Minutes of the Meeting of the Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) held at 2pm on Wednesday 23 May 2018 in the Raeburn Room, Old College

1. Attendance

Present:

Ms Bobi Archer	Vice President (Education), Edinburgh University Students' Association (Ex officio)
Ms Rebecca Gaukroger	Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions (Ex officio)
Professor Iain Gordon	Head of School of Mathematics (Co-opted member)
Ms Shelagh Green	Director for Careers and Employability (Ex officio)
Ms Melissa Highton	Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division (Ex officio)
Professor Charlie Jeffery (Convener)	Senior Vice-Principal
Ms Nichola Kett	Academic Governance Representative, Academic Services
Dr Velda McCune	Deputy Director, Institute for Academic Development (Director's nominee) (Ex officio)
Professor Neil Mulholland	Dean of Postgraduate Studies (CAHSS)
Professor Graeme Reid	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE)
Dr Sabine Rolle	Dean of Undergraduate Studies (CAHSS)
Professor Neil Turner	Director of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning, (CMVM)
Mrs Philippa Ward (Secretary)	Academic Services
Mr Tom Ward	University Secretary's Nominee, Director of Academic Services (Ex officio)

Apologies:

Ms Megan Brown	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Academic Engagement Co-ordinator (Ex officio)
Professor Rowena Arshad	Head of Moray House School of Education (Co-opted member)
Professor Sian Bayne	Director of Centre for Research in Digital Education (Co-opted member)
Professor Sarah Cunningham-Burley	Assistant Principal (Research-Led Learning), Dean (CMVM)
Professor Judy Hardy	Director of Teaching, School of Physics and Astronomy (CSE)
Professor Tina Harrison	Assistant Principal (Academic Standards and Quality Assurance)

In attendance:

Mr Russell Bartlett	Communications and Marketing
Ms Rosalyn Claase	Business School
Mr Neil McCormick	Learning, Teaching and Web Services
Mr Al Powell	University of Edinburgh Students' Association
Professor John Ravenscroft	Moray House School of Education
Professor Susan Rhind	Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback
Dr Simon Riley	Deanery of Clinical Sciences

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2018 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Consultation on University-Wide Courses

A report on the findings of the consultation on University-Wide Courses would be prepared and circulated in the next few weeks, and brought formally to the Committee in September 2018.

> **Action:** Assistant Principal Research-Led Learning and Secretary to prepare report, circulate to members, and bring formally to the Committee in September 2018.

4. Convener's Communications

4.1 Subject-Level Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The Convener reported that consultation on a Subject-Level TEF had now closed. A response had been submitted by Universities Scotland.

4.2 Scottish Government 15-24 Learner Journey Review

The report of the Review had recently been published. It promoted a more holistic approach to learning and smoother transitions across sectors, including better articulation between further and higher education, and greater involvement of universities in the delivery of Advanced Highers.

5. For Discussion

5.1 Entrants Survey 2017 Results

Russell Bartlett (Communications and Marketing) presented the results and findings of the Entrants, Decliners and Non-Matriculating Surveys 2017. Key findings were:

- Entrants accept the University of Edinburgh because of its reputation, location and programme content. The quality of the University's academic staff is also influential.
- The website is a key tool, and international students in particular look at all available sources of information. It is therefore important that the University communicates a consistent message across all channels.
- Considering non-matriculating students: for some programmes, almost 50% of those offered places do not take up the offer. In 75% of these cases, this is due to cost, with many hoping to take up the offer at a later date.
- Around half of those who declined a place at the University of Edinburgh accepted a place at one of ten other institutions. Communications and Marketing is monitoring what these institutions offer. In some cases, Edinburgh does not offer the programme taken up at the other institution. However, in some cases, the University is not communicating what it offers sufficiently clearly. Lack of certainty

about the courses that might be offered in any given year is thought to be a particular problem.
- The most important factors for undergraduate decliners are content and reputation. For postgraduate decliners, cost, content, reputation and location are all important.

Members noted that one of the University's key selling points is programme flexibility. However, there are questions around whether students are able to take full advantage of this flexibility, and whether this is having an impact on the student experience.

In relation to cost, it was confirmed that it is primarily the cost of tuition that discourages students from coming to Edinburgh. Members were advised that more detailed information about the Surveys' findings could be provided if required.

Action: Members to contact Communications and Marketing if they would like more detailed information about the Surveys' findings.

5.2 Enhancing the Student Voice though the Student Representation System

The Students' Association Vice-President (Education) advised members that two Schools – the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies and the Business School – had piloted a programme-level student representation system in 2017/18. In person training had been provided for representatives, resulting in a significant increase in uptake.

The Business School reported that the change to a programme-level system had been timely. Having a smaller number of student representatives had facilitated better communication and dialogue, allowing programme and School issues to be addressed more effectively. As a learning point, it was noted that the change had been implemented quickly, and more could have been done to articulate to both staff and students what the implications of the change would be.

The Vice-President (Education) had consulted Schools about the new system, and had received responses from 21 Schools. 17 of these were planning to introduce a programme-level representation system. The Students' Assocation was aiming to offer in person, School-specific training for representatives in partnership with Schools. Work to develop the LEARN platform to allow it to be used as a communication hub for representatives was underway.

LTC agreed that from 2019/20, all Schools would be asked to implement a programme-level representation system. Exceptions to this would be considered by Academic Services and the Students' Association, overseen by Senate Quality Assurance Committee (QAC).

It was noted that:

- it would be essential for the incoming Students' Assocation Vice-President (Education) to continue the work that had been started by the present incumbent.
- sharing best practice identified through the pilot may assist other Schools to overcome concerns about the new system.
- it would be important to ensure that those students taking outside courses were clear about ways in which they might provide feedback.

Action:
1) Students' Assocation Vice-President (Education) to ensure that work around the student representation system is taken forward by the new post-holder.
2) Secretary to discuss oversight of the new student representation system with the Secretary to QAC.

5.3 Learning Analytics – Proposals

Members were reminded that there had been a delay in producing the detailed Policy because of uncertainties around the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation. The Committee approved the Policy, noting the following:

- Section 7 bullet point 3 should be amended to clarify what was meant by 'more than one School' (interdisciplinary provision owned by more than one School).
- There would be benefit in producing some 'Frequently Asked Questions' or similar to help users navigate the Policy.

Action: Director of Academic Services to amend section 7 bullet point 3 and to produce FAQs or similar to support the Policy.

5.4 Report of Careers, Employability and Graduate Attributes Task Group

The paper was presented by the Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback, who reiterated that employability should be an intentional by-product of the University's high-quality learning and teaching, and that any work in this area should not be metrics-driven. However, it was important to recognise that the University had been below its HESA Performance Indicator Benchmark in this area for the past 5 years.

The Task Group had recognised that the term 'employability' was not universally understood, and had therefore aimed to produce a University of Edinburgh definition. The Group had also made 5 key recommendations:

1. that steps are taken to ensure that employability is seen as a strategic priority;
2. that Schools and Subject Areas are asked to engage more systematically with information sets that are available and to use them to develop a local, evidence-based, strategic approach to employability;
3. that further work is done on employability-related communications;
4. that Subject Areas assess the extent to which activity supporting employability is embedded within the curriculum.
5. that funding is secured for additional audit activity in the area of employability.

The following was discussed by the Committee:

- Some uncertainty remained about why Edinburgh was not performing as well in this area as comparable institutions. The idea of securing additional funding to enable further research to be undertaken was therefore supported.
- Providing students with opportunities to gain meaningful work experience was considered key. Areas of the University employing students regularly should ensure that the positions offered equip students with useful, transferable skills.

- The paper focussed primarily on the transition from undergraduate study to employment, but consideration also needed to be given to the transitions from postgraduate taught and postgraduate research study.
- A School-based approach to employability was supported. It would also be important to share best practice between Schools and to gather the views of employers.

LTC agreed that ensuring that employability was seen as a strategically important and developing a better evidence base should be prioritised at this stage. As such, the Convener would discuss the matter with Heads of Colleges, with the aim of reporting to Court in due course, and additional research with recent alumni and employers of University of Edinburgh graduates would be commissioned. It was also agreed that employability would be discussed at a forthcoming meeting of the Directors of Teaching Network.

Action:
1) Convener to discuss employability as a strategic priority with Heads of College.
2) Director of Careers Service to commission additional research with recent graduates and employers.
3) Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback to add employability to the agenda for a forthcoming Directors of Teaching Network meeting.

5.5 Student-Led, Individually-Created Courses (SLICCs): Priorities for 2018-2020

The paper was presented by Dr Riley and Professor Ravenscroft. It summarised the background and progress to date with SLICCs, and broad objectives for the next two years. It was noted that the SLICCs framework was being used in two ways:

1. As a centrally-run course hosted by Moray House School of Education as an outside elective for Y1 and Y2 students over the summer.
2. As in-programme SLICCs where existing degree programmes and courses embed the SLICC reflective framework and supporting materials in their provision, both as individual student projects, and working with students in groups.

LTC was asked to identify priority areas for exploration, rollout and evaluation during the next two years. LTC supported this work, noting its consistency, pedagogical robustness, student benefits, and support for various challenges and agendas, including employability and learning and assessment literacy. LTC encouraged continued development and exploration of:
- harnessing the flexibility of the SLICCs framework to:
    - provide academic credit for term-time experiential learning, potentially of particular benefit for WP students
    - help students bring together the learning from the two core subjects of a joint degree programme
    - assist students with the transition from further to higher education as a Foundation course
    - facilitate the development of co-created courses
    - facilitate support for community engagement, for academic credit
- scalability - there were mixed views about the amount of academic time needed to support the centrally-run SLICCs and this should be considered to ensure a

sustainable and scalable approach is achieved; group-based SLICCs may have particular value. However, it was agreed that there are already scalability opportunities with the in-programme SLICCs

- staff involvement and capacity - continue developing a network of SLICC champions to help drive developments forward, including possibly awarding credit to participants on the Edinburgh Teaching Award (EdTA) for supervising centrally-run SLICCs;
- terminology - consider a name change to better reflect the methodology and remove a potential current barrier
- evaluation - undertaking a structured evaluation of the impact of SLICCs to inform future developments.

5.6 Lecture Recording Policy

Members considered the draft Policy in detail, and proposed amendments to sections 1.4iii, 1.5, 1.6, 2.2, 2.4 and 5.4.

The Committee noted that the University and College Union (UCU) Consultation Group had expressed support for an opt-in position, while the University of Edinburgh Students' Association supported an opt-out with support from the Head of School position. In light of the consultation feedback, the Lecture Recording Policy Task Group recommended that the Policy should be opt-out, but that lecturers rather than the Head of School should be responsible for deciding whether or not a lecture should be recorded.

Learning and Teaching Committee approved the Policy for introduction from the start of 2018-19, subject to endorsement from the CJCNC in relation to its implications for employment. Those involved in developing the Policy were thanked for conducting a thorough consultation and developing a high quality document.

5.7 Distance Learning at Scale

Members were content with the proposed approach to student status, namely that those studying on a MOOC-like basis would be considered 'learners', while anyone studying for credit would have full student status. At present, anyone with student status is entitled to make use of all University services. The Committee recognised that as the student body became more heterogeneous, having access to all services may become less important. There would be further discussion of this issue over the summer. Members discussed the status of distance learning students in statutory returns.

LTC was positive about the key benefits anticipated from the Distance Learning at Scale pilot. In relation to measures of success, the potential benefit of including a measure reflecting the University's aspirations around widening participation was discussed.

5.8   Final Report of the Research-Led Learning and Teaching Task Group

LTC welcomed the final report of the Task Group, and were positive about the inclusive definition of research-led learning. It was noted that benchmarking against comparable institutions had proved inconclusive, and that identifying ways in which the University's

research-led learning might be evaluated had proved to be the most complex aspect of the Task Group's remit.

Members discussed the value of undertaking a Principal's Teaching Award Scheme (PTAS) funded project to do further work in this area. It was suggested that a number of research projects had already considered evidence-based pedagogy, and that there may therefore be benefit in using any funding awarded to consider the other aspects of research-led learning.

Members also discussed:

- the fact that assessment is often a barrier to research-led learning and enquiry, as it discourages students from taking risks;
- the questionnaire included as Appendix 1, which aimed to surface and encourage research-led learning at programme level, and was considered to be a useful tool;
- the overlap between employability and research-led learning, it being recognised that awareness of both needed to be raised;
- the benefits of incorporating discussion of research-led learning in Boards of Examiners' training.

It was agreed that the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance would be asked to take this area forward.

Action: Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance to be asked to take discussions around research-led learning forward.

6. For Information and Noting

6.1 Student Mental Health Strategy Implementation: Update

Members welcomed the paper, and agreed that there would be benefit in discussing it further. The paper would be brought back to the September meeting, and the Director of Student Wellbeing would be asked to attend.

Action: Secretary to add discussion of the Student Mental Health Strategy implementation to the agenda for the September 2018 meeting and to ask the Director of Student Wellbeing to attend the meeting.

6.2 Guidance for Schools on Situations where Religious Observance (such as Fasting) has Potential Health and Safety Implications for Academic Learning Activity

Members noted that the University had agreed to produce guidance as opposed to a formal policy on religious observance as it applied to only a small number of cases. It was agreed that the guidance would be amended to highlight the support structures that are in place for religious observance, and to provide advice on how students might appeal any decision taken by the University in relation to religious observance.

Action: Director of Academic Services and Students' Association to amend the guidance as required.

6.3 Report from Learning and Teaching Policy Group

The report was noted.

6.4 Report from Knowledge Strategy Committee, 23 March 2018

The report was noted.

6.5 Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate Committees

Members noted that their views on the effectiveness of the Committee would be sought over the summer.

7.　　Any Other Business

Members thanked the outgoing Students' Association Vice-President (Education) for her impressive contribution to the work of the Committee. Her constructive approach to discussions had been greatly appreciated, and her work, particularly in relation to the student representation system, had had a significant impact.

Members also thanked the Assistant Principal Research-Led Learning who would be leaving the Committee in August 2018.