

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Periodic Review

14-week response report

Internal Periodic Review of: Undergraduate Provision at the University of Edinburgh Business School

Date of review: 18-19 February 2020

Date of 14-week response: 25 August 2020

Date of year on response: 19 May 2021

The School Area is responsible for reporting on progress with all recommendations, including those remitted to other areas of the University for action.

If any recommendation has been fully addressed please record the action taken and date completed. Any barriers to progress should be highlighted on this report.

Rec. no	Recommendation	Timescale for completion	Comments on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion	Completion date
1.	It is strongly recommended that the identification of appropriate, high quality space for the Business School is prioritised by the College. The lack of capacity to have any undergraduate teaching in the building is likely to continue to be a very significant negative factor in terms of student experience, and act against efforts to build a community of practice.	Unclear	College has been in no position to engage in discussions about this matter owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. A promised new building for the School to accommodate all students, initially expected to be available by 2023, was first delayed to 2027 and with the onset of the pandemic is now completely 'off the drawing board' owing to the financial impact of the pandemic. We will continue to engage with College and the University about this matter but a resolution should not be expected in the foreseeable future.	
2.	The review team recommends that the Business School is supported by the College to engage proactively with the central timetabling unit to ensure that room scheduling and timetabling is efficient and effective. Currently, the scheduling of concurrent classes which are not proximate is highly detrimental to students and staff, and also raises concerns about accessibility.	Unclear	The Timetabling Unit at the University has been in no position to engage in discussions about this matter owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. At present, they are struggling to accommodate timetabling for Semester 1, AY2020/21 working with vastly changed parameters. We hope to be able to share more detail in our 1-year-on response.	
3.	The review team recommends that there is School-level teaching practice training provision for Postgraduate Tutors, and that this is compulsory and paid for. Furthermore, Postgraduate Tutors should be mentored and signposted to courses by IAD and programmes and fellowship routes by Advance HE. We also recommend strongly that Postgraduate Tutors be given the opportunity for meaningful annual review of their teaching in line with University policy.	We hope to be able to implement this for the AY 2021/22	We were able to implement some changes to the guidance for the Teaching Assistants produced by the Course Organiser for the AY2020/21. On April 23 rd , 2020, the School's Learning and Teaching Forum approved the terms of reference for a comprehensive project in relation to Recruitment, Support and Mentoring of Teaching Assistants and in this the role of TAs in the Business School. This will include a review of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks undertaken by TAs and what proportion of tasks should be retained by Course Organisers; also how this relates to wider capacity needs and the student experience. 	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The job description for TAs and in this the tasks and volume of tasks devolved to TAs – they are to ‘deliver’ but not to ‘develop’ teaching. • Processes for the recruitment of all categories of Teaching Assistant. • Guidance to Course Organisers. • Guidance and supporting instructions to TAs, e.g. teaching objectives, advice on how to conduct the tutorial, marking guidance documents, timelines and a statement on what meetings and support the TA will receive expect. • Guidance and processes for supporting TAs before, during and after their appointment, including processes for annual review of their teaching, in line with University policy. <p>We will develop a SharePoint resource holding all guidance and templates and we plan to implement a year-end review for comparing the projected use of TAs and the actual use, at Group and School level.</p> <p>Discussions have started with Velda McCune (and others) at IAD to help with devising an in-house Edinburgh Teaching Award and we are still planning to trial this with PhD Tutors in 20/21 though our efforts may be impacted by the ongoing COVID 19 crisis.</p> <p>The work will be led by the Director of UG Programmes (who has taken on the responsibilities of the Senior Teaching Assistant Coordinator) and the Director of Faculty. A variety of staff including the Senior Teaching Fellow in Business Education, PhD and External TAs will contribute to the work. TA allocation is ongoing and has been hugely complicated by COVID 19. A training programme will be launched in Sept 2020 to equip all TA’s with the necessary digital skills to work under hybrid conditions. In addition, under hybrid planning for 20/21, all Course Organisers have planned more explicit and regular meetings with their TA’s to help support them and manage the work they will be delivering (which for some will be onsite and digital and for others digital only).</p> <p>It is our intention to have this work completed and implemented in tome for the AY 2021/22 but we may need to defer this owing to COVID-19.</p>	
4.	The review team recommends that the School invests in providing teaching staff with increased opportunities for teaching practice training and reflection, and signposting to the relevant courses by IAD and programmes and fellowship by	Unclear	Plans (and discussions) are ongoing regarding the development of an in-house Edinburgh Teaching Award for PhD and External Tutors and Faculty staff. The Director of UG Programmes, the Director of Faculty and the Senior Teaching Fellow in Business Education have started internal discussions about this and	

	Advance HE. This is particularly important for new members of faculty staff.		reached out to IAD (Velda McCune) to get their advice and support. We aim to continue taking this forward in 20/21 though progress was severely curtailed by the COVID 19 crisis.	
5.	Building on the School Forum, the review team recommends that the School investigate ways of providing more and better advertised opportunities to share good practice in relation to teaching.	Unclear	Our plan is for the School's Learning and Teaching Forum to propose a model for this in collaboration with our Teaching Champions. Owing to the impact from COVID-19 we have not had time to take this forward though interesting our Keeping Connected sessions (instigated to bring the school community together virtually during COVID19, have included some very interesting pedagogic shares especially from staff with digital and online education experience. We hope to be able to share more detail in our 1-year-on response.	
6.	It is recommended that the School consider whether the apparently wide number of Honours option courses available meet the School's educational goals, and also meet with student demand and expectation.	Unclear	This review had already begun but was set aside when the pandemic reached the University. A small reduction (15%) was approved for 20/21 to aid with COVID 19 planning and resilience. We hope to be able to share more detail in our 1-year-on response.	
7.	The review team recommends that the School works with the College to ensure that the professional services UG support resourcing model is adequate for current and future needs.	Unclear	Notwithstanding the huge upheaval associated with COVID 19 and the immense workload that our teaching offices have been coping with, the Director of Professional Services, Head of Student Experience, UG Programme Manager and the PGT Programme Manager have been in discussions about how to bring together the Teaching Offices, and better and more agilely support students especially at UG level. Two additional fixed term posts were approved and recruitment has started. Much more work is needed on this and we hope to be able to share more detail in our 1-year-on response.	
	Suggestions	We understand that we are not required to include this in our response. We are including this for reference.		
	It is suggested that the School review the Teaching Champion pilot after one year, in November 2020.	Unclear	This is something we had already planned to do. We will undertake this review as soon as possible but probably not after one year.	Unclear
	The review team suggests that in addition to seeking opportunities to roll out such initiatives (e.g. the India Trek) to more students, the School may wish to reflect on the environmental impact.	Unclear	The pandemic has forced all schools in the university to rethink all delivery. The School has developed considerable expertise in developing online event and training – student coaching is an example – and we may be able to take this expertise into this domain.	Unclear
	It is also suggested that the School consider whether the School Forum could meet more frequently.	Completed	At present we consider three School Forum meetings a year sufficient, to maintain engagement but also to maintain the sense of expectation surrounding School Forum meetings. Since	Completed

			the outbreak of the pandemic, we are holding regular digital Keeping Connected event with updates, research sharing and a “Desert Island Disc” slot. These changes have been positively received and attendance has been excellent. We will be reviewing in 2020/21, via the School Executive but believe that we are likely to continue regular but less formal post COVID-19 as they serve a different, but valuable, purpose.	
	The review team suggests that the School review the appropriateness of the large amount of group assessment, especially for those students returning from a year abroad whose marks may be disproportionately affected by poor group performance.	Unclear	This review had already begun but was set aside when the pandemic reached the University. We hope to be able to share more detail in our 1-year-on response.	Unclear
	Please report on steps taken to feedback to students on the outcomes of the review.	With permission from the Panel, we were able to record the open feedback session. This we subsequently shared with undergraduate students via Learn early June. Future progress will be share with students via relevant committees and newsletters.		
	For Year on response only			
	Any examples of a positive change as a result of the review			