The University of Edinburgh

**Minutes of the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
held at 10.00am on Thursday 19 September 2019 in the Raeburn Room, Old College**

Present:

Professor Alan Murray (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Support
Dr Jeremy Crang (Vice-Convener)	Dean of Students (CAHSS)
Dr Paul Norris	Associate Dean (Academic Progress) (CAHSS)
Dr Lisa Kendall	Head of Academic and Student Administration
Kirsty Woomble	Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)
Professor Judy Hardy	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE)
Stephen Warrington	Dean of Student Experience (CSE)
Claire Vallance	Head of Academic Affairs (CSE)
Dr Antony Maciocia	Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE)
Philippa Burrell	Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)
Stephanie Vallancey	Vice President Education, Students' Association
Gemma Riddell	Advice Place Senior Academic Adviser
Rayya Ghul	Institute for Academic Development (IAD)
Dr Adam Bunni	Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, Academic Services
Sarah McAllister	Student Systems and Administration
Anne-Marie Scott	IS Learning, Teaching and Web

In attendance:

Ailsa Taylor	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Tom Ward	Head of Education Administration and Change Management, Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI)
Rebecca Shade	Service Excellence Programme - Student Administration and Support

Apologies for absence:

Professor Neil Turner	Dean of Undergraduate Learning and Teaching (CMVM)
Dr Paddy Hadoke	Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM)

1. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

   The minutes of the previous (Curriculum and Student Progression Committee) meeting held on 30 May 2019 were approved as an accurate record.

2. **Matters Arising**

   There were no matters arising.

3. **Curriculum approval arrangements for Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) (APRC 19/20 1A)**

Tom Ward presented this paper. Under the University's Terms of Reference for Boards of Studies, the Committee was required to approve the establishment of Boards of Studies that operated at College or University level (rather than the normal School level arrangements). The Committee gave their approval for the establishment of an EFI Curriculum Oversight Board, as proposed in the paper. It was understood by the Committee that these arrangements would be interim from 2019/20 until the end of 2021-22, by which time EFI would have secured approval for the initial UG and PGT educational portfolio, and EFI's ongoing management and operational structures would also be in place. In practice there would be a small number of validation events during the two-year period - mostly involving a suite of 6-8 Masters programmes and some optional undergraduate courses.

The following comments were also made on the EFI proposals, as presented:

- Equality and diversity/sustainability - members of the Committee encouraged EFI to consider ways in which the Institute could lead the way with new ideas about how the University satisfies itself that equality and diversity, and sustainability issues were incorporated into the curriculum planning process in ways that could be evidenced/measured. The Committee recognised that the Curriculum Oversight Board was already expecting to operate according to the University's policy on Programme and Course Approval and Management, which set out how Boards of Studies took account of equality and diversity issues when considering curriculum proposals.

- Evaluation of success - a query was raised by a Committee member about how EFI expected to evaluate its success, and another member queried whether the output of any evaluation would come back to APRC. Mr Ward anticipated that feedback would be sought from Curriculum Oversight Board members, with evidence to be sought that it had done its job properly. Evaluation would also take place through annual College Quality Assurance (QA) processes, and there was a possibility that EFI might be subject to future Internal Programme Review (IPR) processes.

- Risks - Committee members discussed possible risks, such as the risk of raising expectations too high in terms of what EFI will be able to deliver. The Committee felt it was important to emphasise that the mono-disciplinary models in operation elsewhere in the University were not deficient in comparison with the EFI interdisciplinary offering.

- CAHSS/CSE/CMVM School contributions – whilst the majority of the Schools contributing to the first wave of EFI courses and programmes were from CAHSS, it was recognised by the Committee that there were also likely to be important contributions to EFI from CSE (e.g. Maths/Informatics/GeoSciences). EFI was to be located within CAHSS in governance terms, but EFI would work with Schools across the University to deliver its educational vision. Discussions were currently being held with CMVM about potential contributions. The Committee agreed that the

Curriculum Oversight Board's operation could be extended to the other Colleges at a future point if required (on the same basis that it applied to CAHSS) without needing further Committee agreement.

4. **Special Circumstances and Coursework Extensions Project - Extensions Policy Changes for 2020/21 (APRC 19/20 1B)**

Sarah McAllister and Rebecca Shade presented this paper. Activity was underway to create a new dedicated professional service in the University, providing students with a single point of access system for applying for coursework extensions and special circumstances. Eligibility, evidence review and validity would be performed by a dedicated service in Student Systems and Administration, with support and academic outcome decisions remaining in Schools.

The Committee provided feedback about the draft regulation 28 (Taught Assessment Regulation 28 Late submission of coursework) which included:

- Comments that there was some superfluous operational detail that should be removed as it was not regulatory;
- Comments about the naming of the Service, which was still a matter for debate;
- Comments about the details of the text of Taught Assessment Regulations 28.1, 28.3 and 28.9, which were to be considered further.

> **ACTION - Sarah McAllister to present another paper to APRC's November 2019 meeting about the Special Circumstances and Coursework Extensions Project.**

Discussion was held by the Committee on the timelines for late submission, including the plans for the assessment support online system managed by the Student Support Operations team to have a maximum turnaround time of two working days for applications.

The Committee raised queries about the interactions between late submission and the 15 day feedback turnaround time regulation within the Taught Assessment Regulations (e.g. if submission came later than 7 calendar days, what impact might this have upon feedback timescales?). It was also noted that it would arguably be preferable to state that feedback would be prompt enough to be useful, rather than so time specific in the regulations, as some feedback was needed earlier and some feedback could be received later than 15 days after submission without detriment.

Members also raised concerns about the requirement for Masters students to submit special circumstances forms for short extensions for late dissertation submissions, which was proving administratively burdensome.

It was noted that the Taught Assessment Regulations 2019/20 stated in 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. 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". The Committee agreed that

the responsibility for agreeing which courses would not permit late submission for particular components of assessment should rest with Boards of Studies.

Committee members noted that the Taught Assessment Regulations 2020/21 would technically not need to be formally approved until much later in the academic session 2019/20, therefore there was time for more detailed consideration and review of the regulations in advance of publication.

5. **APRC Membership and Terms of Reference 2019/20 (APRC 19/20 1C)**

This paper was received by the Committee for information.

6. **Knowledge Strategy Committee Report (APRC 19/20 1D)**

This report was received by the Committee for information.

7. **Any Other Business**

There was no further business.

Academic Services
26 September 2019