gratitude for the course, appreciating its clarity and depth. Many felt inspired by the instructors' expertise and noted the course significantly impacted their music education. Some suggested more interactive elements and support for beginners, acknowledging the challenging nature of certain parts. Overall, the feedback was positive, with individuals feeling motivated to continue their musical journey.

## Appendix 6: Testimonials from MOOC learners

### Coursera

#### **AstroTech: The Science and Technology behind Astronomical Discovery**

"I had a fantastic time with this course. I wish they had a part II and a part III, and many more. The instructors were great, the videos just the right length and the information was very interesting. Nicely done!" — Marco P

#### **Introduction to Philosophy**

"This course has been an extraordinary introduction to the basic principles of philosophy. Philosophy is often considered a difficult subject to learn and apply, but the course's structure—organized into bite-sized topics and thought-provoking questions—made the process significantly easier and more engaging. I would strongly recommend it to anyone, regardless of background or future goals, as the approach makes philosophy accessible to all learners." – Ibrahim N

### edX

#### **Digital Marketing Strategy**

"While the technical aspects are essential, the course encouraged me to think creatively and strategically, opening up numerous possibilities for solving real-world marketing challenges." - Nasir

#### **Climate Change: Carbon Capture and Storage**

"This course made me aware about the technology of Carbon Capture and Storage and how it is vital to combat climate change. I now intend to do PhD in a topic specialising in the Geological aspects of CCS." - Mohammad Waleed

### FutureLearn

#### **How to Read a Novel**

"Although not a budding author, and finding the course a little challenging at first, it served my purpose, I wanted to develop a greater understanding of the structure and development of a novel and gain experience of other authors I had not encountered before. I also hoped exposure to different genres would encourage me to widen my choice of reading material, as well as enable me to read more critically. I found the Emeritus professor fascinating as well as the author interviews, I now look forward to reading their books." – Patricia H

#### **Understanding Brain Health: Preventing Dementia**

"The level of depth and breadth of knowledge I gained was amazing. I learned so much about how the neurodegenerative diseases work and the modifiable and fixed factors involved with the risk of getting them. This MOOC was nothing short of fascinating and I found every step of the way deeply interesting." – Alexander C

## Appendix 7: Example email communication to MOOC learners

Example email sent to edX learners to promote virtual open day sessions:



**Take your learning further with an Online Masters!**



Dear edX Learner,

June officially marks the start of the summer here in Scotland – a time for many of slowing down, holidays and (hopefully) more time enjoying the sun! Wherever you are, if you're finding you have more time, why not consider an online masters or another short course?

### Introduction to Postgraduate Online Learning (23 July)

Considering studying a degree online? Not sure how to get started? Worry not. We've got our [Introduction to Postgraduate Online Learning event](#) taking place next month. The online session, happening on Wednesday 23 July, is designed specifically to give you an overview of what postgraduate study is all about and how online learning works here at Edinburgh.

The session includes:

- An overview of online learning at the University of Edinburgh
- Support and services available to all online students

**Senate Quality Assurance Committee**

**26<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

**Committee Priorities:  
Mid-Year Reflection**

**Description of paper**

1. The paper provides an update on progress with the priorities of Senate Quality Assurance Committee for 2025/26.

**Fit with remit:**

Oversee the delivery and enhancement of the University’s quality assurance framework, ensuring that it meets external requirements.	Y
In partnership with Edinburgh University Students’ Association, ensure effective student engagement and representation of student voices in the University’s quality framework.	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 is asked to note the paper and **comment** on progress with the committee priorities for 2025/26 in order to inform area(s) of focus and/or actions/outcomes for the remainder of the academic year as appropriate.

**Background and context**

3. The Committee agreed its priorities for 2025/26 at its meeting in May 2025 and these were presented to Senate in May 2025.

**Discussion**

***Committee priorities 2025/26***

#### **4. Responding to 2023 Quality Enhancement & Standards Review (QESR)**

At our recent Institutional Liaison Meeting (ILM), the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), acknowledged the progress we have made across the range of activities in response to the recommendations of the [QESR](#). The recommendations relating to oversight and planning for growth of student numbers, pace of change, implementation of policy and practice, strategic approach to the enhancement of learning and teaching, and recognition and support for academic staff development have been completed.

Immediate and significant action has been taken to establish an appropriate approach to ensure effective and consistent implementation and monitor feedback turnaround times. Ongoing monitoring will continue to embed and drive improvement. The evaluation of the new student support model is ongoing and will be the focus of the February meeting of SQAC.

Progress has been made on training for postgraduate research (PGR) students who teach in terms of reviewing training provision, reinforcing the mandatory induction and training expectation and establishing appropriate governance for oversight of the policy. However, still ongoing is implementation of the new governance arrangements to ensure that training provision is effective and of the quality required by PGR students.

We have taken several actions to support ongoing work to address awarding gaps. A strand of activity is seeking to identify good practice across the sector and initiatives that have been tested and/or effective elsewhere. We have been active participants in Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP) and a co-lead institution (in partnership with Edinburgh College) in the Supporting Access, Progression and Successful Outcomes (SAPSO) project, which aligns with the work of our SQAC Student Success task group. We anticipate that the STEP project, along with the ongoing work of our task group, will have a significant impact on the way we oversee the support we provide to all our students and will help us address awarding gaps across the University.

#### **5. Responding to the outcome of the Scottish Funding Council's Tertiary Quality Review**

In **September 2025**, SQAC approved updates to the Internal Periodic Review (IPR) process to align with the [Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework \(TQEF\)](#). The University Standard Remit (ensuring consistent coverage of key aspects of the student experience across all IPRs) and IPR Impact Analysis (the key document and reference point produced by the School for its IPR) were comprehensively revised. A new box template format was also introduced that should make it easier for schools to understand what specific responses are required for each area and therefore keep responses succinct and to the point (hopefully reducing time and effort required). It will also help us to compile and administrate the responses by facilitating systematic processing and AI analysis. An IPR Action Plan has also been introduced which directly mirrors (in text and process) the University level SEAP template. The IPR

action plan will be submitted to SQAC (instead of the 14 week response) and then an updated version will be submitted annually along with the School annual monitoring report. This will ensure that our annual monitoring and IPR processes have a formal link and should facilitate better continuous engagement throughout our two key QA processes. The IPR handbook, documentation and guidance were also comprehensively revised.

#### **6. *Evaluation and monitoring of the implementation and effectiveness of the new student support model (SSM)***

In **September 2025**, SQAC reviewed the themes arising from student support responses provided by Schools in their annual quality reports. Echoing the responses from the previous year 2023/24, Schools generally reported that the implementation of Student Advisors has been perceived positively, but there are concerns about workload challenges, the ratios of Student Advisors to students and whether adequate opportunities are available for students to have conversations around academic matters. Schools continue to make significant efforts to deliver Cohort Lead events and opportunities for engagement, but reported that these are not always well attended. As noted above, a paper on the evaluation and ongoing monitoring of the Student Support Model will be presented to the February meeting of SQAC.

The student support related issues and themes identified through the annual quality reports and IPRs were referred to the Student Support Continuous Improvement Group (SSCIG). In response, SSCIG is also undertaking a consultation of students and staff on the Cohort Lead role which will feed into a Student Support Community of Practice event in April. The event will include a set of workshops with key stakeholders to understand what additional support and guidance is needed for the Cohort Lead role so that enhancements can be put in place for the start of the 2026 - 27 academic year.

#### **7. *Student Voice***

The Committee continues to monitor and contribute to the activities around Student Voice, including through quality assurance processes including Internal Periodic Reviews, Annual Monitoring and the Thematic Review which is due to begin later in semester 2.

The Academic Planning department within Registry Services is leading on Student Voice work, with a current focus on a policy and guidance review of SSLCs, establishing an SSLC action log to surface recurring actions and themes across Schools and Colleges, and exploring what we hope to achieve with course evaluation and feedback. A report on these activities will be brought to the Committee before the end of the academic cycle. SQAC has responsibility for approving changes to the Student Voice and related policies.

#### **8. *Student Data Monitoring***

In December 2025 SQAC discussed the Student Data Monitoring Task Group that was active throughout 2024/25. New terms of reference for the Group were proposed, in order to facilitate the group continuing with piloting work to address

awarding gaps within the University. It was agreed by the Committee that there was a need to pilot action and interventions, and have improved data analysis as a long-term objective. The Group has been renamed as Student Success Task Group and will continue its work throughout 2025/26 and beyond. The Convener of SQAC will co-convene the Group alongside the EUSA VP Education.

A report on the Group's activities and findings will be presented to the Committee by the end of 2025/26 cycle.

**9. Enhance Senate understanding of arrangements and effectiveness for quality assurance regarding internal systems and change processes**

Senate is notified when SQAC agendas and papers are available to access. Senate receives notification of Committee Upcoming Business at each of its meetings and receives detailed information on Committee activities via the Senate Standing Committee Annual Report.

**Resource implications**

**10.** This paper does not propose any actions. The resource implications of any actions which arise from the discussion would need to be outlined and considered.

**Risk management**

**11.** The paper raises no additional risks. Failure to fulfil remit raises potential risks associated with the University's framework of academic policy and regulations and the student experience.

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

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

**Equality & diversity**

**13.** This paper does not propose any actions. The equality and diversity implications any actions which arise from the discussion would need to be outlined and considered.

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

**14.** Senate received a mid-year reflection on progress toward the 2025/26 standing committee priorities at its March meeting and receives information on committee business through the routine upcoming business paper. Additionally, the Senate Committees' Newsletter provides information on standing committee business.

**Author**

*Academic Quality and Standards*

**Presenter**

*Tina Harrison and Brian Connolly*

**Freedom of Information *Open***