

H/02/27/02

**Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
to be held by electronic business between 19 March 2020 and 2 April 2020**

A G E N D A

For Discussion

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| 1. Standalone Courses | APRC 19/20 5A |
| 2. Service Excellence Programme: Coursework extensions – request for policy change for 2020/21 | APRC 19/20 5B |
| 3. CAHSS: MSc Mathematical Economics and Econometrics | APRC 19/20 5C |
| 4. CAHSS: Master of Landscape Architecture | APRC 19/20 5D |
| 5. CMVM: Master of Family Medicine | APRC 19/20 5E |
| 6. External Examiners: attendance at taught Boards of Examiners | APRC 19/20 5F |

For information and formal business

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| 7. Mid-Year Progress Report | APRC 19/20 5G |
| 8. Convener's Forum/Committee Priorities 2020/21 | APRC 19/20 5H |
| 9. Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2020 – Update | APRC 19/20 5I |
| 10. Update to Course Creation, Approval and Management (CCAM) Guidance | APRC 19/20 5J |
| 11. Knowledge Strategy Committee Report (January 2020) | APRC 19/20 5K |
| 12. Any Other Business | |

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

19 March 2020-2 April 2020

Standalone Courses

Description of paper

1. College Offices have reported an increase in requests for the approval of credit-bearing standalone courses, particularly for continuing professional development (CPD), but not exclusively so. College Offices and Academic Services would welcome members discussing the opportunities and challenges associated with the growth of this type of provision with the aim of ensuring that our academic governance arrangements, quality assurance frameworks, and associated systems align and support an increase in such provision in a consistent, robust and systemic way.
2. Credit-bearing provision and Massive Online Open Courses are subject to annual monitoring and internal periodic review processes. Credit-bearing provision is subject to assessment policies and processes.
3. The paper has also been discussed at Senate Education Committee on 11 March 2020.

Action requested / recommendation

4. For discussion.

Discussion

General

5. There is significant growth within the University in the creation and student uptake of standalone courses, i.e. courses which do not contribute towards the award of a degree or other type of award from the University. This is often in the form of provision that is labelled as CPD. The use of standalone courses falls into a few categories based on the type of course, and the status of the student taking it.
6. Types of course:
 - Courses which normally contribute towards a University degree programme, but which are being taken by students on programmes to which the course will not contribute credit;
 - Courses (credit-bearing and non-credit-bearing) which do not currently form part of any University degree programme.

7. Types of student:

- Students on an existing University degree programme taking courses (credit-bearing or non-credit-bearing) outside of their programme of study, where these will not contribute credit towards their programme of study;
- Students who are not registered on any University degree programme taking one or more courses in isolation (Non-Graduating Students: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/visitingandnongraduatingstudentpolicy.pdf>). Also students in the Centre for Open Learning.

8. In some cases, courses taken by Non-Graduating Students are offered to allow individuals to get a flavour of a programme, or for them to take a collection of courses that are labelled as CPD. These can be genuinely CPD or are actually a summer school programme or similar which requires a container programme code to be created so that these courses can be in effect housed.

Fees and Finance

9. Courses taken by Non-Graduating students are usually invoiced on a pro-rata basis at course-level (<https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-funding/tuition-fees/postgraduate/visiting>).

Approval

10. Approval of non-credit and credit-bearing provision is covered in the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/prog_course_approval.pdf

- Boards of Studies are responsible for considering and approving proposals for new or revised non-credit bearing continuing professional development courses. What constitutes a CPD non-credit bearing course?
- In general, courses are approved at School-level and programmes are approved at College-level. When does a collection of standalone courses become a programme and this require College-level approval?
- With regard to credit-bearing courses, the Framework for Curricula (https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/curriculum_framework.pdf) requires that these be offered in volumes of 10, 20, 40, or 60 credits (or 5 in Centre for Open Learning). This is largely to allow compatibility for courses with multiple programmes. Some standalone (including CPD) courses would be smaller in volume than 10 credits if they were credit-rated. Where these courses are not expected to form part of any degree programme, is it permissible that they should be allowed to carry smaller volumes of credit?

11. Student Systems and Administration

- Non-Graduating Students studying at the University for more than two weeks are required to be registered on the student record. This requires them to be recorded against a “programme”. Some areas of the University are using Visiting Student codes for this, while others are using Non-Graduating Student

codes. Both present problems, in terms of the volume of codes being used and their defined duration which cannot be extended if a student decides to take further courses.

- Should students who complete a credit-bearing standalone course receive an award letter and/or transcript?
- Should students who complete a credit-bearing standalone course and subsequently take further study in the University, for which they wish to have this course recognised as a part, be able to have the course instance recorded on their record as part of the programme (rather than as RPL)?

12. Student Support

- The Visiting and Non-Graduating Student policy does not explain what services Non-Graduating Students are entitled to: should there be a minimum credit volume undertaken before a CPD student gets full access to services and support structures? What if this provision grows across the University? This discussion is also relevant to the Centre for Open Learning.

13. Course Management

- Where courses are offered for credit, this carries with it a number of significant implications with regard to their management and quality assurance. This can cause potential additional pressure on teaching organisation resources.
- All credit-bearing courses need to be overseen by, and accountable to, a Board of Examiners. For standalone courses which are not offered as part of a programme, consideration needs to be given to which Board of Examiners standalone courses go to.
- Entitlement to resits for courses is defined in the Taught Assessment Regulations based on what kind of programme a student is studying on. How should assessment/resits for standalone courses be managed?
- Standalone courses need a home school for the purposes of course management, including quality assurance and assessment processes. Does this cause challenges for the development of different types of courses, including one-off and interdisciplinary courses?

Information Services

- Do our existing learning and teaching systems support standalone courses?

Portfolio

- Do we have a clear vision and strategy for standalone courses?
- Do we understand the needs of students/others (including professional bodies for CPD)?
- Do we know how students/learners identify standalone course opportunities?
- How do we present standalone course opportunities?
- Do we need business cases for standalone courses?
- How do we pitch the fee levels for standalone courses to ensure they are commercially attractive/viable but also ensuring equity, where required, with standard provision?

Opportunities to consider

- Does the University foresee an appetite to allow more scope for individuals who may come to the University (as “students”/other) to take individual, credit-bearing courses, without making a commitment to undertaking a programme, but with the option to build up towards an award (e.g. modular study or credit accumulation)? If so, would there be time limits on this? And could students build towards general awards, as well as specific ones. For example, could a student collect 60 credits at Level 11 over 10 years, and gain some sort of general PG Certificate, or 120 for Diploma or 180 at L11 for a general Life-long Learning MSc?
- Potential for standalone courses to be available as electives for existing programmes. Does this align with the work undertaken on University-wide courses?
- Is there anything to learn from how micro masters are being managed?

Resource implications

14. The paper is for discussion, no action is proposed.

Risk management

15. As the University’s portfolio of standalone courses grows, there is potential risk associated with inaction with regards to some of the points raised in the paper.

Equality & diversity

16. To be included in more detailed proposals.

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

17. To be included in more detailed proposals.

Author

Adam Bunni and Nichola Kett (Academic Services), Victoria Bennett (College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine), Alastair Duthie (College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) and Heather Tracey (College of Science and Engineering)

Presenter

Adam Bunni (Academic Services)

2 March 2020

Freedom of Information

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Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

19 March 2020

Service Excellence Programme- Coursework Extensions: Request for policy change for 2020/21

Description of paper

1. The paper requests changes to the Taught Assessment Regulations on Late Submission of Coursework in order to support the incoming Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) Team. The changes reflect the ESC team reviewing and processing all coursework extension requests.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For discussion and approval.

Background and context

3. The ESC Team, previously known as SCEC is part of the Student Administration Strand of the Service Excellence Programme. It moves the coursework extensions and special circumstances application to an on online system. The framework for decision making will remain the University Assessment Regulations.

Discussion

4. Comments sought on the changes to the policy by Adam Bunni, Academic Services; Faten Adam, ESC Manager, and Sarah McAllister, Head of Student Support Operations. The changes reflect the ESC service deciding on coursework extension requests.

Resource implications

5. The resource implications lie within the new service which has allocated budget. It is hoped the recommendations and changes to policy will enable a reallocation of time to provide focussed support.

Risk management

6. The system relies on assessment and deadline dates being updated in APT. Failure to have this information will impact on the student's ability to request a coursework extensions.

Equality & diversity

7. We have worked closely with a variety of stakeholders to ensure there will be no negative impact on particular cohorts of students. Once the service is running, we will have access to University and School level data to review service impact and identify cohorts of students requiring additional support. We would hope the service will expedite support and outcomes for students.

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

8. Should the requested changes in regulations be agreed, I will work with APRC to agree updated wording in any related text.

Author

Sarah McAllister

Faten Adam

19th March 2020

Presenter

Sarah McAllister

Faten Adam

Freedom of Information

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Taught Assessment Regulations Academic Year 2020/21

Regulation 28 Late submission of coursework

Students need to submit assessed coursework (including research projects and dissertations) by the published deadline. Where the student **meets the criteria** for late submission, ~~the Student Support Operations service~~ **Extensions and Special Circumstances Team**, ~~(informed by information provided by Schools via course details)~~ will consider accepting late submission of up to seven calendar days without **applying a** penalty.

Application of the regulation

28.1 If assessed coursework is submitted late without an agreed extension to the deadline for an accepted good reason, it will be recorded as late and a penalty will be **applied by the School**. ~~For coursework that is a substantial component of the course and where the submission deadline is more than two weeks after the issue of the work to be assessed, that penalty~~ **The penalty applied** is a reduction of the mark by 5% of the maximum obtainable mark per calendar day (e.g. a mark of 65% on the common marking scale would be reduced to 60% up to 24 hours later). This applies for up to seven calendar days (or to the time when feedback is given, if this is sooner), after which a mark of zero will be given. The original unreduced mark will be recorded by the School and the student informed of it.

~~28.2 Schools may choose not to permit the submission of late work for particular components of assessment where the specific assessment and feedback arrangements make it impractical or unfair to other students to do so. This will be entered onto the academic framework of the Assessment Progression Tool by Schools. This entails (a) whether an extension can be permitted on the assessment or not, (b) the assessment deadline date and time, and (c) whether the extension period will be less than 7 calendar days.~~ If Schools do not permit the submission of late work for particular components of assessment, they must publicise this to students on the relevant course.

~~28.3 Where Schools accept late submissions of coursework, the~~ **Extensions and Special Circumstances Team** will consider cases for accepting late submissions up to a maximum of seven calendar days without **applying a** penalty. **There may be components of assessment where Schools have indicated that the maximum permitted extension is less than seven days.** This will be in addition to any extensions offered in line with a student's Schedule of Adjustments. Students are responsible for submitting their **requests** ~~cases and supporting evidence~~ in advance of the published deadline for the coursework, using the **Assessment Support** ~~relevant~~ **online system**, ~~managed by the Student Support Operations team.~~ **Within this team, processing of applications will be prioritised according to coursework deadline dates and times. A maximum turnaround time for applications will be set to 2 working days.**

28.4 The Course Organiser, Programme Director, or equivalent member of academic or professional services staff assigned this responsibility by the School, **The Student Support Operations team** ~~Extensions and Special Circumstances Team~~ decides whether the student has provided **good and accepted** reason and sufficient supporting evidence to justify an extension, ~~and, if so, determines the length of extension to grant up to a maximum of seven calendar days within the academic framework provided on the Assessment Progression Tool.~~

28.5 ~~The requirement for evidence should be proportionate to the weighting of the component of assessment and the length of extension sought, and should also take into account the student's ability to obtain documentary evidence.~~ Self-certification will provide sufficient evidence in ~~some~~ **all** circumstances. ~~The School~~ **Student Support Operations team Extensions and Special Circumstances Team** are responsible for ensuring a record is kept of the decision and the information ~~which substantiates the reason for late acceptance~~ **provided by the student with their request.**

28.6 ~~Accepted Good~~ reasons for coursework extensions are unexpected short-term circumstances which are exceptional for the individual student, beyond that student's control, and which could reasonably be expected to have had an adverse impact on the student's ability to complete the assessment on time. **Accepted Good** reasons may include:

- Recent short-term physical illness or injury;
- Recent short-term mental ill-health;
- A long-term or chronic physical health condition, which has recently worsened temporarily or permanently;
 - A long-term or chronic mental health condition, which has recently worsened temporarily or permanently;
- The recent bereavement or serious illness of a person with whom the student has a close relationship;
- The recent breakdown in a long-term relationship, such as a marriage;
- Emergencies involving dependents;
- Job or internship interview at short notice that requires significant time, e.g. due to travel;
- Victim of a crime which is likely to have significant emotional impact;
- Military conflict, natural disaster, or extreme weather conditions;
- Experience of sexual harassment or assault;
- Experience of other forms of harassment;
- Exceptional and significant change in employment commitments, where this is beyond the student's control;
- Exceptional (i.e. non-routine) caring responsibilities.

28.7 In addition to these unexpected circumstances, ~~Schools~~ **the Student Support Operations team Extensions and Special Circumstances Team** will also consider requests for coursework extensions in relation to:

- A student's disability where the student's Schedule of Adjustments includes relevant provisions, ~~giving them access to a process enabling them to use their adjustments efficiently on the system. This will notify Schools for cascade.~~
- Representation in performance sport at an international or national championship level, in line with the University's Performance Sport Policy:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/performance_sport_policy.pdf

28.8 The following are examples of circumstances which ~~would not be considered~~ are unlikely to be accepted ~~good~~ reasons for coursework extensions:

- A long-term or chronic health condition (including mental ill-health or similar ill-health) which has not worsened recently or for which the University has already made a reasonable adjustment;
- A minor short-term illness or injury (e.g. a common cold), which would not reasonably have had a significant adverse impact on the student's ability to complete the assessment on time;
- Occasional low mood, stress or anxiety;
- Circumstances which were foreseeable or preventable;
- Holidays;
- Pressure of academic work (unless this contributes to ill-health);
- Poor time-management;
- Proximity to other assessments;
- Lack of awareness of dates or times of assessment submission;
- Failure, loss or theft of data, a computer or other equipment (may be permitted in exceptional circumstances for courses taken online);
- Commitments to paid or voluntary employment.

28.9 Where a student has ~~accepted good~~ a good reason for requiring a coursework extension of more than seven calendar days, the student should submit the coursework when able to do so and apply via the Special Circumstances process ~~through the Assessment Support System~~ relevant online system for the Board of Examiners to disregard the penalty for late submission.

APRC Briefing Document:

Extensions:

The paper submitted proposes changes to the Taught Assessment Regulations on late submission of coursework extensions. The changes reflect the incoming Extensions and Special Circumstances service: the team reviewing and processing all extension request making a decision on whether to approve or not. The changes requested have been made in liaison with Adam Bunni (Academic Services).

Action required: approval of proposed amendments to the Taught Assessment Regulations.

Special Circumstances:

A revised SC policy was submitted to APRC for consideration in January's meeting. It has subsequently been sent to all Schools and Deaneries for consideration and comment. Response rate was good (especially in CAHSS). Common feedback and concerns raised by Schools included:

- Sharing of information with PTs and Student Support: this issue has come up not only via the policy consultation but also via the School visits. This was the one issue where there the feedback was unanimously negative across all Schools and Deaneries. There was serious concern about allowing students to choose to opt out of sharing their extension and special circumstances information with PTs and Student Support: concern about them understanding the implications of what they are opting out of, about not being able to access the right support, but also the question of where the duty of care would lie should they opt out. As part of annual registration, students will opt in into the student privacy agreement which has amendments for coursework extensions and special circumstances. We aim to allow students to view those terms before submission.
- Preferred outcomes: serious concern was raised over the expectations this would raise amongst students, their ability to understand the implications around some of the options (even with guidance), and the ability to manage this appropriately. At this point we recommend this is removed from service launch.
- Late applications: Schools expressed the need for more clarity around the late submission of special circumstances. We are looking for direction from APRC with regards to levels of flexibility or strictness.
- Expedited decisions: Schools were broadly supportive but needed more guidance on the operation of the regulation (e.g. frequency etc). There was a worry around managing student expectations as well as increased workload for the BoE convener.
- Appeals: more guidance needed on the process for appealing ESC team decisions by students.

Next steps: a more detailed summary of all school responses will be shared with Adam Bunni to liaise on producing a final revised version for May's APRC.

Action Required: comment on issues raised by Schools and direction policy should take (especially sharing of information and preferred options).

Work is being done with the University Data Protection Officer around the sharing of information and whether this is necessary.

Escalated Cases Process:

The current definition of what constitutes an escalated case is one where a student declares information whereby they are a danger to themselves or to others. Should declaration on sexual violence also be included?

The suggested process remains the same with the ESC team contacting a nominated School contact in person (followed up in writing), and schools contacting ESC team for cases that arise where students are unable to complete an application.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

19 March 2020 – 2 April 2020

CAHSS: MSc in Mathematical Economics and Econometrics

Description of paper

1. The paper concerns a proposal for a new postgraduate taught programme from the School of Economics in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS). This programme has features that are non-standard and require approval at Senate level - these are outlined in this paper.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) is asked to consider the programme and grant approval for the MSc Mathematical Economics and Econometrics to be created and made available to students in time for an August 2020 start.

Background and context

3. This programme was previously considered by APRC (January 2020). In light of feedback provided by APRC, the programme proposal has been revised.

Discussion

4. The MSc Mathematical Economics and Econometrics is a 180 credit Postgraduate Taught programme delivered by the School of Economics. A copy of the proposed DPT is provided in the appendix to this paper. Two non-standard features require approval from Senate (APRC).
 - a. The programme consists of 180 credits, which will be completed over a 12-month period. However, it is proposed that the programme will run from August to July each year.

The rationale for the early start relates to a wish for students on this programme to attend the Scottish Graduate School for Economics Summer School which runs in August. Following comments from APRC, the intention is that that summer school will be credited (10 credits) for students on this programme (reflected in the attached DPT). This is different from how it appears in the existing Scottish Graduate Programme in Economics where passing it is considered an element of the admissions process and so it is not credited for award. Material in the summer school concerns key issues of understanding in Economics. Hence for students on existing programmes (who have studied Economics previously) it is essentially a recap/remedial exercise. In contrast, the new programme is intended for STEM students without an academic background in Economics, and hence the Summer School will cover new material worthy of awarding credit for. In addition, having students on the new programme attend the Summer School alongside students with previous experience of studying Economics (even if the purpose of the teaching is different) is seen as beneficial to students from a STEM background in helping to integrate them into the discipline, and student cohort, more generally.

The School have made arrangements with Accommodation Services to facilitate accommodation for students needing to attend Edinburgh in August.

- b. The programme will not have a standard 60 credit summer dissertation. Rather a 10+50 credit model is proposed.

The 10 credit element would be an “Econometrics Project”. This would involve students working in groups to identify a research question, collect data and undertake estimation. However, in light of the concerns about group work raised by APRC, the latter stages of the work would be undertaken on an individual basis; with each student submitting their own paper for assessment. This course will therefore provide students with an opportunity to hone the skills they will use in their capstone project, and potentially attempt more unusual approaches to research within the framework of a relatively low credit value (hence minimising the impact/risk of trying something new with regards to degree classification).

The 50 credit capstone project would be akin to a traditional dissertation with expectations, word count etc adjusted to reflect the 50 credit value attached to the course.

Resource implications

5. Resourcing implications have been considered at School Board of Studies and College level through the submission of regular fee costing documentation submitted with the full programme paperwork. This programme has been included in the School financial plan for the 2020/21 academic session.

Risk management

6. Any risk associated with this paper relates to the decision taken. If approval is not granted for this programme, there will be a financial impact on the School of Economics.

Equality & diversity

7. Equality and diversity has been considered as part of the programme design and delivery.

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

8. The College Office will communicate the outcome of the decision to all key stakeholders involved in future delivery of the programme on behalf of the Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval.

Author

*Dr Paul Norris
10th March 2020*

Presenter

*Dr. Paul Norris
Dean Quality Assurance and Curriculum
Approval (CAHSS)*

Freedom of Information

Open

Appendix: Proposed DPT for MSc Mathematical Economics and Econometrics

COMPULSORY COURSES

This DPT has 10 compulsory course(s).

<i>Code</i>	<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Credits</i>
ECNM	Foundations of Economics	(August – Summer School)	10
ECNM...	Further Topics in Economics	Semester 1	10
ECNM11024	Macroeconomics 1	Semester 1	20
ECNM...	Mathematical Microeconomics	Semester 1	30
ECNM11043	Econometrics 1	Semester 1	20
ECNM11050	Econometrics 2	Semester 2	10
ECNM11022	Macroeconomics 2	Semester 2	10
ECNM11025	Microeconomics 2	Semester 2	10
ECNM...	Econometrics Project	Semester 2	10
ECNM...	Dissertation in MEE	Semester 2 till July	50

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

19 March 2020 – 2 April 2020

CAHSS: Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA)

Description of paper

1. The paper includes a proposal for a non-standard dissertation element in the revised MLA programme.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) is asked approve the use of a 40+20 credit split of two courses in place of a single 60-credit dissertation.

Background and context

3. The MLA is a 2 year (240 credit) postgraduate programme. It results in the award of an MSc qualification (and professional accreditation). The programme is longstanding, but the school are keen to revise the programme structure to better reflect the current state of the profession for which the degree is accredited. The revised curriculum also involves a move away from 10-credit courses, and affords students an opportunity to take “outside courses” relevant to there interests.

Discussion

4. The existing MLA involves a 60-credit course in Semester 2 of Year 2 called “MLA Landscape Portfolio 4” which is treated akin to a traditional MSc dissertation. It is proposed to replace this course with two units of assessment “Landscape Architecture Design Exploration: Part 2” (40 credits) and “Landscape Architecture Design Report” (20 credits). Both of the new courses will be taken in Semester 2 of Year 2 (so in the same slot as “MLA Landscape Portfolio 4” is currently taught) affording students the opportunity to reflect across all of their previous studies.

Landscape architecture design exploration, Part 2: In this design course students are required to apply and demonstrate knowledge through different scales of design and proposal to make manifest a significant social and environmental future for a project site. Students will be encouraged to take an integrative approach to design, considering society and environment holistically as well as perception and materiality through relevant scales of proposal making. In support of the advanced nature of this course, specialist expertise will be brought in to support students in developing design proposals as it relates to planting, materiality and construction processes.

Landscape architecture design report: The MLA Design Report is a creative manifesto, a documentary record of practice and a tool for articulating the move from studentship into a distinct area of practice. The course will encourage graphic invention in the representation of student’s work where text and image will enter into dialogue. Students will develop a highly curated document that communicates

the evolution and realisation of the yearlong design exploration project. In addition the report will demonstrate the scope of core knowledge of the profession of landscape architecture through reference to design projects, courses and texts studied during the two year programme. Within this course students will develop and communicate a critical understanding of their work and working practices.

Resource implications

5. Resourcing implications have been considered at School Board of Studies and College level. Resources are intended to transfer from the existing programme.

Risk management

6. There are no specific risks identified with this proposal. Students applying for 2020 entry have been advised of both the existing, and proposed, programme structures with the hope been the new structure can be used if approved.

Equality & diversity

7. Equality and diversity has been considered as part of the programme design and delivery.

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

8. The College Office will communicate the outcome of the decision to all key stakeholders involved in future delivery of the programme on behalf of the Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval.

Author

Dr Paul Norris
11/03/2020

Presenter

Dr. Paul Norris
Dean Quality Assurance and Curriculum
Approval (CAHSS)

Freedom of Information Open

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations (ARPC) Committee

Date: 19 March 2020-2 April 2020

Proposal to restructure the third year of the Master of Family Medicine (MFM) programme

Description of paper

This paper outlines a proposed change to the dissertation process of the MFM programme and requests approval for delivery of these changes to the current cohort of students from September 2020.

Action requested / recommendation

For approval and information.

Background and context

The Master of Family Medicine (MFM) programme is an innovative online distance learning programme designed for clinicians in low and middle income countries thus widening participation, improving accessibility and creating a diverse and vibrant global learning community.

The programme links directly in to Global Health targets towards achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC), with the World Health Organisation (WHO) promoting family medicine as a major tool for UHC delivery. We aim to produce future leaders within the field who will impact health care delivery at a local and international level.

In 2018 the MFM programme structure was redesigned using the Edinburgh Learning design Roadmap (ELDeR) moving from a two to three year format (Figure 1/2). This paper discusses the proposed format for the new third year which will be delivered for the first time from September 2020.

Discussion

We propose to deliver the third year as a 20 credit research methods course followed by a 40 credit substantial research project. All students must complete both components, with no alternative offered. Each component will be graded according to the University's common marking scheme. As per University regulations students would be required to '*attain an additional 60 credits, by achieving a mark of at least 50% for the dissertation or project component*' in order to be awarded a Masters degree and would be required to pass the 20 credit course before progressing. The process and content of the year is similar to the previous 60 credit dissertation but with more structure and focused teaching (as opposed to supervision) to ensure better student support, widening participation and providing improved oversight, equity and quality.

The rationale for the change is outlined below.

Improving student support and facilitating the community of practice

Our students are a unique group. They are mainly clinicians, entering the programme with less academic experience than other cadres of students. They are working in low and middle income countries often in rural areas. Their aim in completing the MFM is to learn academic skills that can be utilised to improve their clinical practice, so-called 'clinical scholarship' (Reeve 2017). The majority do not aspire to a career in academia.

Students have fed back to us that they value the international community of practice that is established in the first two years of the programme. They feel more isolated from tutors and peers during the current dissertation. One reason for the isolation is that they often have to balance study with long and unpredictable hours of clinical work. This is reflected in the number of special circumstance applications during the dissertation, often in relation to stress/mental health issues. The problem is also reflected in marks with students often performing at a high level during the taught course work but achieving significantly lower marks for the dissertation.

Our new approach will continue to facilitate this community of practice and provide a higher level of pastoral, professional and peer support via the on-line learning community. It will also promote ongoing membership of the University of Edinburgh community beyond the programme.

Widening participation

Our programme is aimed at students who often have limited access to postgraduate study in family medicine. Our aim is to widen participation further to include clinicians who deliver family medicine, but do not have a medical degree (primarily clinical officers).

Our student numbers have plateaued at around thirty per year. We believe that the new structure, as less daunting to applicants, will improve recruitment and retention of students through to Masters level. This will better enable students to fulfil their potential.

Improving quality and equity

Feedback from students provided the basis for the redesign of the MFM programme from two to three years.

In the design process we utilised ELDeR which provided an evidence-based team based approach to learning design. Our focus was on ensuring a high quality educational product, produced in line with national standards, but focused on the unique needs of our students.

The outcome of the ELDeR was an new three year programme which enabled students to systematically build on skills and knowledge. This is summarised here:

Year 1 (Certificate): Provides students with a foundation of core skills and knowledge covering principles of family medicine, evidence based medicine, consultation skills and professionalism in relation to family practice.

Year 2 (Diploma): Teaching skills of clinical scholarship (Reeve 2017) enabling the students to learn and think critically about intellectual skills utilised in the practice of family medicine.

Year 3 (Masters): Introduces research methods relevant to clinical practice with students demonstrating proficiency in research skills by conducting a substantial research project relevant to advancement of the discipline. This will be called the 'family medicine project' to emphasise the focus of the research in relation to family medicine, advancement of the discipline and impact on clinical practice. This title will encompass projects in areas such as patient safety, quality improvement and clinical audit as well as other more traditional approaches to research such as systematic review.

In this scaffolding approach to learning design the team felt the research methods course was best situated in the third (Masters) year. The course will ensure equity across the diverse group of students as they will all have access to quality research methods teaching.

Improving impact

Our external examiner, Profesor Val Wass, recommended redesigning the original dissertation and introducing a more structured approach to teaching research methods, thus empowering students to think critically in the choice and application of a wide range of research methodologies available to address clinical problems. The family medicine project which follows the research methods teaching can then challenge the students further in designing and delivering research independantly. This means that learning outputs are likely to have a much greater impact on the professional development and quality of clinical practice resulting in improved health of communities.

Resource implications

There will be minimal resource implications for this change. We have a new teaching fellow in post who will act as lead for the third year. We will employ one additional tutor for the research methods course but will this will be offset by requiring less supervisor hours.

Risk management

The new model of the third year will provide better oversight of students ensuring compliance in areas such as professionalism and medical ethics.

The proposed changes were agreed by the Usher Board of Studies and communicated to students on the Degree Finder in time for advertising and commencing the new programme in September 2019. There is therefore a potential reputational risk, with any change back to the original model requiring cautious consultation with current and new students.

Equality & diversity

The alternative structure to the third year will enable us to provide better support and oversight of students in the third year. It will encourage greater diversity of student and widen participation in postgraduate study at the University of Edinburgh.

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

As mentioned the proposed changes have already been communicated to the current students and new applicants. Any change back to the original model will require cautious consultation with students with oversight from academic services.

Our new teaching fellow will oversee the implementation and evaluation of the proposed changes. We will seek staff, ARPC committee and student feedback. We will involve our external examiner. There are plans to use this experience to help develop the academic literature on the teaching of clinical scholarship on-line.

References

Reeve, J. & Firth, A., 2017. Revitalising general practice: Unleashing our inner scholar. *British Journal of General Practice*, 67(659), p.266.

Author

Name Dr Robin Ramsay

Date 03/02/20

Freedom of Information

This is an open paper.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

19 March 2020 - 2 April 2020

External Examiners: attendance at taught Boards of Examiners

Description of paper

1. The paper asks the Committee to consider whether it may be appropriate to relax the existing requirements regarding physical attendance by External Examiners at meetings of Boards of Examiners for taught courses and programmes.

Action requested / recommendation

2. APRC is asked to discuss the issues raised in the paper and consider a potential change in University policy.

Background and context

3. Under the terms of the Taught Assessment Regulations (TAR) and External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy, at least one External Examiner is required to participate in all meetings of Boards of Examiners. "Participation" is defined in the regulations (TAR 39.1) as follows:

“ "Participation" by an External Examiner does not require physical presence at the meeting of the Board of Examiners, but involves the External Examiner contributing to the meeting, ideally by video, telephone or web-camera and otherwise by email. The External Examiner must have sufficient information and access to the Board's deliberations to allow them to approve the decisions taken by the Board. The minute needs to reflect their participation.”

4. In line with the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy (38), each External Examiner is required physically to attend at least one meeting of the relevant Board of Examiners each academic year. Where they are unable to do so, this is regarded as exceptional under the regulations, and requires approval from the relevant College (TAR 39.5).

Discussion

5. Academic Services are receiving an increasing number of enquiries regarding the potential for External Examiners to participate exclusively remotely, e.g. by videoconference, especially on online-only programmes. In most cases, the rationale provided for this is based upon the impact of short-haul travel upon climate change, and the financial costs associated with physical attendance by External Examiners.
6. Benchmarking within the sector indicates that, while it appears that the majority of institutions require physical attendance by External Examiners for at least one meeting a year, some institutions (e.g. Queen's University Belfast, Queen Mary

University of London) regard remote attendance as equivalent to physical attendance. At least one Russell Group institution indicated that they were exploring the possibility of making remote attendance their default expectation, citing climate impact as the primary motivation for this possible change.

7. Boards of Examiners hold meetings after each Semester to agree final outcomes for courses and programmes, which cannot be changed subsequently apart from in exceptional circumstances. Since an External Examiner is not required to be physically present at any specific meeting of a Board, it follows that physical attendance by an External Examiner is not considered crucial to a Board making robust, final decisions.
8. It is understood that having the opportunity to meet students to discuss their experience, and to see the learning environment, can be of benefit to External Examiners in fulfilling their duties. This may be a rationale for requiring physical attendance by External Examiners in some circumstances. However, this rationale does not apply to programmes delivered entirely online, where neither the students, nor the learning environment, is physically in Edinburgh.
9. Based on these factors, **APRC is asked to consider the following questions:**
 - a. Are there specific reasons why physical attendance by External Examiners should be a requirement?
 - b. Should the requirement for External Examiners physically to attend one Board of Examiners meeting a year be retained, relaxed, or removed?
 - c. Should the same requirements apply to courses and programmes offered exclusively online?
10. It may be appropriate to require External Examiners (for on-campus programmes at least) physically to attend the University on at least one occasion in the first year of their term, but not prescribe further physical attendance.

Resource implications

11. Boards of Examiners are already making frequent use of remote participation by External Examiners, using existing video- and teleconferencing facilities. Relaxing or removing the requirement for External Examiners physically to attend meetings in Edinburgh may lead to significant savings in relation to travel expenses currently paid to External Examiners. As mentioned above, there are also significant potential benefits in terms of the University's climate impact by reducing the need for External Examiners to make use of short-haul air travel in particular.

Risk management

12. As mentioned above, a significant proportion of Boards of Examiners decisions are already made without the physical presence of External Examiners. Reducing or removing the requirement for physical attendance should therefore pose no risk to the robustness of decisions made by Boards. Any change in the requirements would also not preclude External Examiners from attending

meetings, and coming to meet students, or see the learning environment, where this was regarded as beneficial to the fulfilment of their duties.

Equality & diversity

13. Allowing greater use of remote attendance by External Examiners could promote diversity in the pool of External Examiners used by the University, by removing barriers to access from some individuals for whom travel may be more challenging, e.g. due to family commitments, disability, or other reasons.

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

14. Should APRC agree to make changes to the requirements relating to attendance of External Examiners at Boards of Examiners, Academic Services will amend the Taught Assessment Regulations and External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy accordingly. Any changes will be communicated in the annual New and Updated Policies and Regulations communication (and associated web resource) to staff in Schools and Colleges.

Author

Dr Adam Bunni, Academic Services

Presenter

Dr Adam Bunni, Academic Services

14 February 2020

Freedom of Information

Open

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

19 March 2020 – 2 April 2020

Mid-Year Progress Report

Description of paper

Action requested / recommendation

1. For information

Background and context

2. All Senate committees are asked to put together a mid-year progress report, reporting on progress with the priorities for 2019/20 they identified to Senate and Court in May/June 2019.

Discussion

3.

- Work with the Service Excellence Programme to oversee the implementation of any significant policy changes associated with the current programme of work (e.g. Special Circumstances and Coursework Extensions, Programme and Course Information Management)

The Committee is working with the Service Excellence Programme on this and is receiving regular updates.

- Guide the University's response to any policy issues raised by the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment's report on degree classification outcomes

We are monitoring developments in this area. There has been no specific need to consider any policy changes at this time. However, we have made significant progress on the issue of borderlines for classification, covered below.

- Oversee the implementation of changes in policy regarding resubmission of PGT dissertations and associated dissertation supervision support, and PGT assessment/progression arrangements

Academic Services is not aware of any issues arising from the implementation of the new regulations relating to resubmission of PGT dissertations. However, we will seek relevant feedback from Schools and Colleges about this following the period of industrial action. Should the feedback indicate that any changes to regulation are needed, we will present proposals to the May meeting of APRC.

- Oversee the implementation of changes to the Code of Student Conduct following the review in 2018-19, and conduct a light-touch review of the impact of the amendments

Towards the end of the session, we will ask for any feedback relevant to the changes from the Colleges, Students' Association (including the Advice Place), Student Discipline Committee members and Student Discipline Officers. We will update APRC on anything of note that comes out of this.

- Oversee the implementation of any agreed changes to the Support for Study Policy following the review in 2018/19

The policy was agreed and the website updated and the revised policy will kept under review.

- Develop an institution-wide approach to borderlines for Honours degree classification

The Committee is hoping to receive a paper on this at the March 2020 meeting of APRC for discussion.

Resource implications

4. Any resource implications associated with the individual areas of activity have been considered separately.

Risk management

5. Any risk management implications associated with the individual areas of activity have been considered separately.

Equality & diversity

6. Any equality and diversity implications associated with the individual areas of activity have been considered separately.

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

7. Progress against priorities will be reported on to Senate and Court.

Author

Ailsa Taylor and Dr Adam Bunni,
Academic Services
March 2020

Freedom of Information

Open

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

19 March 2020 – 2 April 2020

**Senate Committees' Conveners' Forum and
Academic Policy and Regulations Committee Priorities for 2020/21**

Description of paper

1. This paper provides the membership, remit and annual schedule of meetings of the Senate Committees' Conveners' Forum, which has been established to better coordinate the work of Senate and its Standing Committees.
2. The paper also asks Academic Policy and Regulations Committee members to begin considering the Committee's priorities for academic year 2020/21.

Action requested / recommendation

3. Academic Policy and Regulations Committee is asked to note the information relating to the Convener's Forum.
4. It is asked to discuss Academic Policy and Regulations Committee's priorities for 2020/21. Priorities should be categorised, as far as possible at the time, as a future project for the Senate Committee, work for Academic Services, or a larger project / aim that may need to be taken forward to the next Planning Round.

Discussion

5. As part of the response to the recommendations of an external review of Senate and its Committees (March 2019), a Conveners' Forum has been established to support the Senate Standing Committees in effective planning, information sharing and reporting. The appendix provides details of the membership, remit and annual schedule of Convener's Forum.
6. As detailed in the Convener's Forum annual schedule for March / April each year, Academic Policy and Regulations Committee members are now asked to begin considering the Committee's priorities for academic year 2020/21. These will subsequently be discussed by the Conveners of the three Senate Standing Committees before being reported to Senate in May 2020 via the annual report of the Senate Standing Committees.

Resource implications

7. The time of the Conveners and Academic Services staff in scheduling, preparing and attending meetings of Convener's Forum.
8. The resource implications of the 2020/21 Committee priorities identified will be considered in due course.

Risk management

9. Convener's Forum will contribute to effective academic governance and will therefore assist the University in managing risk associated with its academic activities.
10. The risks associated with the 2020/21 Committee priorities identified will be considered in due course.

Equality & diversity

11. The composition of Senate Committees including the role of Convener is largely determined according to defined role-holders (e.g. defined Assistant or Vice-Principals, Director of a defined support service or delegate) or as representative of a particular stakeholder (e.g. a College or the Students' Association). The membership of these Committees and the identification of Conveners who attend this Forum is therefore largely a consequence of decisions made elsewhere to appoint individuals to particular roles.
12. The Equality and Diversity implications of the 2020/21 Committee priorities identified will be considered in due course.

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

13. The 2020/21 Committee priorities identified will be discussed by the Conveners of the three Senate Standing Committees before being reported to the May meeting of Senate via the annual report of the Senate Standing Committees.
14. Progress with the identified Committee priorities will be evaluated by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee in the middle and at the end of academic year 2020/21.

Author

Sue MacGregor, Director of Academic Services
Kathryn Nicol
28 February 2020

Presenter

Sue MacGregor, Director of Academic Services

Freedom of Information

Open

Senate Committee Conveners' Forum

Membership, Remit and Annual Schedule

The Senate Committee Conveners' Forum is not a formal Senate committee. It is intended to support Senate Standing Committees in effective planning, information sharing and reporting.

1. Membership

- Conveners of Senate Standing Committees: Education Committee; Academic Policy and Regulations Committee; Quality Assurance Committee
- A representative from the Principal's Office, or University Secretary **TBC**
- Deputy Secretary Student Experience
- Representative of Research Policy Group
- Director of Academic Services
- Support provided by Senate Clerk and Senate Standing Committee Secretaries

2. Remit

- 2.1. The Senate Committees Conveners' Forum supports the conveners in their roles and contributes to the annual planning and prioritising of committee business for Senate and the committees reporting to Senate.
- 2.2. The purpose of the Forum is to facilitate communication between committees, reduce duplication of effort, and provide an opportunity for an overview of committee business and priorities, and mapping of the flow of business between committees.
- 2.3. The Forum provides an opportunity to identify committee business to be reported to Senate for discussion.
- 2.4. The Forum provides a point of coordination in responding to the emergence of key University groups and committees.

3. Annual schedule

Month	Conveners' Forum activity	Associated activity
August	Conveners' Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review draft paper - Internal Committees Effectiveness review • Review committee plans for year ahead • Identify any new and emerging priorities • Highlight anything that should involve more than one committee, or that should be reported to Senate. • Highlight anything that is a significant project and may need to be raised in the planning round. 	
Sept / Oct		1 st meeting of Senate Committees Agenda item - Committees reminded of annual priorities. 1 st meeting of Senate Paper – report on annual internal effectiveness review of Senate Committees
Nov / Dec		2 nd meeting of Senate Committees
Jan / Feb	Conveners' Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim review against annual plan and priorities • Identify any new and emerging priorities • Highlight anything that should be received by more than one committee, or that should be reported to Senate. 	3 rd meeting of Senate Committees Paper - All Standing Committees receive a mid-year report on progress against committee priorities - paper written by Committee Secretary 2 nd meeting of Senate

APRC 19/20 5 H (Electronic)

<p>March / April</p>		<p>4th meeting of Senate Committees Paper - All Standing Committees receive a paper inviting them to suggest priorities for the coming academic year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities to be categorised, as far as possible at the time, as a future project for the Senate Committee, work for Academic Services, or a larger project / aim that may need to be taken forward to the next planning round. • The paper sets out the context of current and known future work for all Senate committees and wider University priorities. • Written by the Director of Academic Services.
<p>April</p>	<p>Draft report - Director of Academic Services drafts Senate Standing Committees report to Senate, for review by the Forum. This includes a report on committee progress against priorities in the current year and plans and priorities for the coming year. This report is an opportunity to ask Senate to discuss any specific priorities identified by the Senate committees.</p>	
<p>May (early)</p>	<p>Conveners' Forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review draft Senate Standing Committees report to Senate • Identify any new and emerging priorities • Highlight anything that should be received by more than one committee, or that should be reported to Senate. 	

APRC 19/20 5 H (Electronic)

<p>May (late)</p>		<p>5th meeting of Senate Committees Agenda item - Senate Standing Committees invite members to provide feedback on the committee effectiveness at the final meeting – this is noted and feeds into the annual effectiveness review.</p> <p>Paper - Senate Standing Committees preview of internal effectiveness review process and opportunity to comment on draft questions.</p> <p>3rd meeting of Senate Paper - Senate Standing Committees report to Senate on activity in the current year and plans for activity in next academic year.</p> <p>Paper - Senate Standing Committees preview of internal effectiveness review process and opportunity to comment on draft questions.</p>
<p>June- July</p>	<p>Internal review of Senate and Senate Standing Committees' effectiveness, conducted by Academic Services. Report presented to Conveners' Forum then to Senate in Sept / Oct.</p>	

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

19 March 2020 – 2 April 2020

Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2020 – Update

Description of paper

1. An update on preparations, next steps and information on visits for ELIR 2020.

Action requested / recommendation

2. For information.

Background and context

3. ELIR is the method by which the Quality Assurance Agency (Scotland) (QAAS) reviews universities and other higher education institutions in Scotland. The University's next ELIR takes place in semester 1 2020/21.

Discussion

Preparation of the Reflective Analysis

4. Drafts of chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5, developed using information gathered from colleagues across the University and the Students' Association, were made available to all staff and students in November and December 2019 with accompanying Teaching Matters blog posts. Comments received on the draft chapters were used to develop a first draft of the reflective analysis.
5. The first draft was reviewed by key internal and external stakeholders in the last week of January and the first week of February. Comments received on the first draft were used to develop a second draft which will be made available to all students and staff to comment on in March 2020¹. A final version of the reflective analysis will then pass through University committees for approval in June 2020.
6. Briefing sessions were held in early March for staff in roles who may be asked to meet the review team at visits. These briefing sessions, as well as covering the background to ELIR and our preparations, encouraged staff to comment on the second draft. Briefing sessions will be held with students chosen to meet the review team at the planning visit following the appointment of a PhD Intern who will support student engagement with the ELIR.
7. The development of the reflective analysis is being supported by a coordinated communications and engagement plan developed in consultation with Communications and Marketing and the Students' Association. The key

¹ <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/elir/elir-2020>

elements of this plan are:

- A Spotlight On ELIR series on Teaching Matters publicised to staff and students via email, social media channels and the quality website²
- Group meetings with students
- Engagement with College committees
- Regular update papers to Senate committees
- Senate committee newsletter entries

Visits

8. A review team, comprising three academic reviewers, two student reviewers and one co-ordinating reviewer has been appointed by QAAS to conduct the ELIR and will visit the University twice, meeting with staff and students.

6 August 2020	Deadline for submitting the Reflective Analysis and supporting Advanced Information Set to QAAS
17 September 2020	Early feedback provided to the University by QAAS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions and/or themes for exploration in the planning visit • Any areas where the team think they need additional documentation
1 October 2020	PLANNING VISIT Meeting 1: Senior staff leading preparations Meeting 2: Group of student representatives and students with experience of internal review Meeting 3: Group of staff involved in quality processes
8 October 2020	Deadline by which we will receive (as an outcome of the planning visit): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An agreed set of themes to be explored during the review visit • A draft programme for the main visit • A note of additional information requested by the team <p>We will have at most 6 weeks to organise and brief the staff and students who will be meeting the review team. In preparation, during semester 2 2019/20 we will identify staff and students in roles who may be asked to meet the review team at visits.</p>
26 October – 2 November 2020	Earliest and latest deadlines for providing additional information requested by the team (2-3 weeks to gather the information).
Week beginning 16 November 2020	Review visit

² <https://www.teaching-matters-blog.ed.ac.uk/tag/spotlight-on-elir/>

	Meetings with groups of staff and students likely to be held Monday to Thursday (inclusive).
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Resource implications

9. Students and staff are asked to contribute to the development of the reflective analysis and some students and staff will be asked to meet the team during the planning and review visits.

Risk management

10. A successful ELIR is of vital importance to the University.

Equality & diversity

11. No issues are associated with this paper.

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

12. As outlined above.

Author

Nichola Kett, Academic Services
5 March 2020

Freedom of Information

Open

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

19 March 2020 – 2 April 2020

Update to Course Creation, Approval and Management (CCAM) Guidance

Description of paper

1. Outlines a proposed update to the Course Creation, Approval and Management (CCAM) guidance <https://edin.ac/32U3IRG>

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval.

Background and context

3. The CCAM guidance gives detailed advice about the information captured in each field of the course descriptor which is then displayed via the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS).
4. A request was made to update the advice in the CCAM guidance relating to the “Graduate Attributes, Personal and Professional Skills (Previously Transferable Skills)” field to ensure that explicit reference is made to the University’s Graduate Attributes.
5. Although the CCAM guidance is non-mandatory, it was felt to be important that the Committee was made aware and supportive of the proposed update.
6. The proposed update has also been discussed with and agreed by Professor Tina Harrison (Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance).

Discussion

7. Current advice:

Graduate Attributes, Personal and Professional Skills (Previously Transferable Skills)

This field should be used to describe the contribution made to the development of personal and professional attributes and skills as a result of studying the course - i.e. the generic and transferable skills beyond the subject of study itself.

Reference in particular should be made to the SCQF learning characteristics at the correct level in categories 3 to 5.

3 generic cognitive skills (e.g. evaluation, critical analysis);

4 communication, numeracy and IT skills; and

5 autonomy, accountability and working with others.

<http://scqf.org.uk/the-framework/scqf-levels/>

8. Proposed update:

Graduate Attributes and Skills

This field should be used to describe the contribution made to the development of personal and professional attributes and skills as a result of studying the course - i.e. the generic and transferable skills beyond the subject of study itself.

Reference in particular should be made to the University's Graduate Attributes <https://www.ed.ac.uk/graduate-attributes>, bearing in mind the developmental levels of the SCQF https://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/SCQF-LevelDescriptors.pdf

9. During April a dedicated webpage on referencing the University's Graduate Attributes in course descriptors will be created and the link above will be replaced.

Resource implications

10. Updating this guidance will help with the course proposal process by ensuring a more coherent and consistent approach which aligns with the expectations of Boards of Studies. Thus reducing the risk academic staff being asked to rewrite course descriptor content.

Risk management

11. This update will support the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Enabling Student Achievement advice and guidance theme guiding principle 8: "Clearly communicate course outcomes and graduate attributes to all current and prospective students, staff and associated organisations."

Equality & diversity

12. No issues are associated with this paper.

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

13. Academic Services will ask Student Systems to update the CCAM guidance. The update will also be communicated to Boards of Studies Convenors and Administrators.

Author

Nichola Kett, Academic Services
5 March 2020

Freedom of Information

Open

REPORT FROM THE KNOWLEDGE STRATEGY COMMITTEE

24 January 2020

1 Information Services Plan

The Chief Information Officer presented the emerging key components for the Information Services Group's (ISG) annual planning round submission. The submission is being developed around the four Strategy 2030 areas: people; research; teaching and learning; and, social and civic responsibility. A key element within the people strand is to expand workplace experiences within ISG for students. 300 students a year are currently benefiting, with the near term intention to grow to 500 students and a long-term aspiration of 1,000 students. Within the teaching and learning strand, the successful 'makerspace' in the Library could be a model for other parts of the University to establish makerspaces, with a paper to be submitted to the Committee on this topic.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- How to adopt the online/distance learning technologies for the hybrid online/in person approach to be pioneered by the Edinburgh Futures Institute – a course in teaching online courses has been developed and a course in teaching hybrid online/in person courses could be developed in partnership with the Edinburgh Futures Institute;
- Managing the tension between maintaining sufficient recurrent funding for core services and funding digital transformation projects – this will be done in close consultation with the Colleges to ensure that the appropriate balance is met;
- The potential for very different makerspaces in engineering or medicine is exciting – student demand for such provision is likely strong but will need to be considered against other high student demand areas, e.g. refurbishment of audiovisual facilities;
- Avoiding any disconnect between ISG, Colleges and Edinburgh Futures Institute colleagues on Distance Learning at Scale activities – the consolidation of virtual learning environments (see Item 6 below) has helped bring staff across the University together. ISG are working to connect staff specialising in online learning across the University and this will continue.

2 World Class Data Infrastructure IT Equipment Procurement

Following an overview presentation at the previous meeting, the planned procurement of Information Technology equipment for the City Region Deal's World Class Data Infrastructure hub was reviewed. The inclusion of an information security component was welcomed and plans to mitigate software costs by using open source software where possible discussed. Consideration of data ethics was raised, to be overseen on a project by project basis by the City Deal Executive Governance Group and by the AI & Data Ethics Board chaired by Vice-Principal Professor Richard Kenway as appropriate. Provision for long term costs after the end of the 10 year funding period was queried, with the funding provided including a replacement cycle to cover a 15 year period and the intention to move towards self-funding over the period.

Environmental sustainability in relation to high performance computing systems more generally was discussed, noting that the largest system is the ARCHER2 system, which is a UK national resource hosted in Edinburgh and should be

considered on a national level. The University uses a green electricity tariff and for the next generation of high performance computing systems is considering novel approaches to cooling and heat reclamation. An initial study is underway and funding to develop this applied for.

The Committee agreed to recommend to Policy & Resources Committee and Court that the University procure the IT equipment using an open procedure through the Official Journal of the European Union. The Committee further agreed to recommend to Court that, following the successful conclusion of the procurement process, contract signature (for an initial period of 5 years) is delegated to the Principal and subsequent to contract signature, authority is delegated to Professor Mark Parsons under the governance of City Deal Executive Governance Group to issue Purchase Orders against the IT Building Block price list.

3 Information Security Update

An update on current and planned work being undertaken to address the ongoing information security threat facing the University was considered. How to effectively publicise the Information Security Guidance for Travel to High Risk Countries was discussed, with the intention for the guidance to be raised automatically when arranging insurance for travel to one of the high risk countries. The Chief Information Security Officer was invited to meet with groups undertaking regular travel to China such as those involved in teaching in collaborative institutes. Information Services Group were encouraged to ensure that a potential unintended consequence of the sustainable IT policy in the form of staff purchases of personal IT devices was avoided and to ensure that the provision of 'clean' University devices for those travelling to high risk countries is made as simple as possible to encourage take up.

4 Data-Driven Innovation: Regional Internet of Things Sensor Network

Following approval of the first phase data platform appliance at the previous meeting, the purchase of the second phase sensor network as part of the City Region Deal's World Class Data Infrastructure Internet of Things service was considered. Ethical and data security considerations in the establishment of a sensor network were raised, with projects to be reviewed by School-level Ethics Committees and the AI & Data Ethics Board as appropriate and an intention to set an exemplar in data security for the sensor network. The Committee approved the investment and delegated signing authority for the purchase to the Vice-Principal & Chief Information Officer.

5 IT Committee: Revised Terms of Reference

Following review by a working group, revised terms of reference for the IT Committee were submitted for approval. The intention to bolster the IT Committee's ability to govern the acquisition and implementation of IT systems with the aim of avoiding proliferation of systems in different parts of the University was welcomed. Adding pre-approval checks to procurement processes as a further safeguard was also suggested. Subject to minor textual amendments in consultation with the Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning, the revised terms of reference were approved.

6 Virtual Learning Environment Programme Closure Report

A closure report on the four year programme to consolidate the number of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platforms used within the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine was reviewed. The Committee congratulated all those involved in the programme for the success achieved and discussed how to embed findings in institutional memory. It was suggested that ensuring that the main VLE now in use, 'Learn', is sufficiently flexible to incorporate novel uses by teaching staff is key to avoiding the creation of new VLEs within Schools without the support of the Information Services Group.