

The University of Edinburgh

Senate Education Committee

Thursday 14 September 2023, 9.30am to 12.30pm

Hybrid meeting: Torridon Room, Charles Stewart House and Microsoft Teams

A G E N D A

* Standing item + Committee priority

1.	Welcome and Apologies	
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting To approve <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 23 May 2023	SEC 23/24 1 A
3.	Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action log <i>link to follow</i>• Convener's communications	Verbal Update
4.	SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS	
4.2	Students' Association Sabbatical Officer Priorities 2023-24 To discuss	SEC 23/24 1 B
4.1	Student Experience Update: National Student Survey 2023 Results* To note	SEC 23/24 1 C CLOSED
4.2	Draft Learning and Teaching Strategy To comment	SEC 23/24 1 D To follow
4.5	University Firewall Website Controls – Plagiarism Sites To consider and comment	SEC 23/24 1 E
4.6	Student Online Information Security Awareness Training To approve	SEC 23/24 1 F
4.7	Curriculum Transformation Programme*+ To note	SEC 23/24 1 G To follow
7.	ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NOTING	
7.1	Doctoral College* To note	Verbal update
7.2	Assessment and Feedback Groups+ To note	Verbal update
7.3	Generative Artificial Intelligence+ To note	Verbal update

7.4	Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review 2022/23 To note and support	SEC 23/24 1 H
7.5	Support for Curriculum Development Group: ELDeR Requests 2022/23 and Closure of Group To approve and note	SEC 23/24 1 I
7.6	Committee Administration: To note <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee Terms of Reference • Committee Membership 2023/24 	
8.	Any Other Business	
9.	Date of next meeting Thursday 9 November 2023, Hybrid meeting: Argyle House Boardroom Floor K and Microsoft Teams	

**Minutes of the Hybrid Meeting of Senate Education Committee
11 May 2023
Argyle House Boardroom and Microsoft Teams
1400 - 1700**

1. Attendance

Present	Position
Colm Harmon	Vice Principal, Students (Convener)
Tina Harrison	Deputy Vice Principal, Students (Enhancements)
Sabine Rolle	Representative of CAHSS (Learning and Teaching)
Lisa Kendall	Representative of CAHSS (Learning and Teaching)
Laura Bradley	Representative of CAHSS (Postgraduate Research)
Tim Stratford	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)
Antony Maciocia	Representative of CSE (Postgraduate Research)
Paddy Hadoke	Representative of CMVM (Postgraduate Research)
Jamie Davies	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching)
Jo Shaw	Head of School, CAHSS
Mike Shipston	Head of Deanery, CMVM
Jason Love	Head of School, CSE
Shelagh Green	Director of Careers and Employability
Melissa Highton	Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Division of Information Services; Assistant Principal (Online and Open Learning)
Velda McCune	Representing Director of Institute for Academic Development
Shane Collins	Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions
Nichola Kett	Interim Head of Academic Services
Lucy Evans	Deputy Secretary, Students
Marianne Brown	Head of Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling
Callum Paterson	EUSA Academic Engagement Coordinator
Richard Gratwick	Senate Representative
Mary Brennan	Senate Representative
Susan Morrow	Senate Representative
Lisa Dawson	Academic Registrar
Stuart Fitzpatrick	Academic Services
In Attendance	
Teresa Ironside	Director of Data Science Education
Amanda Percy	Curriculum Transformation
Apologies	
Jon Turner	Curriculum Transformation Lead, Director of Institute for Academic Development
Sarah Henderson	Representative of CMVM (Learning and Teaching, PGT)
Sian Bayne	Assistant Principal Digital Education
Patrick Walsh	Representative of CSE (Learning and Teaching)

2. Minutes of Meeting held on 9 March 2023

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2023.

3. Matters Arising

- Committee Priorities for the coming Academic Year (Electronic Business)

The Committee Priorities for the coming Academic Year, which had been circulated as Electronic Business, were noted. No further comments were raised by the Committee.

4. Convener's Comments

The Convener invited the Deputy Vice Principal, Students (Enhancement) to update the Committee on the re-convened meeting of Senate as it related to the Curriculum Transformation Project (CTP). An agreement was reached to provide a fuller report on the CTP at the beginning of the next academic year, incorporating the engagement work conducted by Jon Turner. Senate had emphasized their desire that final decisions on CTP should lie with them. Jon Turner would prepare an overview paper to be sent to the next Senate meeting. The overall sense from the Senate members had been positive, with engagement and understanding of the ongoing work.

5. For Approval

5.1 Student Support Framework

The Academic Registrar presented the Student Support Framework. The Committee were asked to approve its use in the upcoming academic year and retire its predecessor (the Academic and Pastoral Support Policy). The framework provided guidelines on how student support should be delivered during the transitional year. An update to this framework would be provided to the Committee in 12 months for review and approval. All Schools had developed plans for implementing the model. There had been positive engagement with trade unions, although they had not yet fully considered the framework. The Committee suggested cross-referencing the Code of Practice for Research Students and Supervisors in the document, and also suggested clarifying the content around Support for Study. There had been extensive engagement with Schools and they were thanked for their engagement. The Committee also noted that effort should be made to ensure that the framework operated alongside the Extensions and Special Circumstances Services (ESC) in a realistic way, as there was some concern in relation to administrative burden. The Deputy Secretary (Students) commended the work on the framework, emphasizing its flexibility. The Academic Registrar acknowledged the feedback and would address these points

The Committee approved the paper subject to minor amendments in response to feedback, and also approved the retirement of the Academic and Pastoral Support Policy.

5.2 Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group: Update and Recommendations

The Deputy Vice Principal Students (Enhancement) provided an update on the Assessment and Feedback Strategy Group. The Group had recently been established, with the Deputy Secretary (Students) leading a parallel group. The Group had discussed the position on exam formats for the upcoming year. Due to the limited evaluation of the previous exam diet, the group had made no recommendations at this stage. There would be benefit in making colleagues aware of the potential consideration of different exam formats and increasing oversight for decisions regarding in-person exams. The Group also

discussed the August Assessment Diet and recommended exploring alternative assessment formats for resit exams to reduce the need for students to return to Edinburgh. The Group also suggested revisiting the timing of assessments, exploring the feasibility of more robust digital assessments, and increased use of the overseas exam service. Further, the Group had discussed implementation of assessment and feedback principles and priorities, as well as the development of cases for the use of generative AI. There were concerns about the upcoming resit diet and the need for clearer communication and support for students. The Committee noted the need to consider the timing of exams and the possibility of running multiple exams in a day. The Director of Student and Academic Administration in CAHSS specifically suggested an amendment to recommendation number 11 in order to provide a reasonable expectation of what might be possible in the coming year. The Deputy Vice Principal Students (Enhancement) agreed to amend this. There was broad agreement with the paper, and the paper and the recommendations contained within were approved.

Actions:

- 1) **Deputy Vice Principal Students (Enhancement) to discuss recommendation 11 in the paper with Colleges.**

5.3 Tutors and Demonstrators Policy: Governance proposal

Antony Maciocia presented the paper, which originated from ELIR (Enhancement-Led Institutional Review). The Tutors and Demonstrators (T&D) network currently consisted of approximately 150 staff members and also had an oversight working group. Dr Maciocia emphasized the need for governance within the T&D network as it lacked a structured framework. He acknowledged that while some Schools had effective governance in place, others could be improved upon. Dr Maciocia highlighted the importance of addressing governance concerns before implementing any changes to the training programs. The purpose of the paper was to outline the proposed direction of travel for making improvements in the coming months. A steering group, composed of members from the Senate Quality Assurance Committee, had distilled the recommendations into five key points. The Convener sought clarification on the proposed process and stated that the current direction of travel should be approved by the relevant Committee, after which it would return to Senate Education Committee for final approval. Dr Maciocia confirmed the Convener's understanding.

The Committee noted the employment status of Tutors and Demonstrators - they were employees, and this aspect has caused confusion in the past. Discussions regarding the alignment of their employment and line management should involve Human Resources, People Committee, and the EDI Committee, with a focus on supporting the training that Tutors and Demonstrators received.

There was some concern in regards to Point 11 of the paper, which suggested changing Guaranteed Hours contracts for Tutor & Demonstrator PhD students to fractional contracts. The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences is exploring the possibility/feasibility of implementing fractional contracts for Tutors and Demonstrators within the College.

The Deputy Vice Principal, Students (Enhancement) provided clarification on the ELIR recommendation, stating that the focus was on ensuring that all tutors and demonstrators undergo appropriate training. ELIR had not questioned the quality of the training itself, but had emphasised the need for effective management processes to ensure the completion of training.

Dr Maciocia noted the comments and agreed with the suggestion of involving HR and trade union representation, and noted that any matters in relation to contracts were the responsibility of HR. Dr Maciocia reiterated the need for oversight regarding the training process to ensure that all Tutors and Demonstrators received the necessary training.

The Committee agreed with the points raised in the paper and supported the recommendations.

Actions:

- **Dr Maciocia to involve Human Resources and Trade Unions in discussions. Tutor and Demonstrator employment and line management should be discussed and taken forward with Human Resources, the People Committee, and the EDI Committee;**
- **Dr Maciocia to review ELIR recommendation and consider existing management processes as part of proposals.**

At this point, the Convener invited Dr Maciocia to provide the Doctoral College update, which was noted as Paper I. The Committee noted the update and thanked Dr Maciocia for his input.

5.4 Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) Additional Category Proposal

Amanda Percy presented the paper. The paper proposed an addition to the HEAR regarding student participation in University-level change projects. The proposal aimed to recognise and reward students for their contributions to projects, with a suggestion that students who contributed at least 15 hours and submitted a short reflective report should be eligible for recognition. The Committee were concerned about the distinction between HEAR and paid employment, and sought clarification on whether students in paid roles would be put forward for the HEAR. There was a need for refined training for students, and clarification on the expectations of the report, who would receive such a report and how it would be judged. There was also some concern about the distinction between recognition and reward. The Convener noted that work on the Postgraduate Research Student HEAR was starting, and proposed aligning it with this current proposal. The feedback was welcomed, and it was agreed that the proposal would be refined based on the discussion.

Actions:

- **Convener to discuss proposal and next steps with Strategic Change Unit**

5.5 Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy: minor revision proposal and recommendations for future development

The Assistant Principal (Online and Open Learning) presented the paper. The group responsible for the review had met several times and had made changes to the policy based on the feedback that had been received. The paper emphasised the importance of universal design, conducting Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs), and performing accessibility checks on courses and websites. The Committee suggested connecting this review with the CTP, and the equality and diversity toolkits for curriculum design. There was a need for consistency within the paper, and the wording could be refined in certain sections. The resource implications were acknowledged, and it was noted that significant effort and support would be required for implementation. The Assistant Principal (Online and Open Learning) noted the importance of engaging with accessibility audit reports and highlighted the improvements that could be achieved through these. There was a need to train and enable students in these practices. There was caution noted on overwhelming the task with the ambition of the project and the Committee suggested starting with small to medium fixes and gradually working towards the overarching goals. The Convener and the Deputy Secretary (Students) would look to address the resource implications within the context of the CTP plan. The Committee approved the paper and the recommendations within in relation to the future development of the policy, noting that it had provided further suggestions on how the future development could be implemented.

Actions:

- **Educational Design and Engagement to consult with Academic Services in relation to consistent use of wording within policy document**
- **Convener and Deputy Secretary (Students) to address resourcing implications**

5.6 Student Partnership Agreement

The Vice Principal Students (Enhancement) provided a brief overview of the annual discussion on Student Partnership Agreement Priorities. This year, three priorities were proposed: community wellbeing and supporting transitions, transforming curriculum, and equality, diversity, and inclusion. These priorities represented a continuation from the previous year, and a pot of funding would be made available for staff and students to submit applications for funding. The proposed priorities were approved.

5.7 Minor Policy Updates

The Interim Director of Academic Services introduced the paper. It included updates to two policies falling under SEC's remit (Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators and Virtual Classroom Policy), and was primarily an exercise in updating terminology. The term "Tier 4" was changed to "sponsored students," and "Personal Tutor" was changed to "Student Advisor." The proposed updates were approved.

6. For Discussion

It was agreed that any items for discussion had been covered during the meeting to this point, and as such there was no need for further discussion.

7. For Information

The Convener noted that there were a number of items in front of the Committee noted as For Information. These included a LEARN Ultra update, the Committee Membership and Terms of Reference, and the Scottish Funding Council Upskilling Mid-Year Report.

In relation to the LEARN Ultra update, it was noted that the rollover had taken place and all spaces in which courses could be built were now available. It was noted that there was readily available training in LEARN Ultra should anyone wish to undertake it.

In relation to the Committee Membership and Terms of Reference, the link at the top of the paper required amendment, and ex-officio membership which could be updated from the Students' Association and CAHSS was noted.

In relation to the Scottish Funding Council Upskilling Mid-Year Report, the Committee received the paper with interest and noted the content.

8. Any Other Business

The Convener thanked the outgoing Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) Vice President of Education (VPE) Sam MacCallum. The Convener noted that Academic Year 2022/23 had been a particularly challenging year, but that Sam had been a great contributor.

The Convener thanked the outgoing Dean of Education in CAHSS, Professor Sabine Rolle, for her experience and input into SEC and its predecessor Committees. Professor Rolle was demitting office at the end of the Academic Year and would be replaced as Dean of Education by Professor Mary Brennan.

The Convener thanked the Committee Administrator Stuart Fitzpatrick, who had provided support to the final two meetings of the Committee for this Academic Year. The Convener noted that Mr Fitzpatrick would leave Academic Services to take up a new position in the School of Mathematics in July.

There was no other business.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Senate Education Committee would take place on 14th September 2023, 0930 – 1230. The venue was to be determined in due course.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Education Committee
14 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 Education Committee
14 September 2023

University Firewall Website Controls – Plagiarism Sites

Description of paper

1. This paper outlines options for introducing technical controls to limit access to websites hosting content related to plagiarism sites/essay mills.

Action requested

2. Committee is asked to consider the option of blocking access to websites hosting plagiarism content/ essay mills and to provide comments prior to the paper being taken to University Executive for discussion and a decision.

Background and context

3. ISG have been asked to investigate options for limiting access to so-called 'ghost writing/essay mill' services following recent student complaints to the Principal and Professor Tina Harrison. We have confirmed a control could be implemented via the perimeter firewall that will block access to external website addresses presenting 'websites that provide, distribute or sell, school essays, projects or diplomas' from the core University network. This paper aligns with the approach previously recommended to Knowledge Strategy Committee (KSC) (March 2020) and agreed by the University Executive (January 2020) when we deployed the new firewalls as part of the network replacement which confirmed the categories to be blocked at roll out (Information Security and Child Abuse) and which ones would be investigated at later dates – this analysis is the first in the latter category.
4. Apart from the issue of academic misconduct and unfairness that these sites and services present, there are increased reports of students being defrauded and misled by services and sites purporting to offer help.
5. ISG switched the category on in 'monitor' mode in January 2023 to identify which specific sites are visited and to allow us to identify the potential scale of impact if we were to block them from the core University network
6. Whilst the aforementioned control will limit access to this category of websites, the recent increase in AI capability, such as that used in ChatGPT, may reduce the effectiveness of the expected outcome. Rather than accessing 'essay mills', anyone set on submitting system generated material rather than their own work, may be able to achieve the same outcome via readily accessible tools that would not be included in the plagiarism category. As the University is embracing AI for the positive it can bring, attempting to limit its use via technical, rather than policy based, controls is counter intuitive – it is therefore assumed such considerations are not in scope of this paper.

Discussion

Plagiarism – Option to block access to specific websites

7. The list of Plagiarism websites to be blocked is maintained by our firewall provider and is updated as they receive additional information about specific sites within the category.
8. A data gathering exercise on the 'Plagiarism' web filtering category within the University firewall settings has been undertaken. Analysis of data covering a typical 90 day period suggests there were approximately 220 individual occasions where documents of 500 words or more were downloaded via the core University network from approximately 35 different websites (some sites may have multiple 'front end' addresses so the true number of individual companies behind them may be lower). The most common site visited was 'fernfortuniversity.com', followed by 'essayzone.co.uk', both of which advertise essay writing services.
9. It should also be noted there is no way to differentiate between staff or student accessing the sites, nor the intent of those doing so (research, curiosity, nefarious purposes etc). It is therefore not possible to be definitive on the number of papers, reports, submissions etc that might have been produced as a result of these visits and then misused.

Resource Implications

10. The introduction of the control within the University firewall settings will require minimal resource to implement and would be undertaken by existing resources in ITI.

Risk Management

11. The introduction of the web filtering category covering 'Plagiarism' content will prevent access to such sites from the University network, thereby removing a possible route through which students may 'cheat' in the creation of work. However, it will not affect any member of staff or student who accesses such sites via any other network connections (such as the University Visitor Wi-Fi offering, mobile devices or public connections etc), nor will it impact the use of generative AI resources such as ChatGPT.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

12. The introduction of this control will have no material impact on any of the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development goals.

Equality & Diversity

13. There are no direct equality or diversity implications from this paper as there would be no differentiation of users who would no longer be able to access sites covered by the control.

Next steps/Implications

14. There are no adverse information security concerns with this option, nor are the IT considerations in implementing this control material, (essentially, switch

the block on or not). The topic of this paper is relevant to the Committee's remit and Generative AI is one of the Committee's priorities for 2023/24. It is therefore proposed to submit this report, with any additional comments from SEC, to allow the University Executive to make an informed decision based upon academic consideration.

15. ISG will also consult with Accommodation Catering and Events about the communication and application of this access change to the ResNet network.

Consultations

16. Required consultation is ongoing where needed.
17. Paper has been presented to KSC and agreement obtained. Following consideration and comment by SEC, approval will be sought from University Executive.

Further information

18. Author

Presented by:

Alistair Fenemore

Alistair Fenemore

CISO

CISO

Information Security Directorate

Information Security Directorate

August 2023

Freedom of Information

19. This paper is open.

Senate Education Committee

14th September 2023

Student Online Information Security Awareness Training

Description of paper

1. This paper outlines a recommendation to mandate online information security awareness training for students via LEARN Ultra and including the course within their 'essential training' portfolio.
2. Providing our students with knowledge about potential information security and cyber risks, and how to counter them, we will better prepare them for working in the digital arena. This will contribute to the following outcome set out in Strategy 2030:
 - The undergraduate curriculum will support breadth and choice, preparing students, graduates and alumni to make a difference in whatever they do, wherever they do it.

Action requested/Recommendation

3. Senate Education Committee is asked to approve mandating all students undertake an Information Security Essentials training course via their pre-enrolled training portfolio in LEARN Ultra, starting from Semester 1, 2023/24.

Background and context

4. As with all users of the internet, our students face an often-perplexing range of online cyber threats in their day to day use of digital services. The cyber threat is increasing rapidly and is becoming more complex and sophisticated. Students face threats and damage to their mental health, personal lives, finances, privacy, studies, identities and their outputs. We have an opportunity to increase their awareness and understanding of these threats and to provide options to counter them via the provision of an online training course delivered through LEARN Ultra. By better equipping them to work safely with their own data and devices, we can help reduce the ongoing risk to University digital services as the skills provided will span across all areas of digital interactions.

Discussion

5. Given the ongoing high cyber security risk and the benefit of increased user awareness, and to support compliance with the University Information Security Policy, it is recommended that all students should be mandated to take an Information Security Essentials training course as part of their digital training portfolio, accessed via LEARN Ultra. A number of other courses, such as LibSmart (Library skills), Introduction to Sustainability, Digital Skills Awareness (first years only) and Academic Integrity are already added to their portfolios and recommended as 'essential' training, however, Information Security Essentials will be marked as being 'mandatory'.
6. The course will be created by the Information Security Team using similar content and will follow the same format as the new staff course (to be hosted on P&M) but will be tailored for students to provide focus. The course will be self-paced, last

approximately 25 – 30 minutes and comprise short video's covering key topics, reinforced via multiple choice knowledge checks.

Although the staff version will use P&M reporting functionality to allow local tracking of completion rates and details of pass/fail, it is not currently intended to include the same reporting functionality for students and no central follow-up action is anticipated for non-completion. As a result, there is no current proposal to implement any form of centrally managed automated sanction for not completing the course as this is currently neither practical nor pragmatic, though the course will remain on the student to-do list until completed. However, the University reserves the right to take appropriate action if students do not take the course. If local areas wish to introduce more formal checks and follow up, they would naturally be able to do so.

Resource implications

7. The course will be created and uploaded in LEARN Ultra by existing teams within ISG so there is no additional resource requirement associated with this proposal, other than the time each student will spend on the training.

Risk Management

8. Provision of online awareness training will better equip our students to understand the cyber risks they face both within their personal on-line life and in their interactions with University digital services and how these can be mitigated.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

9. There is no specific climate impact as a result of the proposals in this paper.

10. Although the proposals in this paper will better equip our students to manage their on-line 'digital life', it does not directly contribute to the Strategy 2030 outcomes or SDG as it is fulfilling an internal risk reduction initiative.

Equality & Diversity

11. A provisional E IA of the course material has not identified any adverse impact upon any specific equality group. If the decision is made to proceed with providing the training, a full assessment will be undertaken, noting the EIA for LEARN Ultra covers accessibility aspects for the platform and assessment of the content has been completed for the staff version of the course hosted on P&M.

Next steps/implications

12. If approved by the Committee, Information Security will finalise the course and liaise with LTW teams to make the training available. College Heads of IT are already aware of this proposal as it has been discussed previously at Knowledge Strategy Committee (KSC) and IT Committee (ITC), so they will be involved in local communication to affected students.

Consultation

13. The proposal contained within this paper have been discussed at ITC and KSC where broad support was confirmed by all attendees, including EUSA representatives. Further discussion at University SLT confirmed the view that the training should be mandatory for all students and that the University retains the right

to take action if students do not take the course, a position endorsed by the University Executive. The paper was endorsed by University Executive on 5 September 2023.

Further information

14. Author

Alistair Fenemore
Chief Information Security Officer
September 2023

Presenter

Colm Harmon
Vice-Principal Students

Freedom of Information

15. This paper is open.

Senate Education Committee

14 November 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, which is intended to aid continuous improvement of our approach to academic governance.

Action requested / recommendation

2. To note the contents of the paper and support the proposed actions.

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
Nichola Kett

Presenter:
Nichola Kett

Freedom of Information
Open

Report of Senate Education Committee Internal Effectiveness Review 2022/23

The Senate Education Committee currently has 28 members. 13 responses were received to the Internal Effectiveness Review Questionnaire equating to a 46% response rate. This is an increase when compared with 2021/22 when there were 5 responses from 24 members equating to a 21% response rate.

- **Committee Remit**

All respondents agreed that:

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

Three respondents disagreed that the scope of the Committee remit is appropriate.

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

There were no strong themes from the six free text comments provided. Comments related to the wide remit, the cross over between other committee remits, and blurred boundaries of the remit.

- **Governance and Impact**

All respondents agreed that there are clear links between Committee business and University strategic priorities.

One respondent disagreed that they understood how the Committee fits into the academic governance framework of the University.

Two respondents disagreed that the Committee makes the desired impact based on its remit and priorities.

One respondent strongly disagreed that there is effective flow of business between relevant College Committees, Senate Committees and Senate.

Two of the five free text comments mentioned strengthening reporting links with colleges. Two comments talked about overlaps and links with other committees and the need for clarity on responsibilities. One comment reflected on the responsibilities of College representatives and the new elected Senate representatives roles, outlining instances where views gathered by these representatives from schools differs.

- **Composition**

All 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.

Free text comments acknowledged that the Committee membership is large, but felt this was appropriate. One free text comment reflected on the challenge of Senate Standing Committees not revisiting in-depth discussion where work has been delegated to task groups.

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

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

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

Free text comments talked about the importance of diversity on the Committee but also the challenge of achieving this given the membership is predominantly related to roles. One comment said EDI was covered well and two others mentioned how equality impact assessment could be better used.

- **Role**

All respondents agreed Committee members engage fully in Committee business.

One respondent disagreed that they have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities as Committee member.

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

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

In the free text comments, two respondents noted they had not received an induction.

- **Communications**

All respondent agreed 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.

Four respondents 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 what members are themselves responsible for communicating.

- **Support**

All respondents felt that the Committee is effectively supported by Academic Services, with 9 strongly agreeing.

One respondent disagree and one strongly disagreed that the information provided to the Committee supports effective decision-making.

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

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

Two free text comments outlined the challenge of consulting with constituencies within timescales.

As part of the Internal Effectiveness Review, the committee coverage of postgraduate research student business was reviewed. In terms of major agenda items, the Doctoral College was a standing item, the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) questions were approved and the postgraduate research Higher Education Achievement Record was also discussed.

Proposed actions

- Consider how to focus business within the Committee remit and clarify responsibilities where business overlaps and links with other committees.
- Continue to explore ways to diversify the membership of the Committee and effectively consider EDI matters.
- 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.

Senate Education Committee

14 September 2023

Support for Curriculum Development Group: ELDeR Requests 2022/23 and Closure of Group

Description of paper

1. This paper recommends the closure of the Support for Curriculum Development Group, which was a formal task group of SEC.

Action requested / recommendation

2. To approve the closure of the Group and to note the Edinburgh Learning Design Roadmap (ELDeR) requests approved in 2022/23.

Background and context

3. The Support for Curriculum Development Group (SCDG) was formally constituted as a Task Group of Senate Education Committee (SEC) in 2019.
4. SCDG last reported to SEC on 15 September 2021 at which time the Group had agreed to pause its activity because the Assessment and Feedback workstream of the Curriculum Transformation Programme will cover the majority of SCDG's remit and membership.

Discussion

5. SCDG has not met to consider substantial business since January 2020 but has approved ELDeR requests by electronic business. ELDeR is run by the Learning Design team in the Learning, Teaching and Web (LTW) Services Directorate, Information Services. ELDeR requests approved during 2022/23 are noted below.
6. Appropriate colleagues, (for example College Deans) can still be consulted by the Learning Design team for guidance on future ELDeR requests. However there is nothing in the governance structures that requires these workshops to have formal Senate approval.
7. As SCDG's original remit is being taken forward by other mechanisms (Curriculum Transformation and Assessment and Feedback Groups), the Group convener has changed role, and the Group has been inactive for more than two years, SEC is asked to formally close this Task Group. ELDeR is now a normalised process owned by LT&W who can engage with the Colleges directly for approval of and guidance on proposals. There are no governance implications or requirements beyond this report to SEC. If there are any strategic matters arising from analysis of ELDeRs, then these can be reported to SEC to inform work/priorities

8. ELDeR workshops approved by correspondence during 2022/23:

- Child Protection Futures MSc – new (EFI)
- Clinical Education Integrated PhD – new (Edinburgh Medical School)
- Cultural Heritage MSc – new (EFI)
- Data Science, Technology and Innovation (MSc, PGDip, PGCert) – redesign (Bayes Centre/CSE)
- Future Infrastructure MSc – new (EFI)
- Immunity and Infection Honours – redesign (Biological Sciences)
- Living in the Anthropocene Lab (challenge-led course) – new (CSE)
- Psychological Therapies MSc – redesign (Clinical Psychology)
- STEM Foundations (Access) – new (Centre for Open Learning)

Resource implications

9. There are no resource implications associated with closing this Task Group.

Risk management

10. Academic Services has not identified any risks associated with closing SCDG as the Group's remit has been superseded by other University initiatives and workstreams.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

11. The paper does not contribute to climate emergency and sustainable development goals.

Equality & diversity

12. Academic Services has not identified any equality and diversity impacts associated with the paper nor with closing the Group.

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

13. The Convener advised the Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services of this proposal in advance of the meeting. The Committee is invited to consider any additional communication, implementation and evaluation of impact associated with any actions arising from discussion.

Author

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29 August 2023

Presenter

Nichola Kett

Freedom of Information

The paper is open.