Minutes of the Meeting of the Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) held at 2pm on Wednesday 18 September 2018 in the Research Suite, Main Library, George Square

1.	Attendance

Present:

Ms Megan Brown	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Academic Engagement Co-ordinator (Ex officio)
Ms Rebecca Gaukroger	Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions (Ex officio)
Professor Iain Gordon	Head of School of Mathematics (Co-opted member)
Ms Shelagh Green	Director for Careers and Employability (Ex officio)
Dr Sarah Henderson	Acting Director for Postgraduate Taught (CMVM)
Ms Melissa Highton	Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division (Ex officio)
Professor Charlie Jeffery (Convener)	Senior Vice-Principal
Dr Velda McCune	Deputy Director, Institute for Academic Development (Director's nominee) (Ex officio)
Ms Diva Mukherji	Vice President (Education), Edinburgh University Students' Association (Ex officio)
Professor Graeme Reid	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE)
Dr Sabine Rolle	Dean of Undergraduate Studies (CAHSS)
Professor Mike Shipston	Dean of Biomedical Sciences (Co-opted member)
Professor Neil Turner	Director of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning, (CMVM)
Mrs Philippa Ward (Secretary)	Academic Services
Mr Tom Ward	University Secretary's Nominee, Director of Academic Services (Ex officio)

Apologies:

Professor Rowena Arshad	Head of Moray House School of Education (Co-opted member)
Professor Sian Bayne	Director of Centre for Research in Digital Education (Co-opted member)
Ms Nichola Kett	Academic Governance Representative, Academic Services
Professor Judy Hardy	Director of Teaching, School of Physics and Astronomy (CSE)
Professor Tina Harrison	Assistant Principal (Academic Standards and Quality Assurance)
Professor Neil Mulholland	Dean of Postgraduate Studies (CAHSS)

In attendance:

Ms Rachel Hosker	Archives Manager and Deputy Head of Special Collections, Centre for Research Collections
Dr Lisa Kendall	Head of Academic and Student Administration (CAHSS)

| Ms Angela Laurins | IS Library and Collections |
| Mr Andy Shanks | Director of Student Wellbeing |

2. Visit to Centre or Research Collections

Ms Rachel Hosker, Archives Manager and Deputy Head of Special Collections, delivered a brief presentation and led a tour of some of the University's collections for the Committee. Members considered ways in which the collections might be used to enhance teaching, with a particular focus on diversifying the curriculum.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2018 were approved.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Lecture Recording Policy

Members were reminded that the Committee had approved the Policy at the May 2018 meeting. The University Executive had also approved the Policy, but it had not yet been endorsed by the HR Combined Joint Consultative Negotiation Committee (CJCNC). It was hoped that CJCNC support would be offered in due course; however the University would implement the Policy without CJCNC endorsement if necessary in order to ensure that there was clarity across the University around lecture recording.

5. For Discussion

5.1 Analysis of Student Survey Results

The Committee considered the results of the National Student Survey (NSS) 2018, Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2018, and Course Enhancement Questionnaires (CEQs) 2017-18.

The Convener noted that the results were a cause for concern, presenting a reputational challenge externally and a morale challenge internally. Culture change across the institution was essential, and a programme of action to bring this about was emerging from a series of meetings. Once finalised, this would be taken to the University Executive, Court and Senate for approval. Improving communication between staff and students was thought to be key to addressing the issues raised by the surveys.

Members discussed the potential to gain greater insight by separating PTES results for online and on-campus provision. The matter would be referred to the Student Surveys Unit.

Action: Secretary to discuss separating the online and on-campus PTES results with the Student Surveys Unit.

The Committee also discussed the importance of:
- rewarding excellent teaching, whilst tackling underperformance;
- recognising that the University as a whole was responsible for the issues raised by the surveys, not just Schools;
- engaging those students who were currently disengaged;

- and ensuring that the focus on the student experience was maintained as pressures around the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 increased.

5.2 Teaching and Academic Careers Project – Draft Principles

Members were advised that the University Executive had established a task group to consider ways in which teaching excellence might best be recognised. The task group had developed a set of draft guiding principles, which, once agreed, would be used to examine the University's policies and procedures to see where there was room for improvement, particularly in the area of policy implementation.

Members discussed the draft principles and made the following observations:

- There would be value in clarifying that the principles applied to all categories of staff involved in teaching, not just academic staff.
- The potential for a Teaching Fellow to progress to Professorial level should be made explicit within the principles.
- There would be benefit in including a principle around workload.
- *'What kind of University do we want to be?'* - the fourth bullet should make clear that academic leaders should be given sufficient time for their managerial duties.
- Some concern was expressed about the use of 'teaching and / or research' in the principles, it being felt that staff should be involved in both. It was noted that the question of whether or not the University should be aiming to expand its cohort of teaching-only staff would need to be considered.

5.3 Student Support

5.3.1 Proposal for Review of Student Support

The Committee acknowledged that there was variation in the implementation of the Personal Tutor system across the University, and that this inconsistency needed to be addressed. The system would therefore be reviewed alongside work being undertaken by the Service Excellence Programme on student support. Current thinking was that the review would aim to identify any changes to be made by the end of 2019, and to implement these in September 2020. Members noted that:

- the University was aiming to develop a system of support that met the needs of a diverse student body, and there was unlikely to be a 'one-size-fits-all' solution;
- the number of students, and therefore the tutee to Personal Tutor ratio, was the main problem within the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences;
- the review should take into account the role that Library and Information Services' staff play in student support;
- learning analytics have a role to play in identifying those students potentially requiring additional support.

5.3.2 Personal Tutor System Annual Update 2017-18

The update had been generated from the work of the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) Personal Tutor System Oversight Group. It identified ways in which the Personal Tutor System might be improved in the shorter term. The following observations were made by members:

- a number of Personal Tutors had gaps in their training and were not aware of all of the resources available to assist them in their roles.
- current annual review processes did not encourage reflection on the personal tutoring experience.
- recruitment processes should assess an applicant's ability to perform the research, teaching and student support-related aspects of the role.

5.4 University Learning and Teaching Strategy

5.4.1 Update on Progress Against the University Learning and Teaching Strategy Implementation Plan

The paper outlined action being taken at institutional level to drive forward the Learning and Teaching Strategy's priorities. It did not include information about action being taken at College and School levels, and it was noted that linkage across levels could be a challenge, particularly given the number of different strategies (eg. the Strategic Plan, Learning and Teaching Strategy, Widening Participation Strategy) areas were being asked to consider. Members were broadly happy with the direction of travel outlined in the paper, but were keen to develop a more joined up, University-wide approach.

5.4.2 Review of School Annual Plans 2018-19

Members were advised that the quality of the learning and teaching-related content of School Annual Plans was improving with time. Many Schools were now providing detailed information about a range of learning and teaching-related themes in their Plans, and there was recognition that culture change in this area was required. However, variation across Schools persisted and, as with the previous item, members were keen for a more joined-up and consistent approach to planning to be adopted.

5.5 Student Mental Health Strategy Implementation - Update

The paper was presented by the Director of Student Wellbeing, who highlighted the following points:

- The Student Mental Health Strategy was approved by LTC in January 2017 and a group was now meeting quarterly to drive forward its implementation.
- There was more demand than ever for mental health support, reduced stigma, and increased awareness of the services offered by the University in this area.
- As a result, resources for mental health support were being increased year on year.
- The University had adopted the Stepped Care Model of mental health support, and was considering a range of developments to meet the increased demand for support including:
  - recruiting more counsellors
  - offering more online resources
  - developing more group programmes
  - developing a wellbeing centre in Bristo Square to bring all relevant University services together.
  - focusing on proactive wellbeing services as well as support for those with mental health issues.

- o looking at ways of ensuring that all areas of the University campus were resourced.
- o looking at ways in which communication with the NHS might be improved
- o working more closely with the Students' Association on peer mental health models
- o considering ways in which training for School and Professional Services' staff might be improved.

5.6 Edinburgh University Students' Association

5.6.1 Students' Association Priorities 2018/19

The Students' Association Vice-President (Education) introduced the paper, noting that her priority for the year would be to facilitate better conversations between staff and students about diversifying the curriculum, creating inclusive teaching environments, and developing alternative pedagogies.

5.6.2 Student Partnership Agreement – Implementation Plan 2017-18: Update and Proposed Themes for 2018-18

The Committee was advised that, for continuity, the 2017/18 themes would be retained in 2018/19. All 17 of the SPA projects funded in 2017/18 had had a positive impact, and project funding would also be available in 2018/19.

An event to share learning from the 2017/18 projects would be held on 9 October 2018, and a small booklet had been produced to highlight themes and showcase some of the projects.

5.7 Introduction of a Resource Lists Framework

The paper was presented by Angela Laurins, IS Library and Collections, who noted that the Resource Lists service was now supporting 1700 lists, with representation across all Schools. However, this still represented only 30% of all taught courses. An Acquisitions Audit Report had recommended mandatory use of the Resource Lists service across the University. However, in preference to a mandate, the service was seeking LTC support for the introduction of a Resource Lists Framework as a route to increasing adoption of the service.

Members discussed:

- the potential benefits for the student experience of adopting a consistent approach to the use of Resource Lists;
- the impact on Course Organisers of producing Resource Lists;
- whether the availability of Resource Lists might discourage students from making full use of the Library and reading widely;
- the interaction between Resource Lists and the provision of prioritised reading lists as part of mainstreamed learning adjustments;
- the importance of adopting an approach that captured the diversity across Subject Areas, including the possibility of some Subject Areas providing nil returns combined with statements that a different pedagogy was used by the Subject which did not require a Resource List;

- the need to consider the relationship between Resource Lists and information provided via the DRPS to ensure that Course Organisers were not being asked to produce information twice (Service Excellence would have a role to play in this);
- the importance of compliance with Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA) guidelines on consumer protection law.

It was agreed that the Resource Lists service would undertake further consultation and report back to the November meeting of LTC.

Actions:
1) Resource Lists Service to undertake further consultation and to report back to the November 2018 meeting of LTC.
2) Angela Laurins to discuss CMA guidelines on consumer protection law with Director of Academic Services.

5.8   Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate Committees

Members noted the outcomes of the review and discussed:

- the timing of meetings, noting that, for those on multiple Committees, having a number of meetings falling in the same week was problematic;
- the late arrival of papers, making review and prioritisation difficult;
- the length of papers, noting that Committee members were keen to reduce the length of papers, whilst ensuring that they were sufficiently detailed to allow informed decisions to be made.

6. For Information and Noting

6.1 Senate Committee Input into 2019-22 Planning Round

Members noted that at this stage, they were being asked to highlight key priorities and identify areas of work that may have significant resource implications. The Committee agreed that work around employability should be a priority, and discussed the possibility of the University being more ambitious in its planning. The importance of IS and Library spend reflecting learning and teaching priorities was highlighted.

It was agreed that the Director of Academic Services would do further work on the paper once the outcome of the September meeting of the University Executive was known.

Action: Director of Academic Services to do further work on the planning paper once the outcome of the September meeting of the University Executive was known.

6.2 Reports

Reports from the following groups were noted:

6.2.1 Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group
6.2.2 University-Wide Courses Task Group – Consultation Responses
6.2.3 Service Excellence, Student Administration and Support

6.2.4 Learning and Teaching Policy Group
6.2.5 Knowledge Strategy Committee

6.3 Guidance for Committee Members 2018/19

The Committee's terms of reference, members' guidance and agreed priorities for 2018/19 were noted.

Philippa Ward
Academic Services
25 September 2018