

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Quality Assurance Committee
Tuesday 12th September 2023, 2pm – 4pm
Hybrid meeting: Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House and Microsoft Teams

A G E N D A

1.	Welcome and Apologies	
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting To approve: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 18 May 2023	SQAC 23/24 1A
3.	Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none">• e-SQAC• Convener's communications	Verbal Update
SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS		
4.	Academic Collaborations Report Closed - disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of the University.	SQAC 23/24 1B
5.	University of Edinburgh Students' Association Vice President Education Priorities 2023/24 To comment.	SQAC 23/24 1C
6.	School Annual Quality Reports 2022-23: Sub Group Report To discuss and agree recommended actions.	SQAC 23/24 1D
7.	Internal Periodic Review Themes 2022-23 To discuss and approve.	SQAC 23/24 1E
8.	Evaluation of Course Level Feedback To approve.	SQAC 23/24 1F
ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NOTING		
9.	Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review 2022/23 To note and comment.	SQAC 23/24 1G
10.	Scottish Funding Council Annual Report 2022-23 To approve.	SQAC 23/24 1H
11.	Committee Administration: To note: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committee Terms of Reference• Committee Membership 2023/24	SQAC 23/24 1I

12.	Student Support Model To note.	Verbal update
13.	Any Other Business	
14.	Date of next meeting Thursday 8 th December 2023, Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House and Microsoft Teams	

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 18 May 2023
at 2pm via Microsoft Teams**

Present:

Dr Paul Norris (Deputy Convener)	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Professor Matthew Bailey	Dean of Quality, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Marianne Brown	Co-opted member with expertise in Student Systems
Brian Connolly	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team (Interim), Academic Services
Dr Anne Desler	Elected member of Senate
Dr Gail Duursma	School Representative (Engineering), College of Science and Engineering
Olivia Eadie	Co-Director, Institute for Academic Development
Dr Jeni Harden	School Representative (School of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Dr Pia Helbeing	Elected member of Senate
Professor Linda Kirstein	Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture, College of Science and Engineering
Dr Meryl Kenny	Elected member of Senate
Callum Paterson	Edinburgh University Students' Association Academic Engagement Coordinator
Professor Leigh Sparks	Deputy Principal, University of Stirling

Apologies:

Professor Tina Harrison (Convener)	Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Sam MacCallum	Vice President (Education), Students' Association

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Deputy Convener thanked the following demitting members for their contributions to the Committee: Dr Anne Desler (elected member of Senate); Dr Jeni Harden (outgoing School Representative, CMVM); Dr Pia Helbeing (elected member of Senate); Dr Meryl Kenny (elected member of Senate); Sam MacCallum (outgoing Students' Association VP Education); and Professor Leigh Sparks, Deputy Principal, University of Stirling (and outgoing external member since 2020). The Committee also thanked the Deputy Convenor, Dr Paul Norris (outgoing Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval, CAHSS) for his contributions which have greatly enhanced quality at the University of Edinburgh.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 27 April 2023

The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting.

3. Matters Arising

The Deputy Convener noted that the agenda item 'Thematic Review: 2018-19 Review Progress Update' would now be considered at a later date at the request of the presenter (due to a family emergency).

For Discussion

4. Student Support Model

4.1 Student Support – Evaluation

The Committee discussed an update on the two core strands of activity currently underway to evaluate the new student support model: evaluation of the implementation of the model and development of a continuous learning model for on-going quality assurance.

It was noted that to date the evaluation of implementation had focussed on gathering feedback from Cohort Leads and students through a series of focus groups. Upcoming evaluation would include focus groups with teaching office staff and Student Adviser line managers, and further feedback sessions with Student Advisers and Wellbeing Advisers. A full evaluation report would be considered by the Project Board in June 2023.

Action: Student Support Project Board to share the full evaluation of implementation report with the Committee.

The Committee agreed that establishing and embedding mechanisms for monitoring the quality of the new arrangements will be key to ensuring the right support is provided to all students at the University. It was noted that Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling (SAIM) had been in discussions with academic colleagues in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS) to develop proposals for an evaluation model. A small

stakeholder group (with representatives from each College, the Wellbeing Service, the Project Team, SAIM, EUSA and Academic Services) will now take this work forward. The output will be shared with a wider consultation group, including the Committee, for review and input. SAIM and Academic Services continue to work closely on approaches to embedding outcomes within existing quality assurance processes.

Action: Student Support Project Board to share regular updates on the work of the stakeholder group with the Committee.

4.2 Proposed Policy Changes related to Implementation of Student Support Model

The Committee approved a minor change to the Work-based and Placement Learning Policy, changing terminology from '*Personal Tutors*' to '*Student Advisors*'.

5. Student Support Services Annual Review: Policy, Guidance, and Reporting Template

The Committee approved minor amendments to the policy and guidance to ensure current names, dates and terminology. The Committee also approved the reinstatement of the regular reporting template to reflect the post-pandemic return to the regular reporting process.

6. Operation of Senate Standing Committees: Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees

The Committee discussed the plans for the annual review of Senate Committees' effectiveness. Senate Committee members will be invited to respond to an online questionnaire during summer 2023 (managed by Academic Services). The Committee Convener and Secretary will review committee coverage of Postgraduate Research Student business. Academic Services will collate the information above and produce a report on the findings. If the review identifies required actions or enhancement opportunities, these will be taken forward by Academic Service (if directly related to the functioning and support of the Senate Committees) or referred to the appropriate body for consideration.

For Information and Formal Business

7. Annual Monitoring and Internal Periodic Review Themes 2021/22: University Level Actions

The Committee noted the update on University level actions agreed in response to issues identified as areas for further development in School Annual Quality Reports 2021-22 and themes that emerged from Internal Periodic Reviews held in 2021-22. Going forward, in order to ensure issues are addressed in a timely manner more detailed responses will be required from areas/individuals with remitted actions and these responses will be

considered at the next scheduled meeting of the Committee each year (usually in December).

8. Terms of Reference and Membership 2023/24

The Committee noted the Terms of Reference and Membership for 2023-24. It was noted that the following memberships positions would be filled in due course over the summer period: external member from within the Scottish Higher Education sector with experience in quality assurance; members of staff from each College with experience of and an interest in quality assurance at a School level (CMVM and CAHSS); three elected members of Senate; Edinburgh University Students' Association sabbatical officer. It was also noted that the following new members had been confirmed: Dr Emily Taylor (joining as the new Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval, CAHSS) and Professor Laura Bradley (Dean of Postgraduate Research, CAHSS, and joining as the new member from the Doctoral College).

9. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

10. Provisional meeting dates 2023-2024 (all meetings take place between 2-4pm, venue TBC):

- Tuesday 12th September 2023
- Thursday 7th December 2023
- Thursday 22nd February 2024
- Thursday 25th April 2024
- Thursday 16th May 2024

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee
12 September 2023

Students' Association Sabbatical Officer Priorities 2023-2024

Description of paper:

1. This paper notes the priorities of the Students' Association Vice President Education and the Sabbatical team for 2023-24.

Action requested / recommendation:

2. For information and discussion.

Background and context:

3. Each year a report is presented to the Senate standing committees on the priorities of the student representatives for the coming year.

Discussion:

4. See attached paper.

Resource implications:

5. Actions arising from the ideas discussed in the paper may have resource implications. These will be considered in detail if specific action is proposed.

Risk management:

6. The risk of any action arising from the ideas discussed in the paper will be assessed if specific action is proposed.

Equality & diversity:

7. The ideas discussed in the paper aim to encourage and support equality, diversity, and inclusion. The equality impact of any specific actions arising from the paper will be assessed once the actions are proposed.

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

8. This will be agreed if specific actions arising from the ideas discussed in the paper are identified.

Author

Callum Paterson

Academic Engagement Coordinator
Edinburgh University Students'
Association

Presenter

Carl Harper

Vice President Education 2023-24
Edinburgh University Students'
Association

Freedom of Information: Open

**Priorities of the Students' Association Vice President Education for
2023-24:**

1. Creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment

The current University environment creates barriers preventing many students to reach their learning objectives and leaving more to advocate for their needs to be met. Carl will be focusing on continuing to bring the voices of our most disadvantaged and marginalised students into committees and working groups on issues such as Extensions and Special Circumstances, and Assessment and Feedback. They will also focus on exploring and tackling hidden course costs.

2. Real student engagement

There are currently a number of strategic projects which will have a significant impact on the student experience at Edinburgh, but many students feel like they haven't been consulted or even told what's happening. Carl will focus on driving deeper and longer-term student engagement and dialogue in Schools and Colleges, as well as with strategic projects such as Curriculum Transformation. Carl maintains that a candid, communicative, and intensely student-facing outreach style is key in driving student engagement.

3. Ensuring students feel valued members of their academic community

Too often, students feel like they're just a number, and they don't have a voice; our policies and processes should centre students' needs and interests, now and into the future. Carl will also be focusing on developing reward and recognition for student leaders, from student representatives to PALS Leaders.

The Sabbatical Team's shared priorities for 2023-24 are as follows:**1. Tackling the Cost-of-Living Crisis**

The Cost-of-Living Crisis continues to fundamentally shape the student experience at Edinburgh; the University must do more to recognise, and protect students from, its impact.

2. Being open and engaged advocates

The University is a complex, ever-changing institution, making it challenging for students to navigate; we want to prioritise transparency within these processes, and be strong advocates for our members on the issues that matter most to them.

3. An inclusive and engaging Association

We want all our members, but particularly those who have historically been disengaged or excluded, to feel a sense of belonging to the Association and the student community at Edinburgh, and able to fully participate in our activities.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

12 September 2023

**School Annual Quality Reports
Sub-Group**

Description of paper

1. This report updates the Committee on the Sub Group tasked with reviewing School annual quality reports.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Discuss the positive practice and themes for further development at University level and agree on recommended actions.

Background and context

3. Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) approved an enhanced template for the 2022-23 reports with core questions (focused on updates on previous actions, what worked well and areas for development), a new free text box (to provide an opportunity to reflect on issues specific to local areas which are not addressed elsewhere in the report), and a specific response box to ensure that reports capture reflections on postgraduate research (PGR) provision as standard.
4. This year Schools were asked for specific reflections on the following institutional priorities: the Student Voice Policy; the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities; student support arrangements; and the impact of the industrial action.
5. To aide their reflections, student data was available at the Insights Hub and the Student Analytics, Insights & Modelling SharePoint with online training available at PowerBI help videos.

Discussion

6. See attached paper.

Resource implications

7. Resource implications will be considered as part of any proposed actions.

Risk management

8. The paper does not require a risk assessment.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

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

Equality & diversity

10. Equality and diversity will be considered as part of any proposed actions.

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

11. The Committee Secretary will inform the relevant areas of the Committee's decisions.

Authors

**Professor Tina Harrison
(Convener)**

Deputy Vice-Principal Students
(Enhancement)

Presenters

**Professor Tina Harrison
(Convener)**

Deputy Vice-Principal Students
(Enhancement)

Brian Connolly

Academic Policy Manager
Academic Services

Brian Connolly

Academic Policy Manager
Academic Services

September 2023

Freedom of Information Open

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

**School Annual Quality Reports
Sub-Group**

Meeting held on **Thursday 31 August 2023**
via **Microsoft Teams**

Notes

Present:

Professor Tina Harrison (Convener)	Deputy Vice-Principal Students (Enhancement)
Professor Matthew Bailey	Dean of Quality, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Brian Connolly	Acting Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team, Academic Services
Sinead Docherty (Secretary)	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Professor Linda Kirstein	Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture, College of Science and Engineering (CSE)
Dr Emily Taylor	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS)

Apologies:

Carl Harper	Vice President (Education), Students' Association
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1. Welcome and Introductions

The Convenor welcomed members and in particular Professor Matthew Bailey and Dr Emily Taylor to their first meeting in their current roles.

2. Consideration of School Annual Quality Reports

The Group noted that Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) approved an enhanced [template](#) for the 2022-23 reports with core questions (focused on updates on previous actions, what worked well and areas for development), a new free text box (to provide an opportunity to reflect on issues specific to local areas which are not addressed elsewhere in the report), and a specific response

box to ensure that reports capture reflections on postgraduate research (PGR) provision as standard.

To aide their reflections, student [Data to Support Annual Quality Processes](#) was available at the [Insights Hub](#) and the [Student Analytics, Insights & Modelling SharePoint](#) with online training available at [PowerBI help videos](#).

This year Schools were asked for specific reflections on the following institutional priorities: the [Student Voice Policy](#); the [Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities](#); student support arrangements; and the impact of the industrial action. The following was noted from the 2022-23 reports:

- **Student Voice Policy** – Schools and Deaneries have made considerable efforts to embed the move to locally managed course level feedback. The flexibility of new approach broadly is valued as is the link to school strategic planning. However, many Schools reported issues with engagement and low response rates with concerns regarding the utility of feedback derived from such low levels of engagement. A small number of Schools requested a return to centrally-managed CEQs, citing resource implications.
- **Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities** – Engagement with the new Principles and Priorities has been variable, broadly falling into three groups. Around one third of Schools/Deaneries have demonstrated significant consideration of the new Principles and Priorities and have made changes to assessment practice throughout the academic year, many of these with further plans for development. The majority of the remaining Schools/Deaneries have engaged in some reviewing of assessment and feedback practice over the year and identified areas to be addressed throughout the coming academic year. In a small number of Schools it was not clear from the Annual Quality report how Schools had engaged with the new Principles and Priorities or whether any actions we planned. Detailed findings are being shared with Vice Principal Students and Deputy Secretary Students to feed into conversations with Schools/Deaneries.
- **Student Support** – the new student support model has been generally well received by staff and students across the University, with the effective and consistent level of support provided by the new Student Adviser and Wellbeing Adviser roles being particularly welcomed. However, some areas raised concerns about the loss of direct contact with academic staff, with the end of the Personal Tutor role, and uncertainty as to how effectively embed the Cohort Lead role into the system of support.
- **Industrial Action** – the industrial action has impacted student experience, but unevenly distributed, with some courses and programmes more affected than others. However, where there has been significant disruption both the student (with delayed progression or graduation) and staff (in working hard to mitigate) experience has been detrimentally impacted.

2.1 Positive practice for sharing across the University

The following themes of positive practice for sharing across the University were noted:

2.1.1 Community Building

A strong positive theme throughout the reports was the sense of community and support that academic and professional service staff provided for their students and each other.

Examples include:

- **Divinity** - cross-year groups for Cohort Leads to enable more effective support for key student transitions through peer support.
- **Economics** - Student Experience Team's calendar has worked well in seeing what's on and when across the School. They can target Cohort Leads to run certain events at appropriate times of the year.
- **Education** - took steps to ensure a smooth handover from Personal Tutors to Student Advisers, with a 'New Student Support Model' communications template for Personal Tutors to use with tutees.
- **Geosciences** - embedded a Student Experience Team as part of the new model of student support. The transition from 3 student support co-ordinators to a larger student experience team (8 student advisors, 1 student experience assistant and 1 student experience manager) will significantly enhance the support for students.
- **History, Classics, and Archaeology (HCA)** - new Director of UG Engagement and Experience a new academic administrative role to coordinate aspects of the student experience.
- **Social and Political Science (SPS)** - higher levels of student engagement when Cohort Leads are also course organisers of core or compulsory courses for the year group, which provides a focal point for students.
- **Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences (MGPHS)** - in response to staff workload/wellbeing challenges tutor contracts were reviewed, enabling seven staff to move to University contracts. This provided staff members with a greater sense of job security, fostered a greater sense of community, and should contribute to a reduction in workload.
- **Informatics** - there was a special community-building effort in semester (S1) of 2022/23, where students were funded to have "office get-togethers" (of their own design) in S1, to reconnect following the post-pandemic return to buildings. There was a high take-up with 190 of the ~500 PGR students participating.

- **Maths** - Student Support Team (SST) has successfully begun implementing the University's new student support model; the transition has been received well by students, as is evidenced by 3 members of the SST being nominated for an Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) Award as "Support Staff of the Year".

2.1.2 Innovative Practice

Academic and professional services staff have made considerable efforts in very challenging circumstances to do things in new and inventive ways in order to enhance the student experience. This year's reports evidenced a wide variety of initiatives, with a number of these in relation to the implementation of the new Assessment and Feedback Principles and the Student Voice Policy.

Examples relating to Assessment and Feedback include:

- **Biomedical Sciences** - the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities now form part of the approval process for new and altered assessment in the Deanery Learning and Teaching Committee.
- **Divinity** - diverse and innovative forms of mid-course assignment to promote student engagement (e.g. 'take a photo of religion' assignment on a core pre-honours UG course, complementing the established use of visual methods on another large pre-honours course).
- **Divinity** - development of standardised marking criteria tables for short written pieces and reviews, as well as a simplified version of essay/exam criteria to help students understand what is required. Innovations such as using positive descriptors for everything above a fail.
- **Edinburgh College of Art (ECA)** – the success of work undertaken around assessment and feedback has been evidenced by excellent results in both PTES and the NSS, including a commendation in the Annual School report summary.
- **Economics** - Gradescope was successfully trialled for assessment in one Honours course and may be used as the default mechanism in future.
- **Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI)** - use a wide range of assessment approaches to facilitate learning, and making the assessment 'authentic'. Some essays and reports can be part of this, but there is much where students will work collaboratively to co-produce presentations and slide decks, generate code, craft physical objects, build digital artefacts, create videos and design data visualisations. Students often have a high degree of autonomy and there are very low levels of academic misconduct reported. External Examiners have commented on the innovative assessment practice.
- **Geosciences** - in response to the principles and to reduce variability between courses in the amount and intensity of assessment, implemented a

Course Delivery Framework (CDF), to agree norms for the amount of assessment expected for courses of different levels and delivery periods.

- **Geosciences** - the School's Digital Education Team are supporting staff to create novel assessments using learning technologies. This involves helping staff design assessments using Learn Ultra that are less easy to be answered well by students using AI.
- **Medical Education** - developed online feedback tests across the programme using Learn quizzes, Microsoft Forms, Peerwise and recall tests via Practique. These provide a range of opportunities for test enhanced learning and helped improve student knowledge test performance, especially at Finals Assessments.
- **Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences (PPLS)** - skills rubric continues to be adopted across the School with some courses providing bespoke rubrics for assessments.
- **Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (RDSVS)** - all staff who provide students with written feedback during their rotations undertake additional compulsory training (30 min online and 30 min face-to-face) to improve the consistency and quality of the feedback to students in their final year.

Examples relating to student voice include:

- **Biomedical Sciences** - student reps are invited to help design a set of core questions for the end-of-course surveys.
- **Biological Sciences** - developed a course questionnaire to be completed by students in conjunction with additional questions to be part of the course QA evaluation.
- **Chemistry** - created additional in-house templates and guidance for course representatives informed by the new Student Voice Policy.
- **SPS** - new approach to course-level feedback, in line with the Student Voice Policy, designed by a short-life working group incorporating more questions focused on student self-evaluation, which has been positively received.

Other examples of innovation:

- **Clinical Sciences** - the Clinical Management of Pain programme is an exemplar of how programmes can reshape to become less reliant on outside resources. The University programme team was restructured, customised induction and development programmes were designed and a comprehensive skills matrix was implemented to allow for sight of key competencies and identification of skills gaps and training requirements.
- **MGPHS** - Three stars and a wish, a methodology employed in the Data Science and Leading Digital Transformation programmes. Students reflect on and document three aspects they found significant, intriguing, or novel in the week's content (referred to as 'stars'). Additionally, they pinpoint one area they wish to better understand or improve (their 'wish'). These facilitate teaching by enabling course leaders to address common points of confusion

during live weekly sessions. This approach empowers students, giving them an active voice and a clearer sense of direction in their learning journey.

2.1.3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

There were a number of initiatives by Schools and Deaneries striving to promote an inclusive learning environment.

Examples include:

- **Business** - formed a school-wide Widening Participation (WP) Working Group. At UG level, of the 323 students recruited for year one 2022/2023, 86 are recognised as WP students - represents a 26.6% representation within the student cohort and 6.6% higher than the University target.
- **Centre for Open Learning (COL)** - formed a Decolonising the Curriculum working group including representatives from across the Centre. The working group has collaborated with Heads of Subject Area to provide guidance for teaching colleagues on decolonisation and inclusion.
- **COL** - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion project led by COL's Head of Humanities. The Humanities team engaged in a workshop 22-23 to share micro-examples of how course organisers and teachers might embed equality, diversion and inclusion principles in courses. The examples and discussions from this forum will be shared across COL as part of a stronger practice-sharing culture in the Centre.
- **Divinity** - the EDI committee was commended in the PG IPR for instituting a "suggestion box".
- **Education** - new school Director of EDI has implemented a range of strategies, consultations and is developing strategic plans for EDI at all levels in the School. A range of approaches have been embedded into courses to ensure that diversity is recognised and accommodated.
- **HCA** - developed an EDI action plan on reducing attainment gaps in HCA which focuses especially on how to meet the requirements of different groups of students in HCA. Plan includes several initiatives to improve the experience of WP students, and to embed WP issues across planning initiatives.
- **Medical Education** - MBChB Student inclusivity group involves two students from each year of the programme with a remit to challenge all of forms of discrimination. The group has contributed to the development of a new student reporting process.
- **Medical Education** - the student-led widening participation group has continued to meet and has been involved in the development of key actions, including the student pantry and hardship funds.
- **Medical Education** - will appoint a new role of Director of Student Experience in semester 1 of 2023 who will also have responsibility for overseeing collaborations on widening participation including student led initiatives.
- **RDSVS** - an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee was set up to feed into the PGT L&T Committee. One of their priorities is to continue promoting practices that increase decolonising and diversifying the curriculum.

- **Geosciences** - the School has continued to increase the diversity of countries from which it attracts international students, particularly to its Masters programmes, and continues to have the highest level of student diversity by country in CSE.

2.2 Areas for further development at University level

The following themes for further development were noted:

2.2.1 Staff Experience

A strong theme across reports was ongoing concerns in relation to workload pressures, the implementation of new systems and ways of working, and ultimately the impact these have on staff wellbeing and morale. The gradual rise in recruitment numbers, the onset/fallout of the Covid pandemic, and now the cost-of-living crisis and industrial action have all be contributing factors. However, reports noted ongoing frustrations with systems such as People and Money, Diversity Travel, the Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) system, and Timetabling (delayed/late release) continue to have a detrimental impact on the staff experience across the University.

In this context, reports noted limited appetite for large-scale University change initiatives highlighted capacity constraints in regard to engagement with Curriculum Transformation programme.

2.2.2 Student Engagement

Schools and Deaneries have gone to considerable efforts to engage students in dialogue about their teaching and learning and wider student experience. However, student response rates to both centrally and locally organised feedback initiatives have been persistently low. This has in turn resulted in staff frustration and growing scepticism regarding the utility of feedback derived from such low levels of engagement.

Some reports also raised concerns that student engagement with on-campus activities in general remained relatively low compared to pre-pandemic levels. There were some suggestions that there may be a link between continuing challenges with on-campus lecture attendance and poor exam performance, particularly for the cohort who began their studies in 2020-21 in the midst of lockdowns. This cohort have experienced hybrid and online delivery from the start of their programme and hence of less experience of pre-lockdown University life.

2..2.3 Assessment and Feedback

Assessment and feedback continues to remain a key priority, both following the Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) recommendation and the recent National Student Survey (NSS) results. A majority of Schools/Deaneries report ongoing plans to review or address assessment and feedback, aligning with the new Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities. Further conversations are required with these Schools/Deaneries to progress work in this area. Feedback timeliness is a key cause for concern from the recent NSS. This is very likely to have been affected by the Marking and Assessment Boycott (MAB), but since MAB also affected other institutions that does not explain why Edinburgh has performed so much worse than other institutions. The new Principles and Priorities put the onus on Schools/Deaneries to set and communicate feedback return dates to students. Many of the School Quality Reports noted inconsistencies in meeting feedback return dates, but were not able to quantify this, which should be a key focus for the coming year.

2.2.4 Learning and Teaching Infrastructure

A number of issues have been grouped under a broad theme of Learning and Teaching Infrastructure covering estates/space and IT/systems. Reports noted some difficulties accessing suitable teaching and office space particularly given the move towards new ways of hybrid working and the expansion of various professional service teams (due to the new student support approach). It was also noted that the further roll out of digital on-campus exams is hampered by the limited availability of suitable computer rooms and IT support.

Reports also noted issues arising from the EUCLID system such as 'going down' at key times (e.g. welcome week and awards publication) and inconsistencies and inflexibilities of the system that have proven challenging in response to the ongoing MAB. It was noted that these resource issues exacerbated existing concerns in relation to staffing and workload pressures and there is a need to consider these holistically.

2.2.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Concerns were raised in a number of reports about the cost-of-living crisis and the impact this was having on current and prospective students. The lack of accommodation options in the city and increased cost of living has impacted students' time and ability to focus on their studies as they spend increasing amounts of time searching for suitable accommodation and/or on part-time jobs to allow them to meet the costs of living in Edinburgh. The Medical School runs an undergraduate student pantry, offering food and toiletries to support students and a survey evaluation indicated that it was widely used and appreciated by the students (for example, one said "Thank you so much. You've allowed me to be able to make soup and stay warm while on placement").

A number of areas also noted that if fees continue to rise this may have a detriment impact on recruitment compared to competitor programmes (noted as a particular issue for the CMVM Deaneries). Furthermore, the cost-of-living crisis and high fees may become barrier to the University's aspirations to widen participation and diversify the student population.

3. Reflection on the Process

The Group commended the Directors of Quality and all the School staff who had collaborated in the process for their excellent work under very challenging circumstances.

The Group was in agreement that the new themed template had allowed for a more standardised approach to reporting while also enabling Schools and Deaneries the scope to expand on specific local issues and activities. It was noted that the addition of a specific reporting box for postgraduate research (PGR) activities had worked well and ensured a complete PGR response this year.

The Group noted that the reports represented a rich depository of good practice that should be shared across the University. It was also noted that the School and Programme Quality System (SPQS) had again worked very well and that a move to a fully online reporting process across all three Colleges would allow for more efficient analysis and utilization of the data held within the reports.

Professor Tina Harrison
(Convener)

Deputy Vice-Principal Students (Enhancement)

Brian Connolly,
Academic Policy Manager, Academic Services

September 2023

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

12 September 2023

Internal Periodic Review Themes 2022/23

Description of paper

1. Identifies areas of good practice and further development arising from internal periodic reviews held in 2022/23, and proposes responsibility for action in response.
2. This paper does not contribute to the Strategy 2030 outcomes. It fulfils a regulatory requirement.

Action requested / recommendation

3. For discussion and approval of proposals for responsibility for action in response.

Background and context

4. Twelve Internal Periodic Reviews were held during 2022/23:
 - Business School (PGT/PGR)
 - Divinity (PGT/PGR)
 - Ecological and Environmental Sciences (UG)
 - Economics (UG/PGT/PGR)
 - Edinburgh College of Art (UG/PGT/PGR) **[ECA]**
 - GeoSciences (PGT)
 - History, Classics and Archaeology (PGT/PGR) **[HCA]**
 - Literatures, Languages and Cultures (UG) **[LLC]**
 - Mathematics (UG/PGT) **[Maths]**
 - Moray House School of Education and Sport (UG) **[MHSES]**
 - Philosophy, Psychology and Languages Sciences (UG) **[PPLS]**
 - Physics and Astronomy (PGR)
5. A larger than normal number of reviews took place in 2022/23 (typically there are ~10 each year) and a range of provision was covered. Overall, there were 123 commendations, 98 recommendations and 75 suggestions across the 12 reviews.
6. Recommendations and commendations were themed and, where possible, sub-themed, to support the analysis of the outcomes of IPRs. This was done retrospectively and to the most pertinent theme and/or sub-theme (as outcomes may span multiple themes and/or sub-themes). Due to the qualitative nature of recommendations and commendations, analysis is a manual process. Themes were identified from text data and then used to code the content for analysis.

7. The Quality Team in Academic Services has identified the need to develop and agree consistent themes and sub-themes to support effective recording and analysis of quality process outcomes as a priority development aligned to the recommendations from the Digital Maturity audit carried out in 2020/21. However, the Team have been unable to progress this due to current resourcing.
8. Individual review reports are available at: [IPR Reports 2022/23](#)

Discussion

9. The following areas of good practice are drawn from commendations which are not review-specific, appear across a number of reviews, and/or align to a broader theme.
 - **Student support** was the most common theme with 19 commendations across nine reviews. These included six commendations, in six Schools, relating to the sub-theme of the new student support model: positive engagement, implementation, preparation and ambition for the new arrangements and the level of resource commitment were identified by review teams in relation to the new model.

Examples of commendations identifying good practice relating to the Student support theme include:

“School staff are keenly aware of mental health and wellbeing impacts for both students and staff. There are various support mechanisms in place and staff are encouraged to embed wellbeing in the curriculum, aligning with the University Accessible Learning Policy to design a responsive curriculum. The review team commends this as an area of good practice.” [MHSES UG]

“The review team commended the wealth of good practice demonstrated in PGR supervision, spanning academic and pastoral spheres.” [Divinity PGT/PGR]

“The review team commend the consideration that has been given to phase 2 of the implementation process, and commend the work by current cohort leads to share good practice and lessons learned with incoming cohort leads.” [Maths UG/PGT]

“The review team commend the professional services staff for their proactive and encouraging approach to developing support and services to students.” [Economics, UG/PGT/PGR]

- **Learning and teaching** as a theme was commended 17 times across nine Schools. Programme development was the most common sub-theme with five commendations. Although no specific good practice examples were identified by review teams, some example commendations include:

“Since the previous review, the School has undertaken a review of and rationalised its postgraduate taught programme portfolio. The review team commends this activity which has also helped to address pressures on academic workload.” [HCA PGT/PGR]

“The review team commend the School for undertaking a marketing review to understand and ensure the PGT programmes remains reflective of market demands.” [GeoSciences PGT]

“The review team found that the School provides a number of forward-thinking courses and commends the innovative courses and programmes, working across disciplinary boundaries that are offered.” [LLC UG]

- There were 15 commendations relating to the **Student experience** theme. Transitions was most commonly identified as a sub-theme with four commendations.

Examples of good practice commendations relating to the Student experience theme include:

“The review team commended the Academic Fair that is being organised for the students progressing from Years 1, 2 & 3. It is clear that the School has responded to the feedback from students and worked with them in planning their education and future career prospects.” [Ecological and Environmental Sciences UG]

“The review team commends the School’s strong relationships with its local authority partners. There was clear good practice in using learning from crisis oriented operation during Covid to further benefit relationships post-pandemic.” [MHSES UG]

- The **Staff** theme received 13 commendations in seven Schools. The most commonly identified sub-theme was Academic with four commendations. The over-arching common thread to commendations related to the dedication and commitment of academic and professional services staff to the student experience and delivering high quality programmes. Although no specific good practice commendations were identified by review teams, examples of commendations in relation to the Staff theme include:

“The review team commends the commitment of ECA’s academic and professional services staff. All staff showed commitment to providing a positive student experience.” [ECA UG/PGT/PGR]

“The review team commended the teaching staff for their contributions to teaching on courses elsewhere in the university and in attracting students from other programmes into the School (for example students from the law

school undertaking courses in the Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations programme)." [Divinity PGT/PGR]

10. Areas for further development

The following areas for further development are drawn from recommendations which are not review specific, appear cross a number of reviews and/or align to a broader theme. Some overarching themes also received a high number of recommendations across reviews but those recommendations were review-specific and/or so varied that a strong theme for further development at University-level could not be extracted.

Theme	Proposed responsibility for action
<p>Staff support and development (16 recommendations across 11 reviews) Recommendations covered guidance, training and support for postgraduate tutors and demonstrators; accreditation and skills training for staff</p>	<p>Align with ELIR response Tutors and Demonstrators working group Schools/Colleges</p>
<p>Assessment and Feedback (14 recommendations across nine reviews) Recommendations covered range of assessment types and assessment load; marking criteria and feedback/forward methods</p>	<p>Align with ELIR response CPT/Assessment and Feedback group Schools/Colleges</p>

Resource implications

11. There are no additional resource implications associated with this paper at this point.

Risk management

12. Failure to respond to areas for further development would constitute an institutional risk.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

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

Equality & diversity

14. The paper itself does not require an Equality Impact Assessment. The Equality Impact Assessment for internal periodic review processes is published at:
<https://edin.ac/2p3B7WZ>

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

15. Responsibility for action in response will be communicated to those allocated the role, along with example recommendations to provide context.
16. College Deans of Quality are asked to communicate the areas and the outcome of the discussion to relevant College committees.
17. Academic Services communicates the areas for further development arising from internal periodic review reports and responsibility for action to Schools/subject areas which had provision reviewed in 2022/23.
18. Academic Services will work with the Institute for Academic Development to share examples of good practice across the University.
19. Areas for further development will also be reported to University Executive.

Author

Susan Hunter
17 August 2023

Presenter

Brian Connolly

Freedom of Information The paper is open.

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

12 September 2023

Evaluation of Course Level Feedback

Description of paper

1. This paper presents a recommendation for Senate Quality Assurance Committee to oversee a review of the current approach to course level feedback. The Student Voice Policy paper presented to SQAC in May 2021, which approved the move away from centrally managed to locally managed course feedback, is attached as an appendix.

Action requested

2. The Committee are asked **to approve** a review of course level evaluation across the University. The Committee are asked **to approve** the proposed next steps.

Background and Context

3. A new approach to course level evaluation was introduced in September 2021. This removed the centrally administered Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQs), moving to devolved model of course evaluation, where Schools/Deaneries were responsible for determining the appropriate feedback mechanisms for their courses in accordance with the [Student Voice Policy](#). Schools are asked to report *“on the approach and effectiveness of student voice activities in line with the new Student Voice Policy and the move to locally managed course level feedback”* within their annual quality reporting.
4. A Student Voice Task and Finish Group has been set up through the Student Lifecycle Management Group. Through this group, academic colleagues representing Schools/Deaneries have requested that a review takes place as the devolved model of evaluation moves into its third year.
5. The University performs consistently below sector peers in the National Student Survey (NSS) question *“How clear is it that students’ feedback on the course (programme) is acted on?”* (Positive outcome - 46.2% - 8.4% below Russell Group peers, NSS 2023). In order to understand how the University can improve student experience in this area, a clearer understanding of the current approach to course level evaluation (and how effective it is) is needed.

Discussion

6. To understand how effective the new approach to course level feedback is, the Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling (SAIM) team propose a review is undertaken in early 2023/24. This review would be undertaken by SAIM in conjunction with key academic and professional colleagues across the University, and would be overseen by SQAC.
7. If approved, a proposal for undertaking this evaluation will be developed and presented to the Committee for approval. The evaluation would consider the

approach from a staff, student, School and institutional perspective, and would utilise existing data from the annual monitoring process and internal periodic reviews, as well as any new data collection required.

Resource implications

8. Resource requirements will be outlined as part of an evaluation proposal.

Risk management

9. Failure to improve student experience is a reputational risk for the University.

Equality & diversity

10. The development of evaluation proposal will consider equality and diversity implications.

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

11. If approved, an evaluation proposal will be developed and approved ahead of any wider communication.

Freedom of Information (*Is the paper 'open' or 'closed'*) *open*

Open

Author

*Marianne Brown
Head of Timetabling, Examinations and
Student Analytics
04/09/2023*

Presenter

*Marianne Brown
Head of Timetabling, Examinations and
Student Analytics
04/09/2023*

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

20 May 2021

Student Voice Policy

Description of paper

1. Attached is the new Student Voice Policy.

Action requested / recommendation

2. SQAC are asked to **approve** the new policy.

Background and context

3. SQAC approved the principles embedded in the policy at the last meeting. This version provides an update based on the discussions at the last meeting.
4. University Executive approved the move away from centrally managed to locally managed course feedback last summer.
5. An Equality Impact Assessment has now been completed on the policy.

Discussion

6. The policy has been developed following extensive consultation with staff and students.
7. The policy provides a new framework for student feedback at the University of Edinburgh.
8. Supporting guidance and a toolkit will be developed, in consultation with Schools and Colleges, over the summer.

Resource implications

9. There will be resource implications for the development of a new approach to course level feedback in Schools however it is anticipated that this resource cost will be compensated by the time saved as Schools no longer have the administrative burden of Course Enhancement Questionnaires. The Policy encourages Schools to develop approaches to feedback collection that are appropriate and proportionate – there is no requirement for Schools to make a like for like replacement of end of course feedback surveys.

Risk management

10. N/A

Equality & diversity

11. EQIA completed and attached.

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

SQAC 23/24 1F Appendix

12. Communications planned with Schools, Colleges and to students via the Students Association and Student Representatives.

Author

CEQ Review Board
17/05/21

Presenter

Paula Webster,
Head of Student Analytics, Insights &
Modelling

Freedom of Information – open

2021 paper

Student Voice Policy

Introduction

The University has a clear commitment to excellence in learning, teaching and postgraduate research and to enhancing the student experience at all levels of study and across degree programmes.

To maintain a high-quality student experience, it is essential that all students have opportunities to reflect on and evaluate their experiences of academic study and the wider service offering. To this end, we engage our students through a variety of mechanisms with a view to learning from and responding to their feedback individually, collectively and through their representatives.

Our commitment to working in partnership with our students is articulated at the highest level in the University's Strategy 2030. We work in partnership with the Students' Association to:

- ensure that students are central to governance and decision making;
- ensure that students are central to quality assurance and enhancement;
- provide opportunities for students to become active participants in their learning;
- foster collaboration between students and staff.

Throughout this Policy, the student experience encompasses the learning, teaching and assessment experience and the wider student experience, including the experience of student support services. By its nature, experience is subjective and context specific. Student feedback is therefore an important counterpart to other quality measures such as summative assessment, employment destinations or the professional accreditation of programmes and the professional recognition of staff.

Students are not a homogenous group and as such there will be a range of student voices within the University. All conversations with students should recognise that our student body is diverse and that students will have varied views on issues. When seeking feedback from students, colleagues should ensure that conversations are inclusive and enable all students to participate so that as many student voices as possible may be captured.

Students' views of their University experience and student voice mechanisms are an essential part of the University's (including Colleges and Schools) Quality Assurance and Enhancement framework.

Quality Assurance Agency expectations

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education sets out the expectation that students are actively engaged, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience.¹ This includes engaging students in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience. Formal structures of collective student representation and individual student feedback are twin core elements.²

¹ The Revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education, 2018, 3, at <https://www.gaa.ac.uk/quality-code#>.

² UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance: Student Engagement, 3–5, at <https://www.gaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/student-engagement>.

Student engagement should be strategically led but widely owned by both students and staff at all levels, with students considering, deliberating and developing informed views independent of the University. The purposes of engagement are enhancement, innovation and transformation, and their effectiveness should be monitored and evaluated regularly, including via key performance indicators. Engagement should be inclusive and adequately resourced and supported, with responses to feedback communicated back to students.

Senate Quality Assurance Committee, as a key part of the University's Quality Assurance and Enhancement framework, ensures adherence to these external expectations. Schools are required to report on student feedback and actions taken in response through their Annual Quality Report and periodically via Internal Programme Review, which also includes reflection on the effectiveness of the School's approach to student voice activities.

Underlying principles for student voice activities

- **Be enhancement-focused:** Ensuring each student has a voice, whether via representation or other feedback mechanisms, enables students to be co-creators of an improved educational experience.
- **Include all students:** It is essential that student representation and feedback activities be inclusive and accessible to all.
- **Celebrate and share positive practice as well as identify areas for improvement:** Representation and feedback should be valued by all as opportunities to celebrate strengths as well as to identify and share concerns, and student voice activities should enable both to be captured.
- **Involve students in the co-creation of feedback mechanisms:** To ensure greater engagement by students, and open, honest and balanced feedback, students should, as far as possible, be given opportunities to collaborate in the design and delivery of feedback activities³. Students should be made aware of the opportunities they will have to give feedback.
- **Adhere to ethical standards and be conducted with dignity and respect:** Feedback mechanisms must adhere to ethical standards, and feedback should be given and received in accordance with the University's Dignity and Respect Policy⁴. Students should be free to give honest feedback with no undue influence.
- **Adhere to data protection regulation:** Any activities that involve the gathering and storing of data must adhere to the University's Data Protection Policy⁵. This includes ensuring the use of compliant software (such as survey and polling tools). Where feedback results are shared, steps should be taken to protect respondent anonymity unless the student or students have consented to share their feedback without anonymity.

³ Good practice examples of

⁴ [dignity and respect policy.pdf \(ed.ac.uk\)](#)

⁵ [Policy and handbook | The University of Edinburgh](#)

SQAC 23/24 1F Appendix

- **Be transparent:** When feedback is collected from students, it should be made clear why it is being collected, what will be done with it, how it will be used and by whom. There should be clearly outlined escalation routes for when feedback cannot be responded to directly. When decisions are made, or changes are effected as a result of student feedback, this should be highlighted.
- **Be considered and responded to:** Students should be made aware of the information gathered, the conclusions drawn and, where relevant, the actions taken and why. Feedback may not automatically lead to change or action but should always result in a response and explanation.

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give open and constructive feedback• Ensure feedback is in line with the University's Dignity and Respect Policy
Course Organisers/ Programme Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer at least one opportunity for students to provide feedback on their course each year• Ensure that all students have an opportunity to provide feedback• Engage with students in the design of feedback collection and explain how students can provide feedback on their course• Listen to student feedback and let students know how their feedback has or has not been acted on and why
Heads of School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set out the School's approach to collecting course, programme and School level feedback, ensuring that the principles in this Policy are followed• Ensure that all students are offered appropriate ways of providing feedback at course, programme and School level• Ensure that students are engaged in the design of feedback processes• Ensure that School approaches to student feedback are reported and reflected on in the School's Annual Quality Report
Senate Quality Assurance Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that there are a range of appropriate ways for students to provide feedback• Review School Annual Quality Reports to ensure student voice activities are in line with the expectations in this Policy
College Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide fora for sharing best practice and resources• Advise on areas for development in the student voice guidance and toolkit

When can students expect to be able to give feedback?

This list is not exhaustive. Links to relevant policies and guidance are included.

SQAC 23/24 1F Appendix

Course feedback	All courses should offer at least one opportunity for students to provide feedback. This can be in the middle of the course, towards the end or both.
Student representatives ⁶ / Student–Staff Liaison Committee ⁷⁸	All appropriate School, College and University committees include student members who are supported to enable meaningful student participation.
School-specific channels	Schools may offer town hall meetings or other opportunities to provide feedback on School-specific issues.
University-wide surveys	Annual surveys offer an opportunity to provide feedback on a range of issues and more general feedback on how the University is doing. All feedback is anonymised and respondent anonymity is protected in published results.
Student Panel	Participation enables students to provide feedback on specific questions and to shape service design and delivery.
Have Your Say mailbox	Students may post comments about specific issues. These are shared with the relevant team and summaries of comments received are published on the University website.

Monitoring student voice activities

All Schools are expected to set out their approach to course, programme and School-level student voice activities. It is good practice for these approaches to be agreed with student representatives as part of SSLC discussions. Schools should report on their approach to student voice activities in their Annual Quality Report.

⁶ [Student representation | The University of Edinburgh](#)

⁸ [sslcguidance.pdf \(ed.ac.uk\)](#)



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Equality Impact Assessment Template

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

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

<p>A. Policy/Practice (name or brief description):</p> <p>Student Voice Policy</p>
<p>B. Reason for Equality Impact Assessment (Mark yes against the applicable reason):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed new policy/practice • Proposed change to an existing policy/practice • Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice • Other (please state):
<p>C. Person responsible for the policy area or practice:</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Job title:</p> <p>School/service/unit:</p>
<p>D. An Impact Assessment should be carried out if any of the following apply to the policy/practice, if it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • affects primary or high level functions of the University • is relevant to the promotion of equality (in terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty 'needs' as set out in the Policy and Guidance)? • It is one which interested parties could reasonably expect the University to have carried out an EqIA?
<p>E. Equality Groups</p> <p>To which equality groups is the policy/practice relevant and why? (add notes against the following applicable equality group/s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Disability • race (including ethnicity and nationality) • religion or belief

- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage or civil partnership¹

The Student Voice Policy replaces the old Course Enhancement Questionnaire and Student Voice Policies. As part of the policy development process the Review Group consulted students and staff about the existing approaches to collecting student feedback – particularly at course level. Staff reported concerns that female staff and staff from BAME backgrounds were disadvantaged under the old system and pointed to evidence in academic literature that some groups are systemically disadvantaged. The decision to collect anonymous feedback at course level prevented us testing whether students from different populations were more or less likely to express satisfaction.

The new Student Voice policy emphasises the need to consider and be inclusive of all students and recognises that there is not one homogenous student voice. The policy requires colleagues to consider how they can make the collection of student feedback inclusive so different student voices are captured.

The policy will be relevant to all the equality groups listed above as it is essential as part of our Quality Assurance processes to test whether students in different groups report significantly higher or lower levels of satisfaction or engagement and to understand why this might be the case. This supports the University in its work to ensure all students have an excellent student experience.

The policy emphasises the need to be mindful of respondent anonymity to ensure students feel able to share their experiences. Anonymity should be presumed unless students explicitly consent to their feedback being shared.

The policy has been developed via consultation with staff and student groups and will be communicated widely. Guidance and a toolkit are being developed to support staff in implementing the policy. The group who developed the policy are working with the Students Association to ensure that students are aware of the changes.

F. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome

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

Option 1: No change required – the assessment is that the policy/practice is/will be robust.

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

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

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

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

G. Action and Monitoring

1. Specify the actions required for implementing findings of this EqIA and how the policy or practice will be monitored in relation to its equality impact (or note where this is specified above).
Senate Quality Assurance Committee will review Schools' approaches to collecting student feedback as part of Annual Quality monitoring. Equality impact should be considered as part of this process.
2. When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?
Annually.

H. Publication of EqIA

Can this EqIA be published in full, now? **Yes/No**

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

I. Sign-off

EqIA undertaken by (name(s) and job title(s)):
Paula Webster, Head of Student Analytics, Insights & Modelling

Accepted by (name):
[This will normally be the person responsible for the policy/practice named above. If not, specify job-title/role.]

Date:

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

Senate Quality Assurance Committee

12 September 2023

Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review 2022/23

Description of paper

1. This paper provides the relevant Senate Standing Committee with analysis and proposed actions drawn from the responses received to the light-touch Senate Standing Committees internal effectiveness review conducted in summer 2023.

Action requested / recommendation

2. To note and comment on the analysis of feedback received and the proposed actions set out in Appendix 1, which is intended to aid continuous improvement of our approach to academic governance.

Background and context

3. The University is required under the 2017 Scottish Code of Good HE Governance to carry out an annual internal review of Senate and its Committees which carry delegated responsibilities.
4. In summer 2023, Academic Services issued a short questionnaire to Senate Standing Committee members and their responses were collated.
5. The review remained deliberately light touch, taking account of the external effectiveness review of Senate which took place in 2022/23.

Discussion

6. An analysis of questionnaire responses received from members and proposed actions can be found in Appendix 1.
7. Proposed actions for the Standing Committee, in response to the feedback from members, are intended to be proportionate to the scope of an annual effectiveness review, and the volume of feedback received.
8. Senate will receive the analysis of responses and proposed actions for each Standing Committee in October.

Resource implications

9. The resource implications of the proposed actions will be considered within Academic Services alongside other Departmental work for 2023/24. Actions will be prioritised and taken forward in line with available resources and in consultation with Senate Standing Committee Conveners. An update on progress with suggested actions will be presented to a future meeting of the relevant Standing Committee.

Risk management

10. This activity supports the University's obligations under the 2017 Scottish Code of Good HE Governance.

Equality & diversity

11. The review provides an opportunity to identify any equality and diversity issues in the composition of Senate Standing Committees, and the way they conduct their business.

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

12. As detailed in paragraphs 8 and 9.

Authors

Presenter:

Sinéad Docherty

Sinéad Docherty

Freedom of Information
Open

Report of Senate Quality Assurance Committee Internal Effectiveness Review 2022/23

The Senate Quality Assurance Committee currently has 16 members. 9 responses were received to the Internal Effectiveness Review Questionnaire equating to a 56% response rate. This is an increase when compared with 2021/22 when there were 3 responses from 12 members equating to a 25% response rate.

- **Committee Remit**

All respondents agreed that:

- The Committee remit is clear.
- The scope of the Committee remit is appropriate.
- The Committee has adapted effectively to challenges of changes in priority.

Four respondents disagreed that the Committee is using task groups effectively.

General comments received in relation the Committee remit are as follows:

- There is some overlap with Education Committee.
- The Committee has used task groups fairly infrequently which is perhaps why they have been ineffective in the recent past.

- **Governance and Impact**

All respondents agreed that:

- There are clear links between Committee business and University strategic priorities.
- They understood how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University.

One respondent disagreed that the Committee makes the desired impact based on its remit and priorities.

Four respondents disagreed that there is effective flow of business between relevant College Committees, Senate Committees and Senate.

Three of the five comments received in the free text box for this section mentioned that the flow of business between SQAC and Senate could be improved. Two comments mentioned that the flow of business between SQAC and College Committees was effective.

- **Composition**

Seven respondents agreed that the current composition of the Committee enables it to fulfil its remit and that the size of the Committee is appropriate in order for it to operate effectively. Two respondents disagreed with this.

Comments in the free text section reflected on recent changes to the Committee membership and suggestions for future changes. It was suggested that there should be an EDI representative on SQAC and that it would be beneficial to invite Subject Area level role holders to feed-back on challenges that may be encountered in implementing QA policy. One member respondent noted that they were uncomfortable about the recent increase in the size of the committee and the lack of balance across the Colleges.

Another comment noted that SQAC would benefit from more representation from and conversation with elected members of Senate.

One respondent felt that the role of the Senate elected members is unclear; the Committee has representation from each College and from a School within each College. The respondent questioned what voice the elected members bring to the Committee. The respondent included in their comment that they strongly feel that if elected members join committees there should be a limit of one member from each college - no college should have more than one elected member on a committee.

- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**

Five respondents disagreed that the composition of the Committee is suitably representative of the diverse University population.

Two respondents disagreed that equality and diversity considerations are adequately addressed when discussing Committee business.

Comments received in relation to EDI on the Committee are as follows:

- There is very little BAME representation on the Committee but also that it is reflective of elected positions within the University.
- One respondent suggested that this field required a “Don’t know” option and for room to be allowed to acknowledge the complexity of the question.
- The Committee is small which makes it statistically harder to have proportional representation of different ethnicities than in a large committee and with a large number of ex-officio members who hold their posts on the basis of applying for College- and School-level positions, this is not easily changed.

- **Role**

All respondents agreed that:

- Committee members engage fully in Committee business.
- They have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities as Committee member.

One respondent disagreed that they had received an effective induction when joining the Committee.

Induction for 2023/24 has already been enhanced across all Standing Committees.

One respondent used the free text box to share they find the Committee to be collegiate and effective at discussing agenda items. Another respondent noted that it would be easier to fully engage if papers were provided as much in advance as possible and were of high quality and clarity on what is being asked of SQAC.

- **Communications**

One respondent disagreed that they have a clear understanding of their role on the Committee as a representative of their College or Group.

Three respondents disagreed that the Committee communicates effectively with stakeholders.

One respondent disagreed that they have a clear understanding of their role in cascading information from the Committee.

Free text comments covered the challenge of communicating committee outcomes and the effectiveness of the cascading system. Three comments noted that the reliance on cascading information is not always clear or effective and that it relies heavily on the Convener or members. One respondent commented that they would like more digitised records and better digital infrastructure to support up to date flows of information.

Another respondent commented that there is a tendency in all University projects/committees to rely on focus groups for information & consultation which is methodologically problematic, and that Committee business could be communicated more effectively.

- **Support**

All respondents felt that the Committee is effectively supported by Academic Services, with five strongly agreeing.

Two respondents disagreed that the information provided to the Committee supports effective decision-making.

One respondent disagreed that committee papers provide an appropriate level of detail on the background of issues brought to the Committee.

Four respondents disagreed that Committee papers provide an appropriate level of detail on how Committee decisions will be implemented.

Free text comments included feedback that differentiated options in different questions (e.g., at all times, most of the time, etc.) would have been useful in this survey.

Two comments noted that implementation can be challenging, either with some matters delegated to task groups and subsequent reporting is unclear, or that implementation may be clear at College or even School level but not in terms of implementation at Subject Area level.

Another respondent noted that there is too much business for the time allocated and that shorter, more frequent meeting would be better for reflection, discussion and effective decision-making.

Proposed actions

- Continue to explore ways to diversify the membership of the Committee and effectively consider EDI matters.
- Clarify the roles of subgroups and task groups at the start of the year.
- Consider how committees can communicate effectively with stakeholders, including the roles and responsibilities of Academic Services and members.
- Any actions need to be considered and undertaken within the wider context of the recommendations from the External Senate review.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

12 September 2023

**Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council
on Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity 2022/23**

Description of paper

1. The University is required on an annual basis to provide the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) with a report on its activities to effectively manage quality assurance and deliver on enhancement. This annual report requires approval by Court.
2. This paper does not contribute to the Strategy 2030 outcomes. It is a regulatory requirement.

Action requested / recommendation

3. Approval of the contents of the report.

Background and context

4. The University's annual report to the SFC on its institutional-led review and enhancement activity is produced in accordance with guidance prepared by the SFC. The exact format is at the discretion of the institution.

Discussion

5. The report is relevant to the Committee's responsibility for the quality assurance framework and is attached.

Resource implications

6. There are no specific resource implications associated with the report.

Risk management

7. The provision of a high quality student experience is a high level risk on the University's Strategic Risk Register, and is overseen by the Risk Management Committee reporting to Audit & Risk Committee and Court. Additionally, failure in effectiveness of the quality assurance framework, including aligning review activity with external expectations and taking action on findings, constitutes an institutional risk.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

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

Equality & diversity

9. Quality assurance policies and processes are subject to Equality Impact Assessment.

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

10. The report will be transmitted to eSenate (14-29 September 2023) for comment and noting and to University Court on 9 October 2023 for approval. Any comments from eSenate will be provided to Court members. Once approved, the report will be submitted to SFC by Academic Services.

Authors

**Professor Tina Harrison
(Convener)**

Deputy Vice-Principal Students
(Enhancement)

Presenters

**Professor Tina Harrison
(Convener)**

Deputy Vice-Principal Students
(Enhancement)

Brian Connolly

Academic Policy Manager
Academic Services

Brian Connolly

Academic Policy Manager
Academic Services

September 2023

Freedom of Information *Open*



The University of Edinburgh

Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity 2022/23

Summary of the institutional-led review outcomes from the preceding academic year (AY) including main themes, recommendations and/or commendations

The University carries out regular reviews of its subject areas and Schools as one of the main ways in which it assures itself of the quality of its academic provision and the student experience. The reviews are carried out on a six-yearly cycle and take the form of internal periodic reviews (IPRs).

IPRs – 2022/23¹

- Business (postgraduate provision)
- Divinity (postgraduate provision)
- Ecological & Environmental Science (undergraduate provision)
- Economics (undergraduate and postgraduate provision)
- Edinburgh College of Art (undergraduate provision)
- GeoSciences (postgraduate taught provision)
- History, Classics & Archaeology (postgraduate provision)
- Languages, Literatures & Cultures (undergraduate provision)
- Mathematics (undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision)
- Moray House School of Education & Sport (undergraduate provision)
- Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences (undergraduate provision)
- Physics & Astronomy (postgraduate research provision)

In 2022/23 a larger than normal number of reviews took place due to rescheduling during the Covid pandemic (typically there are ~10 each year) and a range of provision was covered. All review visits reverted to in-person, on-campus (briefing and preparatory meetings continued to be held online). Overall, there were 123 commendations, 98 recommendations and 75 suggestions across the 12 reviews.

Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) receives an annual report in September each year on areas of good practice and for further development from IPRs and remits actions as necessary². A progress report on actions is then considered by SQAC at an appropriate point. The areas of good practice and for further development from 2022/23 reviews are:

¹ Reports available at: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview/internal-review/reports>

² Example from last year <https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/sqac-agendapapers20220913.pdf> (Paper C)

Areas of good practice

- **Student support** was the most common theme with 19 commendations across nine reviews. These included six commendations, in six Schools, relating to the sub-theme of the new student support model: positive engagement, implementation, preparation and ambition for the new arrangements and the level of resource commitment were identified by review teams in relation to the new model.

Examples of commendations identifying good practice relating to the Student support theme include:

“School staff are keenly aware of mental health and wellbeing impacts for both students and staff. There are various support mechanisms in place and staff are encouraged to embed wellbeing in the curriculum, aligning with the University Accessible Learning Policy to design a responsive curriculum. The review team commends this as an area of good practice.” [MHSES UG]

“The review team commended the wealth of good practice demonstrated in PGR supervision, spanning academic and pastoral spheres.” [Divinity PGT/PGR]

“The review team commend the consideration that has been given to phase 2 of the implementation process, and commend the work by current cohort leads to share good practice and lessons learned with incoming cohort leads.” [Maths UG/PGT]

“The review team commend the professional services staff for their proactive and encouraging approach to developing support and services to students.” [Economics, UG/PGT/PGR]

- **Learning and teaching** as a theme was commended 17 times across nine Schools. Programme development was the most common sub-theme with five commendations. Although no specific good practice examples were identified by review teams, some example commendations include:

“Since the previous review, the School has undertaken a review of and rationalised its postgraduate taught programme portfolio. The review team commends this activity which has also helped to address pressures on academic workload.” [HCA PGT/PGR]

“The review team commend the School for undertaking a marketing review to understand and ensure the PGT programmes remains reflective of market demands.” [GeoSciences PGT]

“The review team found that the School provides a number of forward-thinking courses and commends the innovative courses and programmes, working across disciplinary boundaries that are offered.” [LLC UG]

- There were 15 commendations relating to the **Student experience** theme. Transitions was most commonly identified as a sub-theme with four commendations.

Examples of good practice commendations relating to the Student experience theme include:

“The review team commended the Academic Fair that is being organised for the students progressing from Years 1, 2 & 3. It is clear that the School has responded to the feedback from students and worked with them in planning their education and future career prospects.” [Ecological and Environmental Sciences UG]

“The review team commends the School’s strong relationships with its local authority partners. There was clear good practice in using learning from crisis oriented operation during Covid to further benefit relationships post-pandemic.” [MHSES UG]

- The **Staff** theme received 13 commendations in seven Schools. The most commonly identified sub-theme was Academic with four commendations. The over-arching common thread to commendations related to the dedication and commitment of academic and professional services staff to the student experience and delivering high quality programmes. Although no specific good practice commendations were identified by review teams, examples of commendations in relation to the Staff theme include:

“The review team commends the commitment of ECA’s academic and professional services staff. All staff showed commitment to providing a positive student experience.” [ECA UG/PGT/PGR]

“The review team commended the teaching staff for their contributions to teaching on courses elsewhere in the university and in attracting students from other programmes into the School (for example students from the law school undertaking courses in the Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations programme).” [Divinity PGT/PGR]

Areas for further development (identified in multiple reviews)

- **Staff support and development** (16 recommendations across 11 reviews)
Recommendations covered guidance, training and support for postgraduate tutors and demonstrators; accreditation and skills training for staff.
- **Assessment and Feedback** (14 recommendations across nine reviews)
Recommendations covered range of assessment types and assessment load; marking criteria and feedback/forward methods.

Both of these areas are being taken forward as part of broader institutional work.

Annual monitoring, review and reporting – 2022/23³

A Sub Group of SQAC reviews School annual quality reports and submits a report to SQAC on the outcomes, identifying areas of good practice and for further development and remitting actions as necessary⁴. Responses to the additional School-, College- and University-level actions arising from the review of School annual quality reports are then made available to SQAC.

2022/23

In March 2023, SQAC approved amendments to the reporting templates to ensure that key institutional issues are reported on where required (via the addition of specific reporting boxes)

³ <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview/annual-monitoring-review-and-reporting>

⁴ Example from last year <https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/sqac-agendapapers20220913.pdf> (Paper B)

while also allowing schools/deaneries the opportunity to report on issues specific to the local area (via a free text box). Templates were also reordered to ensure that local issues/comments are considered first.

Themes of positive practice for sharing at University level:

Examples of good practice were identified in every School annual quality report. The following themes reflect the areas where there was a critical mass of good practice examples.

Community Building

A strong positive theme throughout the reports was the sense of community and support that academic and professional service staff provided for their students and each other.

Examples include:

- Divinity - cross-year groups for Cohort Leads to enable more effective support for key student transitions through peer support.
- Economics - Student Experience Team's calendar has worked well in seeing what's on and when across the School. They can target Cohort Leads to run certain events at appropriate times of the year.
- Education - took steps to ensure a smooth handover from Personal Tutors to Student Advisers, with a 'New Student Support Model' communications template for Personal Tutors to use with tutees.
- Geosciences - embedded a Student Experience Team as part of the new model of student support. The transition from 3 student support co-ordinators to a larger student experience team (8 student advisors, 1 student experience assistant and 1 student experience manager) will significantly enhance the support for students.
- History, Classics, and Archaeology (HCA) - new Director of UG Engagement and Experience a new academic administrative role to coordinate aspects of the student experience.
- Social and Political Science (SPS) - higher levels of student engagement when Cohort Leads are also course organisers of core or compulsory courses for the year group, which provides a focal point for students.
- Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences (MGPHS) - in response to staff workload/wellbeing challenges tutor contracts were reviewed, enabling seven staff to move to University contracts. This provided staff members with a greater sense of job security, fostered a greater sense of community, and should contribute to a reduction in workload.
- Informatics - there was a special community-building effort in semester (S1) of 2022/23, where students were funded to have "office get-togethers" (of their own design) in S1, to reconnect following the post-pandemic return to buildings. There was a high take-up with 190 of the ~500 PGR students participating.
- Maths - Student Support Team (SST) has successfully begun implementing the University's new student support model; the transition has been received well by students, as is evidenced by 3 members of the SST being nominated for an Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) Award as "Support Staff of the Year".

Innovative Practice

Academic and professional services staff have made considerable efforts in very challenging circumstances to do things in new and inventive ways in order to enhance the student experience. This year's reports evidenced a wide variety of initiatives, with a number of these in relation to the implementation of the new Assessment and Feedback Principles and the Student Voice Policy.

Examples relating to Assessment and Feedback include:

- Biomedical Sciences - the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities now form part of the approval process for new and altered assessment in the Deanery Learning and Teaching Committee.
- Divinity - diverse and innovative forms of mid-course assignment to promote student engagement (e.g. 'take a photo of religion' assignment on a core pre-honours UG course, complementing the established use of visual methods on another large pre-honours course).
- Divinity - development of standardised marking criteria tables for short written pieces and reviews, as well as a simplified version of essay/exam criteria to help students understand what is required. Innovations such as using positive descriptors for everything above a fail.
- Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) – the success of work undertaken around assessment and feedback has been evidenced by excellent results in both PTES and the NSS, including a commendation in the Annual School report summary.
- Economics - Gradescope was successfully trialled for assessment in one Honours course and may be used as the default mechanism in future.
- Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) - use a wide range of assessment approaches to facilitate learning, and making the assessment 'authentic'. Some essays and reports can be part of this, but there is much where students will work collaboratively to co-produce presentations and slide decks, generate code, craft physical objects, build digital artefacts, create videos and design data visualisations. Students often have a high degree of autonomy and there are very low levels of academic misconduct reported. External Examiners have commented on the innovative assessment practice.
- Geosciences - in response to the principles and to reduce variability between courses in the amount and intensity of assessment, implemented a Course Delivery Framework (CDF), to agree norms for the amount of assessment expected for courses of different levels and delivery periods.
- Geosciences - the School's Digital Education Team are supporting staff to create novel assessments using learning technologies. This involves helping staff design assessments using Learn Ultra that are less easy to be answered well by students using AI.
- Medical Education - developed online feedback tests across the programme using Learn quizzes, Microsoft Forms, Peerwise and recall tests via Practique. These provide a range of opportunities for test enhanced learning and helped improve student knowledge test performance, especially at Finals Assessments.
- Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences (PPLS) - skills rubric continues to be adopted across the School with some courses providing bespoke rubrics for assessments.
- Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (RDSVS) - all staff who provide students with written feedback during their rotations undertake additional compulsory training (30 min online and 30 min face-to-face) to improve the consistency and quality of the feedback to students in their final year.

Examples relating to student voice include:

- Biomedical Sciences - student reps are invited to help design a set of core questions for the end-of-course surveys.
- Biological Sciences - developed a course questionnaire to be completed by students in conjunction with additional questions to be part of the course QA evaluation.
- Chemistry - created additional in-house templates and guidance for course representatives informed by the new Student Voice Policy.
- SPS - new approach to course-level feedback, in line with the Student Voice Policy, designed by a short-life working group incorporating more questions focused on student self-evaluation, which has been positively received.

Other examples of innovation:

- Clinical Sciences - the Clinical Management of Pain programme is an exemplar of how programmes can reshape to become less reliant on outside resources. The University programme team was restructured, customised induction and development programmes were designed and a comprehensive skills matrix was implemented to allow for sight of key competencies and identification of skills gaps and training requirements.
- MGPHS - Three stars and a wish, a methodology employed in the Data Science and Leading Digital Transformation programmes. Students reflect on and document three aspects they found significant, intriguing, or novel in the week's content (referred to as 'stars'). Additionally, they pinpoint one area they wish to better understand or improve (their 'wish'). These facilitate teaching by enabling course leaders to address common points of confusion during live weekly sessions. This approach empowers students, giving them an active voice and a clearer sense of direction in their learning journey.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

There were a number of initiatives by Schools and Deaneries striving to promote an inclusive learning environment.

Examples include:

- Business - formed a school-wide Widening Participation (WP) Working Group. At UG level, of the 323 students recruited for year one 2022/2023, 86 are recognised as WP students - represents a 26.6% representation within the student cohort and 6.6% higher than the University target.
- Centre for Open Learning (COL) - formed a Decolonising the Curriculum working group including representatives from across the Centre. The working group has collaborated with Heads of Subject Area to provide guidance for teaching colleagues on decolonisation and inclusion.
- COL - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion project led by COL's Head of Humanities. The Humanities team engaged in a workshop 22-23 to share micro-examples of how course organisers and teachers might embed equality, diversion and inclusion principles in courses. The examples and discussions from this forum will be shared across COL as part of a stronger practice-sharing culture in the Centre.
- Divinity - the EDI committee was commended in the PG IPR for instituting a "suggestion box".
- Education - new school Director of EDI has implemented a range of strategies, consultations and is developing strategic plans for EDI at all levels in the School. A range of approaches have been embedded into courses to ensure that diversity is recognised and accommodated.
- HCA - developed an EDI action plan on reducing attainment gaps in HCA which focuses especially on how to meet the requirements of different groups of students in HCA. Plan includes several initiatives to improve the experience of WP students, and to embed WP issues across planning initiatives.
- Medical Education - MBChB Student inclusivity group involves two students from each year of the programme with a remit to challenge all of forms of discrimination. The group has contributed to the development of a new student reporting process.
- Medical Education - the student-led widening participation group has continued to meet and has been involved in the development of key actions, including the student pantry and hardship funds.
- Medical Education - will appoint a new role of Director of Student Experience in semester 1 of 2023 who will also have responsibility for overseeing collaborations on widening participation including student led initiatives.

- RDSVS - an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee was set up to feed into the PGT L&T Committee. One of their priorities is to continue promoting practices that increase decolonising and diversifying the curriculum.
- Geosciences - the School has continued to increase the diversity of countries from which it attracts international students, particularly to its Masters programmes, and continues to have the highest level of student diversity by country in CSE.

Areas for further development at the University level:

Staff Experience

A strong theme across reports was ongoing concerns in relation to workload pressures, the implementation of new systems and ways of working, and ultimately the impact these have on staff wellbeing and morale. The gradual rise in recruitment numbers, the onset/fallout of the Covid pandemic, and now the cost-of-living crisis and industrial action have all be contributing factors. However, reports noted ongoing frustrations with systems such as People and Money, Diversity Travel, the Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) system, and Timetabling (delayed/late release) continue to have a detrimental impact on the staff experience across the University.

In this context, reports noted limited appetite for large-scale University change initiatives highlighted capacity constraints in regard to engagement with Curriculum Transformation programme.

Student Engagement

Schools and Deaneries have gone to considerable efforts to engage students in dialogue about their teaching and learning and wider student experience. However, student response rates to both centrally and locally organised feedback initiatives have been persistently low. This has in turn resulted in staff frustration and growing scepticism regarding the utility of feedback derived from such low levels of engagement.

Some reports also raised concerns that student engagement with on-campus activities in general remained relatively low compared to pre-pandemic levels. There were some suggestions that there may be a link between continuing challenges with on-campus lecture attendance and poor exam performance, particularly for the cohort who began their studies in 2020-21 in the midst of lockdowns. This cohort have experienced hybrid and online delivery from the start of their programme and hence of less experience of pre-lockdown University life.

Assessment and Feedback

Assessment and feedback continues to remain a key priority, both following the Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) recommendation and the recent National Student Survey (NSS) results. A majority of Schools/Deaneries report ongoing plans to review or address assessment and feedback, aligning with the new Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities. Further conversations are required with these Schools/Deaneries to progress work in this area. Feedback timeliness is a key cause for concern from the recent NSS. This is very likely to have been affected by the MAB, but since MAB also affected other institutions that does not explain why Edinburgh has performed so much worse than other institutions. The new Principles and Priorities put the onus on Schools/Deaneries to set and communicate feedback return dates to students. Many of the School

Quality Reports noted inconsistencies in meeting feedback return dates, but were not able to quantify this, which should be a key focus for the coming year.

Learning and Teaching Infrastructure

A number of issues have been grouped under a broad theme of Learning and Teaching Infrastructure covering estates/space and IT/systems. Reports noted some difficulties accessing suitable teaching and office space particularly given the move towards new ways of hybrid working and the expansion of various professional service teams (due to the new student support approach). It was also noted that the further roll out of digital on-campus exams is hampered by the limited availability of suitable computer rooms and IT support.

Reports also noted issues arising from the EUCLID system such as ‘going down’ at key times (e.g. welcome week and awards publication) and inconsistencies and inflexibilities of the system that have proven challenging in response to the ongoing Marking and Assessment Boycott (MAB). It was noted that these resource issues exacerbated existing concerns in relation to staffing and workload pressures and there is a need to consider these holistically.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Concerns were raised in a number of reports about the cost-of-living crisis and the impact this was having on current and prospective students. The lack of accommodation options in the city and increased cost of living has impacted students' time and ability to focus on their studies as they spend increasing amounts of time searching for suitable accommodation and/or on part-time jobs to allow them to meet the costs of living in Edinburgh. The Medical School runs an undergraduate student pantry, offering food and toiletries to support students and a survey evaluation indicated that it was widely used and appreciated by the students (for example, one said “Thank you so much. You’ve allowed me to be able to make soup and stay warm while on placement”).

A number of areas also noted that if fees continue to rise this may have a detriment impact on recruitment compared to competitor programmes (noted as a particular issue for the CMVM Deaneries). Furthermore, the cost-of-living crisis and high fees may become barrier to the University’s aspirations to widen participation and diversify the student population.

Sharing Good Practice from Institution-led Review and Annual Monitoring, Review and Reporting

The reports identifying themes of positive practice for sharing and areas for further development at University level are passed to the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) to identify content for Teaching Matters⁵ and the Learning and Teaching Conference. Examples of Teaching Matters blog posts that have been identified through quality processes are tagged⁶. Good practice is also shared at College-level⁷.

Ways in which support services were reviewed

Student Support Services Annual Review (SSAR) – reporting on 2021/22

⁵ <https://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/teaching-matters>

⁶ <https://www.teaching-matters-blog.ed.ac.uk/tag/quality-enhancement-report-examples/>

⁷ For example [CMVM Good Practice Showcase 2021 - Recording - Media Hopper Create](#)

Student-facing support services are reviewed annually by a sub-committee of SQAC. The sub-committee usually submits a report on the outcomes of the review process to SQAC annually in early December, however this year the report was considered at the March meeting⁸. For reporting on 2021/22, the streamlined process was maintained and focused on impacts of industrial action and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Each service receives individual feedback on their report, including commendations and areas of good practice. As with the previous year, no sub-committee meetings were held but each service report was reviewed by the external and the Students' Association members. Common themes arising from service reports were:

- Hybrid Working: services noted the positive and negative impacts of the move to hybrid working.
- Digital Provision: services noted that the pandemic accelerated an existing trend to more digital delivery, stimulated by factors such as student expectations, accessibility and resource limitations.
- People and Money: services noted on-going concerns with the significant system, process, and policy change across the University, and in particular with the implementation of People & Money (P&M) system.

For the 2022/23 reporting cycle we will revert to the regular, pre-pandemic process and return to holding an in-person event to share good practice and discuss themes.

Student Support Thematic Review

Thematic reviews focus on the quality of the student experience in relation to a particular theme or aspect of student support which can span both student support services and academic areas. They are reserved for significant issues requiring in-depth exploration that often cannot be achieved via IPRs or SSSAR. Topics are influenced by the outcomes of SSSAR and discussion with the Students' Association. As planned, no thematic review was carried during 2022/23, however, SQAC considered updates on actions from the thematic review of [black and minority ethnic \(BME\) students' experiences of support at the University](#). Relevant actions from this review and the [Mature Students and Parents and Carers](#) review are being progressed by the SQAC Data Task Group which has been established to examine data and methodological options for the systematic monitoring of data in relation to the student journey (i.e. retention, progression, attainment data) with the aim of ensuring that all groups of students have an equitable experience during their time at the University. Additionally, the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is driving forward the recommendations from the thematic review of BME students' experiences of support at the University.

Role and nature of student engagement in institution-led review

The Students' Association and the University work in partnership to ensure that students are central to academic governance, decision-making and quality assurance and enhancement.

IPR and thematic reviews both include student members on review teams. The student is a full and equal member of a review team and, as with other team members, will typically convene one or more meetings during the review. Membership of a review team is included in the student's Higher Education Achievement Record. In addition to having student members on review teams, engagement of students from review areas as a part of IPRs is regarded as essential. Briefing material aimed at students outlines ways in which they can engage with reviews and actions taken in

⁸ <https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/sqacagendapapers20230603open.pdf> (Paper E)

response. Parallel briefings guide review areas on how to engage their students with reviews. The review area consults with students when defining their remit items.

Contextual information and key messages from analysis of data

To help meet our Strategy 2030 responsibility and commitment to ‘improve and sustain student satisfaction and wellbeing’ we use key performance indicator data on student satisfaction as reported in national student surveys. This year saw a slight -2.1% decline in overall satisfaction across the National Student Survey (NSS) and -2.9% in the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES). However, overall satisfaction in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) increased by 5.9% since the last time this survey was run (2021). In the NSS, the University performed well in the themes “Teaching on my course” and “Learning Resources”, where 80% of responses across questions were positive. The question “Staff make the subject engaging” is higher than our Russell Group peers (1.6%). The themes of “Assessment and Feedback”, “Student Voice” and “Organisation and Management” performed poorly, with below 70% of responses positive across these themes. Satisfaction with communication about mental wellbeing and support services is 14.3% below our RG peers, at 60%. In PTES, satisfaction with Resources and Services remains high (88.7%). There has been an increase in satisfaction in the theme of Engagement (1.1%) and Student Support (0.4%). However satisfaction has significantly declined in the themes of Dissertation or Major Project (2.3%) and Organisation and Management (1.2%). In PRES, over 80% of respondents are satisfied with Supervision (86.5%), Research Skills (83.7%) and Resources (80.1%), however the themes of Community and Research Culture remain low (55.8% and 57.3% respectively.)

SQAC considers a report on degree classification outcomes in April each year. Any subject areas judged to have diverged substantially from either the University average or comparators in their discipline are then asked to specifically reflect on the issue, and any proposed remediation, in their School annual quality report. This approach ensures systematic University oversight whilst also encouraging Schools to engage with the specific data on attainment, reflect on the issues and context, and then seek appropriate local solutions. In April 2023 SQAC considered the annual analysis of degrees awarded by the University in the 2021/22 academic year, benchmarked against the Russell Group and including data on attainment gaps for key student groups (though it was acknowledged that 2019/20 and 2020/21 were exceptional years and so trend data was interpreted in that light). Following two years of increases, the attainment rate for first class degrees has dropped to 41.7%, however this remains higher than pre-2019 rates. Female students continue to have higher attainment rates for first class degrees, with the attainment gap in Edinburgh slightly higher than the Russell Group overall. Students with a non-white ethnicity continue to have lower attainment rates for first class degrees, although the Edinburgh attainment gap is half that of the Russell Group. Students with a known disability also continue to have lower attainment rates for first class degrees, although this gap has been decreasing for both Edinburgh and the Russell Group. At (external) subject level, only one Edinburgh subject continues to have a statistically higher attainment rate of first class degrees relative to the Russell Group. From internal School data, around one third of Schools have a first class degree attainment rate exceeding 50%.

An analysis of 2021/22 undergraduate and taught postgraduate⁹ external examiners’ reports shows that there continues to be a high number of commendations and a low number of issues across the University. The main theme commended in undergraduate reports across all three Colleges was the assessment process, with the sub-theme of good practice and innovation (in the programme development theme) most commented on. The main theme commended in taught postgraduate reports was also the assessment process, with the sub-theme of student feedback most commented

⁹ <https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/20230427agendapapersweb.pdf> (Paper E)

on. A small number of issues raised by external examiners related to the (often timely) provision of information to examiners. No University-level action was required.

Summary

The previous year's IPRs and annual monitoring, review and reporting processes have identified good practice examples and it is important that these are shared across the University. Areas for further development have also been identified, and these will be considered and acted upon accordingly.

The University's approach to improving the learning, teaching and the student experience can be summarised in the ongoing and planned work outlined below, the pace and scale of which is being balanced according to the Enhancement-led Institutional Review recommendations and priorities and the ongoing effects of and pressures of the pandemic.

Actions Undertaken and Planned

Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR)

The ELIR Action Plan, setting out the University's response to the review recommendations, was approved by Senate in October 2021 and an ELIR Oversight Group established to provide direction and oversight of the actions. The ELIR Oversight Group is convened by the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance and the membership comprised of: Vice Principal Students; Edinburgh Students Association Vice President Education; Deputy Secretary Student Experience; Director of the Institute of Academic Development; Director of Strategic Change; and Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Academic Services. The ELIR Oversight Group formally reports to the University Executive, advising on progress and any concerns, and also provides regular updates to Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC).

The Action Plan takes a themed approach to the implementation of the ELIR recommendations in order to ensure alignment with existing learning and teaching priorities and senior leadership responsibility. Actions are grouped as follows:

- assessment and feedback;
- student support (the personal tutor system);
- strategy, growth and planning (encompassing the oversight and planning for growth of student numbers, and the strategic approach to the enhancement of learning and teaching);
- change management (and the pace of change);
- monitoring consistency of implementation of strategy, policy and practice (encompassing specifically oversight and implementation of policy and practice, and training for postgraduate research (PGR) students who teach);
- developing and promoting teaching excellence (encompassing the recognition and support for academic staff development, and promotion of academic staff based on teaching); and attainment gap monitoring.

Two of the recommendations, relating to assessment and feedback and student support, were prioritised for action over the course of the academic year and we have made significant progress in relation to these two areas.

Assessment and feedback

The ELIR panel recommended that the University "*make demonstrable progress, within the next academic year, in prioritising the development of a holistic and strategic approach to the design and management of assessment and feedback.*" In response an Assessment & Feedback Task Group (co-convened by Professor Tina Harrison, Assistant Principal, and Dr Sabine Rolle, Dean for Learning and

Teaching CAHSS, and reporting to the Curriculum Transformation Board) was established to take forward this work.

Following extensive research, external benchmarking and internal consultation the Task Group proposed Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities that were approved on 12th May 2022 by Senate Education Committee and effective from the start of academic year 2022/23, with a focus on meeting the Principles in the first year and thereafter working towards the Priorities. The Principles set out the key expectations for assessment and feedback practice (including feedback turnaround times etc.) and the Priorities set the strategic direction for ongoing enhancement encouraging greater creativity in assessment practice (including greater emphasis on: authentic assessments, formative assessment and feedback; student partnership in assessment; programmatic assessment).

To support the implementation of the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities and coordinate and govern institutional initiatives on assessment and feedback, the Senate Standing Committees established two groups in 2022/23 that are continuing into 2023/24:

- Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group – tasked to address the institutional strategy around assessment and feedback, and academic integrity in assessment. It is focusing on institutional policy around mode of examinations from 2023-24 onwards and overseeing Schools' activities to align with the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities. The group reports to the Senate Education Committee (SEC) and will link to the Student Lifecycle group, the Student Support Model project board, and the Curriculum Transformation Programme project board, via shared membership, ensuring work is joined up across key institutional strategic projects. The group is convened by Deputy Vice-Principal, Students (Enhancement).
- Assessment and Feedback Guidance, Procedures, Data, Systems and Evaluation Group - tasked to develop institutional advice and guidance on the practical management of online and on-campus examinations and oversee the development of academic misconduct procedures. It is coordinating the evaluation of the operation of examinations during 2022-23 and beyond; activities to enhance institutional data on student achievement, progression and completion; practical activities (e.g. development of guidance) to support the implementation of the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities; and developing mechanisms for evaluation and monitoring of the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities. The group reports to the three Senate Standing Committees on issues related to their respective remits. The group is convened by the Deputy Secretary, Students.

All School/Deaneries were asked to provide an update in their School Annual Quality report on how they were responding to the new Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities. The reports revealed that engagement has been variable, broadly falling into three groups. Around one third of Schools/Deaneries have demonstrated significant consideration of the new Principles and Priorities and have made changes to assessment practice throughout the academic year, many of these with further plans for development. The majority of the remaining Schools/Deaneries have engaged in some reviewing of assessment and feedback practice over the year and identified areas to be addressed throughout the coming academic year. In a small number of Schools it was not clear from the Annual Quality report how Schools had engaged with the new Principles and Priorities or whether any actions were planned. Detailed findings are feeding into ongoing conversations with Schools/Deaneries.

Ability to engage with the new Principles and Priorities as well as the wider assessment and feedback experience has been impacted by the Marking and Assessment Boycott over the academic year. This has been reflected back to us in poorer NSS scores for assessment and feedback, especially impacting feedback turnaround times. Implementation of the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities remains a priority to ensure consistent implementation.

Student Support

Another key area highlighted by the ELIR Panel was student support, with the recommendation that *“The University should make demonstrable progress within the next academic year in respect of ensuring parity of experience for students and effective signposting to support services and delivery of an agreed and consistent baseline level of provision. As part of its approach, the University is asked to develop an effective mechanism to monitor consistency of implementation and allow it to evaluate the impact of these changes on the student experience.”*

At the time of the ELIR review, the timeline for the implementation of the new student support approach was planned for academic year 2023/24. We were asked *“to reflect on whether the current timescale for implementation is sufficiently ambitious.”* We did reflect on this and accelerated the timeline through a phased approach commencing in September 2022. New taught students (undergraduate and postgraduate) who joined the University in 2022/23 in Schools in the College of Science and Engineering, one School in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine and five Schools in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science experienced the new Student Support Model. The School of Economics additionally introduced the model to years 2 and 3 undergraduates as well as new UG/PGT students. The Personal Tutor system remained in the short-term for Schools part of Phase 2 and continuing students.

Furthermore our reflections led to the full Student Wellbeing Service launching in September 2022. The Service is located in the University Student Experience directorate. Wellbeing Advisers work with all Schools and Colleges provide a layer of support between the School-based Student Advisers and the central specialist counselling and disability services. This service supports ALL students: UG, PGT and doctoral. This is a transformational investment in mental health services for our students and will provide proactive and reactive wellbeing support. The completion of this recruitment has mitigated the highest risk within the project.

The implementation of this first phase of the Student Support model has been a partnership approach with a central project team supporting College implementation groups, overseen by a Project Board, sponsored by the University’s Deputy Secretary Students.

There has been positive engagement from colleagues across Phase 1 Schools staff and students providing feedback on their experience to-date, with a view to improving the functioning of the model and the support it provides to students. The feedback has been incredibly positive (as outlined earlier in this report) and is already starting to fulfil its aim to ensure students have appropriate academic guidance and support, and personal and wellbeing support during their studies at the University. The evaluation and monitoring helpfully highlighted clear areas for enhancement which have been incorporated as part of Phase 2 planning.

The recruitment of Student Advisers and Identification of Academic Cohort Leads for Phase 2 roll out of all remaining Schools and for all taught students has been completed and training of all staff has taken place, developed on the evaluation of Phase 1. We are pleased to be welcoming and welcoming back all students with the full offering of the Student Support Model.

The Project Board will continue to meet monthly throughout the 2023/24 academic year to ensure appropriate monitoring of such a critical programme.

Strategy and Strategic Projects

Curriculum Transformation Programme

This is a major long-term initiative for the University, closely aligned with the University Strategy 2030. Academic Year 2022/23 marked the end of the scoping phase of the project, including production of an Edinburgh Student Vision that describes our ambition for the long term impact of the curriculum for our applicants, students and graduates. We are currently testing and refining a proposed Curriculum Framework (Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate). This includes a set of programme archetypes and curriculum design principles, together with consideration of the regulatory, system and process changes that will be needed to support its successful adoption over the next 4 to 5 years. Further information on the project (including a selection of briefing papers and other resources) is available from the project website.¹⁰

Student Voice

A Student Voice Task and Finish Group has been set up as part of the Student Lifecycle Management Group (which has set up eight groups to focus on areas areas of continuous improvement). The group brings together professional and academic colleagues across the University and the Students' Association to consider how we can improve our approach to collecting, acting on and responding to student voice – whether it be informal feedback, local feedback (e.g. course level) or institutional feedback (Pulse Surveys). The group is focussed on the following high levels themes: engaging students, joining up feedback, closing the feedback loop. A set of principles for student voice activity will be developed, as well as standard procedures for ensuring we respond to students about how we are addressing their feedback.

At institutional level, Pulse Surveys continue to run, however this year will contain an updated suite of questions and a renewed approach to distributing and collecting this data. A recommendation has been put forward to SQAC to evaluate the effectiveness of the Student Voice Policy and new approach to course level evaluation now that the approach is in its third year.

The University continues to operate a Programme Representative system, delivered in partnership with the Students' Association, supporting approximately 1300 volunteer student representatives. All Programme Representatives continue to receive a two-part online training and induction package, consisting of an asynchronous self-study module, followed by a live, interactive training workshop delivered by staff within the Students' Association's Student Voice team.

In 2022/23, 87% of Programme Representative completed both elements of the training, a 15% increase from 2021/22. The Students' Association continues to provide on-going training and development opportunities for Programme Representatives, through the workshop calendar for volunteer student leaders, as well as access to multiple reward and recognition schemes, from HEAR recognition to the Edinburgh Award for Student Leadership, and the nationally-recognised Saltire Award for volunteering.

In 2022/23 the Students' Association's Student Voice team introduced a Student Voice Forum, on MS Teams, which brought Programme Representatives together with the Students' Association's full cohort of over 90 Elected Representatives, responding to feedback from student representatives that they would like the opportunity to engage with a broader range of non-academic activity, particularly around inclusivity and sustainability.

¹⁰ <https://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/teaching-matters/curriculum-transformation-programme>

The 2022/23 Programme Representative handover process is in progress, but to-date, 64.5% of Undergraduate Representatives have completed a handover form, a 17.9% increase from 2021/22. The new, streamlined, handover form focuses on key themes in student feedback, priorities from the past year and for the future, key contacts, and other useful resources; all information which will be shared with incoming Representatives in Autumn 2023.

Widening Access

We continue to widen access to students from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups across Scotland and the rest of the UK.

In 2022 we launched our new [Corporate Parenting Plan for 2022-27](#). The priorities and actions in the plan were driven by the experiences of our own care experienced and estranged students at the University – they worked with researchers at the University in summer 2022 to identify the priorities for this plan. To highlight the successes we've had in attracting and supporting care experienced students into the University - in 2022 we saw 65 new care experienced students start with us, compared with just 6 in 2017.

The Access to Creative Education in Scotland (ACES) programme in Edinburgh works with 73 schools in south east Scotland to support learners into creative degrees at University. This year ACES students at the University of Edinburgh celebrated successes – this summer we're pleased to say that there are 8 pupils who participated in ACES who are starting a creative degree at Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) while a further 2 more ACES participants are starting another programme at University.

We have reached the second year of the IntroUniversity centres in Craigmillar and Govan (and the Maryhill site opened one year ago) and in just this academic year alone the centres have reached 3593 young people through their activities - a combination of after school academic support, in school focus days and mentoring.

This year we welcomed over 300 school students onto our campus for a range of summer schools in June and July which include the IntoUniversity P7 residential (for students attending the Glasgow and Newcastle centres), the REACH medicine summer school, the Sutton Trust summer school (residential, whole UK) and the ACES Creative arts summer school at ECA. These are invaluable experiences for young people and there are high rates of conversion to applying and entering the University for those who participate.

In 2020 the University launched the new Access Edinburgh Scholarships, which support low income and care experienced and estranged students. Eligible recipients receive up to £5,000 per year during their studies. Since 2020 more than 5,000 undergraduate students have benefitted from the Access Edinburgh scholarship and have received more than £13.7 million in financial support. In 2022/23 more than 2,500 undergraduate students received more than £6.7 million via the Access Edinburgh Scholarship.

Indication of institution-led reviews for the forthcoming cycle

Please see Appendix 1. Please note that specific timings may be subject to change to reflect schedules in Schools.

List of subject areas/programmes reviewed by other bodies

Please see Appendix 2 for all programmes successfully reviewed and accredited/reaccredited in 2022/23 by professional bodies.

Appendix 1 - Internal Periodic Review forward schedule

2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biomedical Sciences (Undergraduate & Postgraduate Taught provision, inc Zhejiang) • Chemistry (Postgraduate Research provision) • Clinical Sciences (Postgraduate Taught Provision) • Engineering (Postgraduate Research provision) • Medicine (Undergraduate provision) • Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences (Postgraduate Taught Provision) • Physics and Astronomy (Undergraduate & Postgraduate Taught provision) • Social and Political Science (all undergraduate provision) ¹¹
2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earth Sciences (Undergraduate provision) • Edinburgh College of Art (Postgraduate Taught & Postgraduate Research Provision) • Engineering (Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught provision) • GeoSciences (Postgraduate Research Provision) • College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (Postgraduate Research provision)
2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business School (Undergraduate provision) • Centre for Open Learning (Undergraduate provision) • Chemistry (Undergraduate provision) • Divinity (Undergraduate provision) • Geography (Undergraduate provision) • Informatics (Postgraduate Research Provision) • Literatures, Languages and Cultures (Postgraduate Taught & Postgraduate Research Provision) • Social and Political Science (Postgraduate Research Provision)
2026/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical Education (Postgraduate Taught provision) • Mathematics (Postgraduate Research Provision) • Moray House School of Education and Sport (Postgraduate Research & Postgraduate Taught provision) • Oral Health Sciences (Undergraduate provision) • School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences (Postgraduate Research & Postgraduate Taught provision)

¹¹ To include Politics & International Relations, Social Anthropology, Sociology & Sustainable Development, Social Policy, Social Work (which will include the Master of Social Work programme)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Social and Political Science (Postgraduate Taught provision)
2027/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological Sciences (postgraduate research provision) • Biological Sciences (undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision) • Data Science, Technology and Innovation online distance learning programme (postgraduate taught provision) • Health in Social Science (including Nursing undergraduate provision, postgraduate taught & postgraduate research provision) • History, Classics and Archaeology (all undergraduate provision) • Informatics (undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision) • Law (undergraduate, postgraduate taught & postgraduate research provision) • Moray House School of Education and Sport (postgraduate taught & postgraduate research provision) • The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (postgraduate taught provision) • The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (undergraduate provision)

Appendix 2 – Degree Programmes Accredited in 2022/23

Accredited Programmes	Accrediting Body Name
Online MBA	Association of MBAs (AMBA)
English for Academic Purposes Summer Pre-sessional Programme	The British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes (BALEAP)
EMiLA Landscape Architecture (European Masters)	Landscape Institute (LI)
MA (Hons) Landscape Architecture	Landscape Institute (LI)
MLA Landscape Architecture - 21 Months	Landscape Institute (LI)
MSc Landscape Architecture	Landscape Institute (LI)
BA Architecture	Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
MA (Hons) Architecture	Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
MArch Architecture - 21 Months	Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
BSc (Hons) Environmental GeoSciences	Institution for Environmental Sciences (IES)
DClinPsychol Clinical Psychology (Core Programme Route) - 3 Years	British Psychological Society (BPS)
PgCert Academic Practice (ICL) - 1-3 Years	Higher Education Academy (HEA)

Removed Accreditations

The following programmes are no longer accredited and/or no longer offered by the University:

Programme Name	Name of Accrediting Body	Status
MBA Business Administration - 16 Months	Association of MBAs (AMBA)	Programme is now closed
MSc Transfusion, Transplantation and Tissue Banking - 3 Years	Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS)	Programme is now closed
MSc Architectural Project Management (Online Learning) (ICL) - 7 Years	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)	Programme is now closed
PgCert Digital Education (Online Learning) (ICL) 1-2 Years	Higher Education Academy (HEA)	Programme no longer offers the accreditation route
BSc (Hons) Physics and Music	Institute of Physics (IOP)	Programme is now closed

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

12 September 2023

Terms of Reference and Membership 2023/24

Description of paper:

1. This paper notes the Committee's Terms of Reference and Membership for 2023-24.

Action requested / recommendation:

2. For information.

Background and context:

3. Presented to the Committee annually for information and reference.

Discussion:

4. The Committee is invited to note the Terms of Reference and Membership, with particular attention to the Terms of Office due to end during the summer period.

Resource implications:

5. Resource implications would be considered as part of any proposed actions in relation to the Committee priorities.

Risk management:

6. Risks will be considered as part of any proposed actions in relation to the Committee priorities.

Equality & diversity:

7. Equality and diversity will be integral to the Committee's work.

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

8. Committee Secretary will feedback comments to relevant areas.

Author

Sinead Docherty,
Academic Services
May 2023

Presenter

Sinead Docherty,
Academic Services

Freedom of Information: Open

Terms of Reference and Membership 2023/24

1. Purpose and Role

- 1.1 The Quality Assurance Committee is responsible, on behalf of Senate, for the framework which assures standards and enhances the quality of the student learning experience.

2. Remit

- 2.1 Oversee the delivery and enhancement of the University's quality assurance framework, ensuring that it meets external requirements.
- 2.2 In partnership with Edinburgh University Students' Association, ensure effective student engagement and representation of student voices in the University's quality framework.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 Identify areas for innovation and enhancement of the student experience and ensure that these inform Senate Education Committee's policy development.
- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 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.

3. Operation

- 3.1 The Committee reports to Senate, acting with delegated authority to take decisions in the area of quality assurance and academic standards.
- 3.2 The Committee may bring matters to the attention of the University Executive as required.
- 3.3 The Committee has the following sub-committees:
- Student Support Service Sub-Committee - with delegated authority for monitoring the quality assurance of student support services in relation to the student learning experience
 - School Annual Quality Report Sub Group - with delegated authority to review reports and prepare recommendations for consideration by the Committee
- 3.4 The Committee will meet at least four times each academic year and will interact electronically as necessary.
- 3.5 The Committee will follow a schedule of business set prior to the start of the academic year which is agreed through consultation with Senate, the Conveners of the other Senate Committees, and other relevant members of the community.

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3.6 From time to time, the Committee will establish working groups or commission individuals to carry out detailed work under the Committee's oversight.

4. Composition

Role	Term	2023/24 Membership
Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance	Ex Officio	Professor Tina Harrison, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance (Convener)
An external member from within the Scottish Higher Education sector with experience in quality assurance	3 years (with no reappointment until 4 years has elapsed)	Professor Nazira Karodia, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Vice Principal of Learning & Teaching, Edinburgh Napier University
College Deans of Quality (or equivalent)	Ex Officio	Professor Matthew Bailey, Dean of Quality (CMVM) Dr Emily Taylor, Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS) Professor Linda Kirstein, Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture (CSE)
1 x member of staff from each College with experience of and an interest in quality assurance at a School level		Dr Gail Duursma, Director of Quality, School of Engineering (CSE) Dr Neneh Rowa-Dewar, Director of Quality, School of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Science (CMVM) Dr Anne Desler, Director of Quality Assurance & Curriculum Approval, ECA (CAHSS)
3 x elected member of Senate	1 year	Dr Michael Barany Dr Pia Helbing Professor Jose Vazquez-Boland
1 x Edinburgh University Students' Association sabbatical officer	Ex Officio	Carl Harper, Vice President Education, Edinburgh University Students' Association
1 x member of the Edinburgh University Students' Association permanent staff	Ex Officio	Callum Paterson, Edinburgh University Students'

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		Association Academic Engagement Coordinator
1 x member of staff from the Institute for Academic Development	Ex Officio	Olivia Eadie, Co-Director, Institute for Academic Development
1 x member of staff from the Doctoral College		Professor Laura Bradley Dean of Postgraduate Research (CAHSS)
1 x member of staff from Academic Services	Ex Officio	Brian Connolly, Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Academic Services
Up to 3 co-options chosen by the Convenor	Up to 3 years	Marianne Brown, Head of Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling

4.1 The Convenor can invite individuals for specific meetings or agenda items.

4.2 Substitutions of members (i.e. due to inability to attend) will be at the discretion of the Convenor of the Committee.

5. Responsibilities and Expectations of Committee Members

5.1 Be collegial and constructive in approach.

5.2 Attend regularly and participate fully in the work of the Committee and its task / working groups. This will involve looking ahead and consulting / gathering input in order to provide the broad spectrum of thoughts and opinions which are necessary for proper consideration of the area being discussed.

5.3 Take collective and individual ownership for the issues under the Committee's remit and for the discussion and resolution of these issues. In taking ownership of the work of the Committee, members must take steps to ensure that they are empowered to take decisions on behalf of academic and managerial colleagues.

5.4 Be committed to communicating the work of the Committee to the wider University community.