

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

**Meeting to be held on Thursday 9 December 2021
at 2pm via Microsoft Teams**

A G E N D A

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For Discussion
4. College Annual Quality Reports 2020-21:
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5. Academic Appeals Annual Report 2020-21 SQAC 21/22 2E
CLOSED PAPER
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- 11. Any Other Business**
- 12. Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 24 February 2022, 2pm, MS Teams

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16 September 2021
at 2pm via Microsoft Teams**

Present:

Professor Tina Harrison (Convener)	Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Brian Connolly	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Dr Gail Duursma	School Representative (Engineering), College of Science and Engineering
Tara Gold	Vice President (Education), Students' Association
Dr Jeni Harden	School Representative (School of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Dr Katherine Inglis	School Representative (Literatures, Languages and Cultures), College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Nichola Kett	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team, Academic Services
Professor Linda Kirstein	Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture, College of Science and Engineering
Dr Paul Norris	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Dr Claire Phillips	Dean of Quality Assurance, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Paula Webster	Head of Student Analytics, Insights and Modelling, Student Systems and Administration

Apologies:

Olivia Eadie	Assistant Director and Head of Operations and Projects, Institute for Academic Development
Stuart Lamot	Edinburgh University Students' Association Representative
Professor Leigh Sparks	Deputy Principal, University of Stirling

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

The Convenor welcomed Tara Gold to her first meeting as the new Students' Association Vice President Education, and thanked Paula Webster, attending her final meeting, for all her work as a member of the Committee.

2. **Minutes of the meetings held on Thursday 20 May 2021 and the electronic meeting conducted between Wednesday 18 and Monday 23 August 2021**

The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meetings.

3. **Matters Arising**

- **Student Voice Policy**

The Convenor reported that discussions had taken place with Directors of Teaching regarding practical support and guidance to develop a new approach to course level feedback. It was noted that work to develop the toolkit and supporting guidance was ongoing.

- **Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)**

The Convenor reported that the Principal had submitted a letter in support of SRUC's application for degree-awarding powers.

For Discussion

4. **School Annual Quality Reports 2020-21: Sub Group Report**

The Committee discussed the report from the sub-group tasked with reviewing the School annual quality reports.

It was noted that the light touch, interim approach had been maintained for the 2020-21 reporting cycle focusing on the impact of and learning from the Covid-19 pandemic. The streamlined reporting template was used but Schools were asked to complete all three questions this year (updating on actions from the previous reporting cycle was optional for the 2019-20 reports). This year Schools were informed that the Committee was particularly interested in their reflections on student progression and outcomes (focussing on the difference in attainment of groups of students, rather than comparing against other years) and student feedback. To aide their reflection, student data was available at the Insights Hub and the Student Analytics, Insights & Modelling SharePoint with online training available at PowerBI help videos. The Student Systems team also produced new guidance on using data for annual reporting made available to Schools at the Analytics SharePoint.

The following themes for further development at University level were noted:

- **Staff Welfare and Student Experience**

There are ongoing concerns that the pandemic has exacerbated existing issues in relation to staffing and workload pressures, particularly as the University admitted an exceptionally large number of students in 2020-21. This year's reports raised concerns that these may now be impacting the student experience.

The Committee noted that the recent Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) recommended the University ‘implement an approach to facilitate institutional oversight and the effective planning and monitoring of student numbers, in order to ensure that appropriate and timely actions can be taken where increases in student numbers impact on arrangements for learning and teaching and student support.’

Action: Committee Secretary to refer issue to the ELIR Response Oversight Group.

- **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)**

Increasingly Schools/Deaneries have engaged with student data and reflected on the gaps in attainment of different groups of students within their local area and across the University. Concerns were raised in a number of reports about the University’s support of students with protected characteristics, particularly in relation to the impact of the pandemic. The issues have been widely discussed and Schools/Deaneries would now like support from the University to address the underlying causes.

The Committee noted that this was also the focus of an ELIR recommended encouraging the University to ‘consider how to address attainment gaps in student performance through the oversight, coordination and monitoring at an institutional level of school-level actions’.

Action: Committee Secretary to refer issue to the ELIR Response Oversight Group.

- **Online/Hybrid Platforms**

In response to the pandemic, Schools/Deaneries developed new approaches to teaching & learning and administrative systems and procedures. They would like to maintain and carry these innovations into the post-pandemic world and, to support this aspiration, there is a general desire for a strategic assessment of the University’s online learning platforms with the aim of improving functionality and suitability.

Action: Committee Secretary to refer issue to Information Systems and the Curriculum Transformation team.

The Committee also noted the importance of the following issues and agreed to request follow-up actions and monitor progress:

- **Postgraduate Research (PGR) Students**

A number of issues relating to PGR students were noted including the long term impact of Covid on both their research (e.g. lack of lab access adversely affecting their submission rates and funding) and their welfare (e.g. due to the isolation from their social and academic communities). Concerns were also raised regarding the level of PGR fees set by the University and the limits this set on the breadth and diversity of the PGR student community (e.g. deterring students from a non-traditional or widening participation background from considering research as a career step or option).

Action: Committee Secretary to refer issue to the Doctoral College.

- **Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC)**

The new centralised ESC system continues to be an issue across a number of reports, exacerbated by the Covid mitigations last year. Concerns persist about the timing of the implementation of the ESC and the additional workload and stress this caused staff due to systems issues and response times, at a time when they were already under pressure. Concerns regarding the extra assistance required to inform PTs and students of the new ESC system and the necessity to highlight to students the importance/benefits of involving the PT (if feasible/appropriate) when submitting a SC application (inherent risk of circumventing the PT). A major concern is the lack of automated notice to PTs when a case has been submitted.

Action: Committee Secretary to refer issue to the Deputy Secretary Student Experience.

- **Student Support and Personal Tutor (PTSS) Review**

Schools/Deaneries reported concerns that consideration must be given to how the new system will be resourced. The proposed evolved model of student support will require additional resources for Schools/Deaneries in order to recruit sufficient professional services staff for the new system. It is fundamentally important that the new system of student support is aligned and thoroughly linked to the ESC system.

The Committee again noted that the PT system was also the focus of an ELIR recommended.

Action: Committee Secretary to refer issue to the Deputy Secretary Student Experience and the ELIR Response Oversight Group.

The Committee noted that the streamlined interim process had worked well again this year and commended the Directors of Quality and all the School staff who had collaborated in the process for their excellent work under very challenging circumstances.

The Committee noted that the reports represented a rich depository of good practice that should be shared across the University. It was agreed that the College Deans would nominate outstanding examples of innovative learning and teaching practice for Academic Services and the Institute for Academic Development to share at University level.

Action: College Deans to send examples of innovative learning and teaching practice to Academic Services.

The Committee agreed that a themed template would allow for a more standardised approach to reporting while also allowing Schools the scope to expand on specific local issues and activities. It was also noted that the School and Programme Quality System (SPQS) had again worked very well and that a move to a fully online reporting process across all three Colleges would allow for more efficient analysis

and utilization of the data held within the reports. However, the Committee acknowledged concerns in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine in relation to the open nature of the SPQS and the limited functionality for course level reporting.

Action: Academic Services to explore reporting options, and the plans for the next QA reporting cycle, and discuss with the College Deans during the 2021-22 academic year.

5. Internal Periodic Review Themes 2020-21

The Committee discussed and approved the areas of good practice and further development arising from internal periodic reviews held in 2020-21, and the responsibilities for action in response.

Action: Academic Services to report areas for further development identified in the 2020-21 internal periodic reviews and annual School and College reports to the University Executive for information.

6. Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR): Response Action Plan

The Committee discussed the recent Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) outcome and recommendations and considered the high-level initial plan for progressing the recommendations.

The Committee noted that whilst the overall judgement was positive, and there were several commendations in the report, two key themes run throughout the findings:

- inconsistency in implementation of policy and practice due to variability arising from the University's decentralised nature.
- speed of change has been slow and projects have not delivered substantial change.

The Committee noted that an ELIR Oversight Group has been established (comprising VP Students, Deputy Secretary Student Experience, Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance, Director of IAD, Director of Strategic Change, Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Academic Services) which has had an initial meeting to discuss how to take forward the recommendations.

7. Annual Students' Association Priorities 2021-22

The Committee noted the following priorities of the Students' Association Vice President Education for the academic year 2021/22:

- Strengthening the University's response to the pandemic by prioritising the centring of student voices in decision making and planning, advocating for measures to support students who have missed essential components of their degrees, and working to ensure progress on accessibility is not lost in the return to on-campus activity.

- Modernising Edinburgh's curriculum by supporting student engagement and involvement in the Curriculum Transformation programme's work and outputs.
- Increasing transparency, responsibility, and accountability by working with stakeholders to make the University's structures more accountable on issues important to students (such as sustainability and ethical partnerships) and by advocating for the strengthening of reporting procedures, support structures, and policy protections for marginalised students in academic spaces.

8. Student Staff Liaison Committee Policy

The Committee considered the revised Student-Staff Liaison Committee Operational Guidance, updating and formalising the previous Student-Staff Liaison Committee Operational Guidance into University policy. It was agreed that the Policy required further development to remove repetition and clarify School and College level procedures.

9. Personal Tutor (PT) System Oversight Group

The Committee noted an update on the activities of the Personal Tutor System Oversight Group, in particular the annual review of the School Personal Tutoring Statement (SPTS).

10. Annual Review of Senate Committees Effectiveness

The Committee considered the initial analysis of the feedback received from the Senate Committee Effectiveness survey and approved the actions in response. It was noted that the results of the effectiveness review and agreed actions would be reported to the October 2021 meeting of Senate.

For Information and Formal Business

11. Terms of Reference, Senate Committees Members' Guidance and Committee Priorities 2021-22

The Committee noted the Terms of Reference, Senate Committees Members' Guidance, and summary of the planned priorities for 2021-22 which was approved by Senate in May 2021.

12. Scottish Funding Council Annual Report 2020-21

The Committee noted the University's annual statement on institution-led review and enhancement activity to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

13. Enhancement Themes: End of Year Report

The Committee noted the University's end of year one report on Enhancement Theme activity.

14. Internal Periodic Review: Reports and Responses

SQAC 21/22 2A

The Committee approved the final reports of the Moray House School of Education and Sport (postgraduate provision) and the Maths (postgraduate research) reviews. The Committee also confirmed that it was content with the year-on response of the School of Informatics (postgraduate research) review.

15. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

16. Next Meeting: Thursday 9 December 2021, 2pm, MS Teams

9 December 2021

College Annual Quality Reports 2020-21

Description of paper:

1. The College annual quality reports for 2020-21.

Action requested / recommendation:

2. For discussion.

Background and context:

3. The College annual quality reports for 2020-21.

Discussion:

4. See attached papers.

Resource implications:

5. Considered within the reports.

Risk management:

6. Considered within the reports.

Equality & diversity:

7. Considered within the reports.

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

8. College reports should be considered by the relevant College committee. Should the Committee agree any actions, consideration will be given to how to communicate these.

Authors

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December 2021

Freedom of Information: Open

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH - ANNUAL MONITORING 2020/21
College Report

Guidance:

- An interim process to continue to reflect on the impact of and learning from the Covid-19 outbreak. Also used to reflect on other aspects of academic standards, student performance and the student learning experience. Designed to be light touch and work alongside other academic contingency activity.
- Covers all types of credit-bearing provision: undergraduate, postgraduate taught, and postgraduate research, including collaborations. The report may be split by type of provision.
- The report should be **brief** (suggested length of no more than four pages). Use bullet points where possible.
- Reports should not contain information which identifies any individual – [Data Protection Policy](#)
- **Deadline: Friday 26th November**

1. Reflection on progress with actions from the last year

Please see actions and updates on progress in table provided below. Some actions marked as completed show that College work is still ongoing, but updates and reporting may be carried out via different routes, as part of the various new College action plans.

Actions identified for the College - QA College Actions for 2020/21

Action ID	Action	Status	Progress	Action Source
1.1	Fully integrate preferred digital platforms (Zoom and Teams) into Learn.	Completed	<p>ISG is leading on integration of Zoom into Learn. ISG has consulted and agreed to establish a project to develop standards and publish guidance for using MS Teams for teaching for 21/22 but note that it will not be fully integrated into Learn.</p> <p>College is leading on a project to provide a Teams for Teaching services that will be lightly coupled to Learn - no deep integration.</p> <p>Part of the reprioritised College information strategy and expected to be delivered by start of 21/22.</p>	QA College Report 2019/20
1.2	Invest resources to enhance subtitling/captioning, in order to make teaching materials accessible.	Completed	<p>College has implemented a temporary subtitle service to assist with the correction of automated subtitles. This student-based service is available until 31 July 2021 to correct content intended for reuse or new content created for 2021/22. https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/hss/college-office/academic-administration/SitePages/College-Subtitling-Service.aspx</p> <p>College will develop some refreshed guidance to staff on subtitling and general accessibility of teaching materials in advance of 21/22 academic year.</p>	QA College Report 2019/20
1.3	Create and issue guidance on the digital platforms and tools supported by College (with updates indicating those under impact review).	Completed	<p>Platform Approval process now in place across College setting out a standard process to bring on new technologies: https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/hss/college-office/groups/cpag/SitePages/Platform-and-system-approval-process.aspx</p> <p>Approvals are managed by the local team on behalf of the whole College so when published they can be reused. As the process is matured we will aim to publish those in progress to facilitate collaboration. All completed or in-progress reviews will aim to be published for College-wide, internal consumption so all staff can see requests and progress via the intranet site above.</p> <p>The site sets out the process to be followed and how to initiate via initial request using standard channels stating the functionality required/sought.</p> <p>We are also investigating mechanisms for gathering the user voice continuously allowing staff to highlight areas of improvement and to vote up others. This will assist College and ISG in prioritising resources.</p>	QA College Report 2019/20
1.4	Support Schools in allocating resources, and provide staffing support relating to learning technology.	Completed	<p>A College level Learning Technology team was created to support Schools and College-wide projects. https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/hss/college-office/groups/tel/service-catalogue</p> <p>The College has also implemented a virtual TEL team comprising all Learning Technologists in the College working together to support all Schools.</p>	QA College Report 2019/20

2.1	Improve the experience of students on joint degree programmes.	In progress	This continues to be a key priority and is a focus of the CAHSS L&T Plan in 2021-22. Draft programme director role descriptor went to CUEC 3rd June 21 for discussion on pilot plans; Course enrolment dates/ process harmonisation for College is underway with a new Course Choice Hub for all CAHSS students collating School-level guidance and processes for selecting elective courses; progress has been made with further alignment of key dates e.g. for course choice; the College-maintained Joint Programme School contacts list has been referenced and updated at regular intervals; work on L&T Director role descriptor and induction and resources is also underway	QA College Report 2019/20
2.2	Develop role descriptor for an Undergraduate Programme Director.	In progress	A draft Programme Director role descriptor went to CUEC 3rd June 21, further workshop held after with some Schools to explore a pilot of using this role descriptor. Given the close linkage between elements of the Programme Director and Academic Cohort Lead roles this work will now be incorporated into the phase one implementation for the new model of Student Support.	QA College Report 2019/20
3	Develop procedures for line managers to support staff wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Completed	<p>This has primarily been dealt with at University level, with the creation of a new hub page for Staff health and wellbeing: https://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/health-wellbeing.</p> <p>Stephen Barnes (College Head of HR) has been consulted to provide any updates on College-specific initiatives. A College Return to Campus group is meeting regularly to share experience and best practice.</p>	QA College Report 2019/20
4	Address the student-staff ratio to support quality of teaching and learning experience, accessibility, and working environment.	Completed	This issue is regularly discussed at relevant teaching committees and features in the annual planning datasets and discussions at College Strategy and Management Committee (formerly P&R). Also addressed through additional teaching resourced employed in 20/21 to support large intakes.	QA College Report 2019/20
5	Support Law School's move to gathered field PGT admissions and all further steps, to reduce PGT over-recruitment including the forthcoming trial of tuition fee deposits.	Completed	<p>The PG Admissions Team have worked in partnership with the Law School to move to a gathered field approach for PGT on campus admissions. In the first instance this was limited to two on campus programmes for the 2019 admissions cycle. In the 2020 admissions cycle this approach was expanded to ten PGT on campus programmes in the Law School and in the 2021 admissions cycle all Law on campus PGT programmes are being managed through staged admissions. The staged admissions approach has allowed the School to be more selective and to limit the number of offers being made throughout the cycle. While it is still challenging to manage the intake, this approach has reduced over-recruitment for the School. To further help manage the intake for the 2021 admissions cycle, the PG Admissions Team are running a tuition fee deposit trial with five PGT on campus programmes. This trial is set to continue for the 2022 admissions cycle to allow for applicant behaviour to be monitored and for the process to be refined with more deposit/entrant data available.</p> <p>School QA report 2020/21: request to continue supporting the School's move to gathered field admissions, the trialling of fee</p>	QA College Report 2019/20

			<p>deposit payments and continued refinement of the gathered field process. This has been communicated to our colleagues in College PG Admissions and the range of programmes using gathered field has been extended.</p>	
6	<p>Create and issue College guidance on how quality procedures can be applied to MOOCs and data sets emerging from these courses captured in Power BI.</p>	In progress	<p>College QA Dean to arrange meeting with Student Analytics around expanding dashboards provided for QA purposes, MOOCs will be part of that discussion</p>	<p>QA College Report 2019/20</p>
7	<p>Support in-house solution for surveying graduates, to gain richer understanding of graduate outcomes beyond 15 months from graduation, ideally including those who are self-employed.</p>	Completed	<p>This has been passed to Careers for specific follow up with the School.</p>	<p>QA College Report 2019/20</p>
8	<p>Set up a new simple mechanism for recording PhD viva mode.</p>	Completed	<p>This approval is now delegated to Schools. College office collect the data before the PGR Exam committee.</p>	<p>QA College Report 2019/20</p>
8	<p>Establish process to post a hard PhD thesis copy to examiners who require it.</p>	Completed	<p>The CAHSS Print on Departments Service is now in use in to meet this need. Examiners are still encouraged to read theses digitally, but requests for printed copies and delivery to the Examiner's delivery address can be processed here: https://uoesharepoint.com/sites/hss/SitePages/Print-on-demand-service.aspx</p>	<p>QA College Report 2019/20</p>
8	<p>Create/issue University or College guidance and support for students submitting a 'three paper thesis' (Business).</p>	Completed	<p>Policy on the inclusion of publications: https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/publications_in_thesis.pdf</p> <p>If Business request producing a thesis style with three separate papers, PGR Services will need the School to put a case forward for this style so this can be considered in detail.</p>	<p>QA College Report 2019/20</p>

9	Confirm whether SSLC remits submitted in 2019-20 are approved so that these can be implemented or revised.	Completed	Remits submitted to Academic Services and made available on Schools' webpages	QA College Report 2019/20
10	Develop mechanisms for tracking the impact of COL provision on further study, in terms of transition, retention, and course outcomes.	In progress	Rachael King (Access Programme Director) working with Legal team to draw up data sharing agreement to enable progression data for Access students - those who progress to UoE and other HEI to track progression. Plans to also develop student focus groups (Access students now in UoE FT UG programmes). Rachael spoke at the College WP event on 6th May 2021 to raise awareness of transition and the Access programme in particular. Need to explore more how/ if to link other School annual monitoring to consider the Access Programme flag or how to support COL to do this. Initial conversation with new COL QA Director on data/ dashboards to be continued. Dean of QA to discuss with Student Analytics if it is possible to identify "COL graduates" in student outcome data to allow the future success of those students within UoE can be monitored.	QA College Report 2019/20
11	Ensure implementation of on-campus aspect of hybrid teaching is consistent for semester two 20/21 courses in CAHSS.	Completed (given reference to SM2 only)	Planning and evaluation was in place throughout semester 1 to ensure good practice and lessons learned were captured and acted on ahead of Semester 2. Issues were escalated as required, for example through regular college-level submissions of a RAG Barometer to the ART Planning group and College surveys to School colleagues and College-level meetings with Student School Reps. On-Campus delivery was then completely suspended from January due to the national lockdown with limited return on exceptional basis from mid-March and some PGT in-person delivery from April onwards.	QA College Report 2019/20
12	Support for further analysis and reflection on number of outlier programmes with high classification degree outcomes percentages.	In progress	Given 2019/20 was an extreme outlier in terms of degree classification, Dean QA to look at awards made in 20/21 and compare to previous years. Any outliers will be contacted - although this will then be for internal discussion in the first instance.	QA College Report 2019/20
13	Support School initiatives identified through EDI Action Plans.	Completed	CAHSS appointed a Dean EDI (Jenny Hoy) in April 2021. The Dean EDI and the CAHSS EDI Committee will lead on the implementation of the CAHSS EDI Plan 2020-23 https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/cahss_edi_plan_2020-2023.pdf . EDI considerations in Learning and Teaching will also be integral to the CAHSS Learning and Teaching Plan.	QA College Report 2019/20

14	Lead on fully integrated and coordinated approach to the University curricula review.	Completed	Curriculum Transformation Programme is now formally underway at university level. https://uoesharepoint.com/sites/CurriculumTransformation . This is an integral focus for the 2021-22 CAHSS L&T Plan. Director of ASA and several HoSs are members of the Curriculum Transformation Board; Deans, ASA staff and some CAHSS School staff are part of the Curriculum Transformation Reference group which meets monthly as "critical friends". Opportunities to embed Curriculum Transformation in the structures and frameworks of College work are being explored, e.g. in internal communications, as part of committee work, in supporting EFI and reviewing curriculum management processes. This work will continue to develop, and inform the wider Curriculum Transformation programme of change at both University and College levels.	QA College Report 2019/20
15	Support a return to the PT system review that has been pushed back due to Covid-19 at the first opportunity.	Completed	Communications sent to Schools on updated timelines and planning considerations for SSPT review implementation, underpinned by interim enhanced student support measures for 21-22 academic year.	QA College Report 2019/20
16	Create/issue guidance on the issue of sensitive course content and teaching, restricted by local laws and governmental policy where students are domiciled.	Completed	See: https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/learningexchange/2020/12/17/hybrid-teaching-concerns-around-controversial-and-sensitive-material/ and https://uoesharepoint.com/sites/hss/SitePages/Access-to-University-learning-resources-from-China.aspx	QA College Report 2019/20
17	Support students (funding, extensions) whose work is delayed by limited access to the NHS.	Completed	No significant issues reported beyond those that could be dealt with by the covid mitigation measures.	QA College Report 2019/20
18	Support Progression Boards making decisions on students with missing placement hours.	Completed	MHSES primarily affected - College office liaised with the School and relevant central services to organise programme extensions, funding extensions, and management of late-August progression boards.	QA College Report 2019/20
19	Develop a College-wide support structure and pre-enrolment support for articulating students joining from Edinburgh College/the Our Health Programme.	Not started	This has not been taken forward specifically for articulating students or this specific programme beyond an initial discussion with the Associate Dean for Widening Participation and the School in May 2020. Other initiatives e.g. the centrally (IAD) developed online "Preparing for Study"/ "Good academic communication" and LibSmart which were trialed in 2020-21 are being updated for 2021-22 and a new returning to study course for those coming into 2nd year. The IAD courses will have options for School level bespoke tailoring in future, which might have potential here. There are also other initiatives e.g. COL's Moving On https://www.ed.ac.uk/lifelong-learning/our-programmes/moving-on , which might merit further discussion for this specific cohort.	QA College Report 2019/20

2. Reflection on School/Deanery reports

1. CAHSS approach to reflection on School QA reports

Whilst the central Academic Services team has provided a comprehensive report on themes and priorities emerging from the School QA reports, our College Office team has focused its attention on linking School-level reflections to our wider College activities.

Two resources have now been developed to support this approach:

- A SharePoint list logging points of interest from School QA reports, organised by project, issue, inspiring practice and positive outcome. This list effectively provides a dynamic summary of School QA reports, with adaptable views to allow College Deans and other College stakeholders to easily filter and cross-reference the information of particular interest to them
- A SharePoint list detailing the actions College will be taking forward this year, as well as the College mechanism(s) through which each action will be progressed. A downloaded version of this list is available in section c) of this report

The new CAHSS College governance structure, with its strong focus on actions and outcomes, provides an ideal framework to progress the College QA actions, and ensures that support and resources are allocated to each specific action. Points 2 and 3 in this section provide fuller context on the College governance review, and how QA College actions are now embedded within the relevant College operational action plans.

2. Review of CAHSS College Governance and Remit of Actions

Changes to the College Governance structure have now been approved, to ensure that all CAHSS Learning, Teaching and Student Experience committees, groups (networks, fora, working groups etc) and deanery account for the delivery of our College's strategic objectives and link to the wider University strategy.

The new CAHSS governance structure for 2022-23 onwards includes:

- College Education Committee
- College Postgraduate Research Committee
- College Student Recruitment and Population Planning Committee
- College Student Support Implementation Group
- College Quality Assurance (QA) Forum

New roles will be created (Dean of Education and Dean of PGR), which will replace the current Deans of UG and PG Education.

3. QA Actions/Operational Plans

These changes will be in place from AY 2022-23, and will therefore time well with the progress of CAHSS College QA actions. To support this revised approach to representation and committee operation, thematic

action plans have been developed and incorporated within the committees' reporting structures. This will enable CAHSS to progress all College actions against core, area-specific and collective priorities.

A small number of College QA actions will be progressed on an ad hoc basis (New action); all other actions are integrated within:

- a) [CAHSS Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Plan](#). The College Deans will provide monthly updates on progress against the key commitments of this plan to the College's Strategy and Management Committee, and various College Committees will be accountable for progress.

For the formulation of this particular plan, CAHSS has identified a series of core strategic themes/sub-themes covering all activities in relation to learning, teaching and student experience in CAHSS:

- **Curriculum (Review and) Transformation**
With a focus on:
 - **Engaging** in curriculum conversations
 - **Optimising** curriculum management
 - **Refining** Assessment and Feedback
 - **Expanding** reach and internationalisation

- **Student Support and Wellbeing**
With a focus on:
 - **Enhancing** student support
 - **Regaining** the sense of belonging
 - **Implementing** the new model of student support
 - **Reviewing** Extensions and Special Circumstances

- **Enhancing and Understanding Diversity**
With a focus on:
 - **Amplifying** student voices
 - **Evaluating** attainment/awarding gaps
 - **Understanding** the data
 - **Widening access** to postgraduate study
 - **Decolonising** the curriculum

- **Size, Shape and Composition of Student population**
With a focus on:
 - **Rebalancing** taught student populations
 - **Defining** programme portfolio sustainability

The majority of recommendations for College-level actions listed in CAHSS School QA reports (2020-21) can be linked to the last two themes, **Enhancing and Understanding Diversity** (specifically Evaluating attainment/awarding gaps and Understanding the data), and **Size, shape and composition of student population**.

- b) [CAHSS People Plan 2020-23](#). The College People Committee will own the overall Plan, with delegated authority given on Staff Experience and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion to the College Staff Experience Committee and College EDI Committee, respectively.

A number of recommendations for College-level actions listed in CAHSS School QA reports (2020-21) show clear reference to issues relating to staffing resources and staff development, and will be best addressed as part of this operational plan.

c) Actions

Actions identified for the College:

QA actions identified for the College are presented in the table below.

ID	School	Recommendation/Action	Description	Action remit
1	Divinity	L/T Plan	CAHSS support contacts to visit New College to identify BI Suite and Power BI training and ongoing support needs for teaching and PGR professional services teams.	L/T ACTION: Understand the data - Continue consultation with the College QA Committee about the data needed in the data dashboards to support data informed enhancements and better understanding of attainment gaps.
2	Economics	People Plan	Reconsider the relative price of in-person and online teaching and marking activities	PEOPLE ACTION: Organisational Effectiveness - Effective ongoing deployment of College-wide WAM. Proactively raise issues via the CAHSS WAM Forum.
3	Economics	People Plan	In order to incentivise innovation in teaching and hence the student experience, reconsider the allowances for designing tutorial and lab materials on new courses, refreshing lecture material and designing assessments	PEOPLE ACTION: Organisational Effectiveness - Effective ongoing deployment of College-wide WAM.
4	MHSE	People Plan	Seeking discussion with colleagues at College to gain a greater understanding of their rationale for staffing processes to try to find a way to solve the challenges we face and ensure we can develop a sustainable staffing strategy. To explore how we might have more flexibility to appoint in good time when staff leave or have a long term absence and when student numbers suddenly increase so that students are taught by a member of staff who is qualified and experienced in their area	PEOPLE ACTION: Organisational Effectiveness - Effective ongoing deployment of College-wide WAM. L&D - Develop and build upon the success of the programme for new Heads of Subject Area L/T ACTION: Size, Shape and Composition of student population Rebalance Taught Student Population - Improve student intake forecasting and reporting
5	UEBS	Completed	Applicants (Joint with UEBS): Alleviating the Covid-related fears of applicants, so that they are encouraged to come and study live in Edinburgh (this relates to our UG programmes)	All pre-arrival comms to applicants were focused on this objective pre-September 2021, and CAM's approach is back to business as usual. UG Conversion communications: Templates completed for Schools to fill up https://uoesharepoint.com/sites/CAHSSMarketingCommunications/SitePages/Undergraduate-Conversion-2021.aspx

6	UEBS	L/T Plan	<p>Cohort sizes (Joint with University): We have faced two years with significant increases in UG cohort sizes. The expected intake for 2021/2022 is projected to be 490 students on UEBS owned programmes, compared with the agreed April target of 330 students (49% over target). We are also expecting an additional 120 students on joint programmes, where Business is the second name discipline. Insufficient advance warning is given of the over-recruitment and thus 2021/2022 planning (for example timetabling and Teaching Assistant recruitment) are all worked out before the over-recruitment is announced. It would be helpful if we could have had an additional 8 weeks knowledge of these numbers, so that we are hearing about this in late June, rather than late August. To cope with the additional student numbers we have increased student group sizes. We have also had to close some courses in semester 1. These courses will now only be open to Business School or joint programme students. Thus over-recruitment and its late announcement is impacting on student choice</p>	<p>L/T ACTIONS: Size, Shape and Composition of student population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Size, Shape and Composition discussions held between College, Schools and Strategic Planning - Improve student intake forecasting and reporting
7	ECA	L/T Plan	<p>ECA requests analysis of any action needed regarding long-term (i.e., include pre-Covid years) in patterns of degree classification outcome for UoE students, but with due consideration for programme-specific issues that may be a result of assessment practices, course design, and Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) service</p>	<p>L/T ACTION: Student Support and Well-Being (Reviewing Extensions and Special Circumstances) - College contribution to central review of ESC service</p> <p>Enhancing and Understanding Diversity (Understanding the data) - CAHSS to undertake data analysis of AIS, repeat year, Academic Misconduct, Withdrawal and progression stats and establish core datasets for monitoring efficacy of planned student support enhancements to student support'</p>
8	ECA	L/T Plan	<p>ECA requests work to rectify the major snagging encountered in the 20/21 initial rollout of the uni's new Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) service</p>	<p>L/T ACTION: Student Support and Well-Being (Reviewing Extensions and Special Circumstances) - College contribution to central review of ESC service</p>

9	ECA	L/T Plan	ECA requests support to trial a gathered-field admissions process for PGT programmes	L/T ACTION: Size, Shape Composition (Restore and stabilise student numbers) - Develop CAHSS Student Recruitment Strategy with focus on diversity and sustainability
10	HCA	L/T Plan	Foster a more inclusive and supportive College by combatting the marginalization of certain demographic and WP constituencies	L/T ACTIONS: Enhancing and Understanding Diversity
11	HCA	L/T Plan	Work to improve the Student:Staff ratio. This in part involves working to prevent over-recruitment, which leads to underprivileged demographic and WP constituencies becoming ever more of a minority	L/T ACTIONS: Size, Shape and Composition of student population - Size, Shape and Composition discussions held between College, Schools and Strategic Planning - Rebalance Taught Student Population - Improve student intake forecasting and reporting
12	HCA	L/T Plan	Support Schools in building student confidence in consistency of marking and transparency of marking criteria.	L/T ACTIONS: Curriculum Review and Transformation (Refining Assessment and Feedback) - Assess impact of recent assessment changes (including online exams) on academic integrity and outcomes Support SAMOs / Schools to ensure all students know the expectations for producing academic work in relation to academic integrity
13	HCA	Completed	Support the continuation of centrally timetabled in-person examinations in the post-Covid era.	Process now set up for approving in person exams for summer 2022
14	LLC	University-level actions	LLC notes TAR 2021-22's clarification of regulation 31, which covers provisions relating to marking adjustments. LLC requests guidance on (i) methods for identifying courses or components of assessment that require adjustment eg Power BI, APT (ii) how to scale a cohort's marks using available tools (APT), either at moderation or at Board of Examiners	Our College team will pass these actions on to appropriate contacts in Student Systems and Academic Services

15	LLC	New Action	LLC requests guidance on supporting colleagues in seeking exemplars for excellence in teaching.	<p>Central best practice event focusing on digital L&T is being organised by Celeste McLaughlin (Head of Academic Development for Digital Education)</p> <p>College best practice exemplars in MHSE - Model for Hybrid teaching (contact Deborah Holt).</p> <p>CAHSS is currently liaising with CMVM for info about their College good practice event.</p>
16	PPLS	L/T Plan	Student wellbeing. Consider ways to further support student wellbeing as the NSS indicated students feel there is a lack of mental health support at School and University level. The PRES also identified that wellbeing support does not meet students' needs.	<p>University Mental Health Strategy refresh is currently underway: https://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/supporting-students/student-mental-health/student-mental-health-strategy</p> <p>L/T ACTIONS: Student Support and Wellbeing (Enhance student support) - Support Schools to set up case recording and regular case management meetings</p>
17	COL	New Action	Promote strong communication and collaboration between COL and other Schools in CAHSS and UoE.	<p>College governance review now completed should contribute positively to achieving this.</p> <p>Deans of UG Education and QA will organise a dedicated meeting with COL to tease out what COL is/does/fits into CAHSS</p> <p>Kirsty Adamson working with Rupert Lezemore and Lynsey Dinwoodie on tracking Access student progression from Access into UG programmes</p>
18	SPS	L/T Plan	Work to improve staff/student ratios and to resource and support Schools and subject areas facing acute student numbers and staffing pressures	<p>L/T ACTION: Size, Shape and Composition of student population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Size, Shape and Composition discussions held between College, Schools and Strategic Planning -Rebalance Taught Student Population - Improve student intake forecasting and reporting
19	SPS	Completed	Return to (and update Schools on) existing initiatives that had been postponed due to COVID-19, including the PT	Pilot of reviewed Programme Director role is now due to take place in ECA and Economics.

review; and the introduction of undergraduate and joint programme directors (as highlighted in last year's report).

Actions request of the University (key themes identified from School/Deanery reports and any additional actions identified by the College):

The themes for further development and follow-up actions at University level identified by SQAC, and communicated to CAHSS Directors of Quality on 3rd November 2021, cover the most common issues reported in CAHSS for consideration at University level (please see a copy of this communication in [Appendix 1](#)).

Under the Staff Welfare and Student Experience theme, please see below considerations specific to CAHSS that colleagues in Academic Services may find helpful.

Staff Welfare and Student Experience

Teaching space and student cohort sizes: As well as issues in relation to staffing and workload pressures referred to in Brian's communication, CAHSS School QA reports noted that the return to in-person teaching had paused significant challenges on available teaching space, at a time when student recruitment was exceptionally high. This has affected School staff and the student experience particularly negatively this year. CAHSS Schools have requested that the University investigate the issues around over-recruitment that occurred in 2021, and continues to seek additional resources or solutions to accommodate for student growth.

Communications to students: CAHSS Schools also request that the University ensure careful messaging at central level about the teaching and learning experience that students can expect to receive going forward.

Appendix 1 - QA Reporting 2020-21 (email communication circulated by Brian Connolly on 3rd November 2021)

SQAC identified three themes for **further development at University level**. These issues will be reported to the University Executive and the relevant areas and individuals responsible for addressing them:

- **Staff Welfare and Student Experience** - there are ongoing concerns that the pandemic has exacerbated existing issues in relation to staffing and workload pressures and this year's reports raised concerns that these may now be impacting the student experience. It should also be noted that the recent Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) recommended the University *'implement an approach to facilitate institutional oversight and the effective planning and monitoring of student numbers, in order to ensure that appropriate and timely actions can be taken where increases in student numbers impact on arrangements for learning and teaching and student support.'*
- **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)** - increasingly Schools/Deaneries have engaged with student data and reflected on the gaps in attainment of different groups of students within their local area and across the University. Concerns were raised in a number of reports about the University's support of students with protected characteristics, particularly in relation to the impact of the pandemic. The issues have been widely discussed and Schools/Deaneries would now like support from the University to address the underlying causes. Again, this was also the focus of an ELIR recommended encouraging the University to *'consider how to address attainment gaps in student performance through the oversight, coordination and monitoring at an institutional level of school-level actions'*.
- **Online/Hybrid Platforms** - in response to the pandemic, Schools/Deaneries developed new approaches to teaching & learning and administrative systems and procedures. They would like to maintain and carry these innovations into the post-pandemic world and, to support this aspiration, there is a general desire for a strategic assessment of the University's online learning platforms with the aim of improving functionality and suitability.

The Committee also noted the importance of the following three issues and will request follow-up actions and monitor progress during the course of this academic session:

- **Postgraduate Research (PGR) Students** – a number of issues relating to PGR students were noted including the long term impact of Covid on both their research (e.g. lack of lab access adversely affecting their submission rates and funding) and their welfare (e.g. due to the isolation from their social and academic communities). Concerns were also raised regarding the level of PGR fees set by the University and the limits this set on the breadth and diversity of the PGR student community (e.g. deterring students from a non-traditional or widening participation background from considering research as a career step or option).
- **Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC)** - the new centralised ESC system continues to be an issue across a number of reports, exacerbated by the Covid mitigations last year. Concerns persist about the timing of the implementation of the ESC and the additional workload and stress this caused staff due to systems issues and response times, at a time when they were already under pressure. Concerns regarding the extra assistance required to inform PTs and students of the new ESC system and the necessity to highlight to students the importance/benefits of involving the PT (if feasible/appropriate) when submitting a SC

application (inherent risk of circumventing the PT). A major concern is the lack of automated notice to PTs that a case has been submitted.

- **Student Support and Personal Tutor (PTSS) Review** – consideration must be given to how the new system will be resourced. The proposed evolved model of student support will require additional resources for Schools/Deaneries in order to recruit sufficient professional services staff for the new system. It is fundamentally important that the new system of student support is aligned and thoroughly linked to the ESC system. Again, the PT system was also the focus of ELIR, with the recommendation that the University: *‘make significant progress in implementing plans to ensure an effective approach to offering personal student support. In doing so, and recognising the extended period of time that the University has been developing its approach to personal tutoring, it is asked to reflect on whether the current timescale for implementation of the institutional Student Support and Personal Tutor Plan in 2023-24, is sufficiently ambitious. The University should make demonstrable progress within the next academic year in respect of ensuring parity of experience for students and effective signposting to support services and delivery of an agreed and consistent baseline level of provision. As part of its approach, the University is asked to develop an effective mechanism to monitor consistency of implementation and allow it to evaluate the impact of these changes on the student experience’.*

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH - ANNUAL MONITORING 2020/21
College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine Report

Authors: Dr Claire Phillips and Ms Victoria Bennett.

Reviewed by College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (CQAEC) – electronically.

Dated: 29th November 2021.

Glossary located at the end of the document.

1. Reflection on progress with actions from the last year

Actions for CQAEC from 19/20 Annual QA report:

- *Work planned on moderation guidance and sharing of practice across the College*
Directors of Quality collated local moderation practices and any moderation guidance in preparation. Common practices and principles identified but appropriate local variation was required. Documents will be shared at College SharePoint site, signposting to local areas. New and updated resources will continue to be shared at the committee. Action has encouraged reflection on moderation practices and led to the development of guidance and revised processes in local areas (DCS, DBMS).

- *Work planned to enhance support for reps on college committees and enhance online student representation*

Academic Administrator (QA&QE) meets monthly with the representation officer at the Student's Association. Teams site set up for representatives of all College level committees to liaise, share ToRs and practice, ask questions. Limited engagement so far. CQAEC continues to discuss how best to support meaningful and effective student representation.

An exercise to map all PGR SSLC (or equivalent) provision was conducted during 20/21. Plans to share identified gaps and good practice across the research institutes. Information is exchanged between SSLCs and the College Researcher Experience Committee.

- *Support the development of a strategy for the management of supervision for PGR students.*

A cross-College review of PGR support undertaken to streamline support and management of issues. Supervisor support is managed through the CMVM BoE and CMVM REC. Supervisor Briefings are led by the Director of PGR Student and ECS Experience. In association with the Doctoral College, a new online portal was introduced for Supervisor briefings to be augmented by in-person briefing events. The PGR BoE brought College practice in line with the rest of the University by allowing Early Career Researchers to be approved as Supervisors.

- *Review of the process for the appointment of internal and external examiners for PhD viva examinations.*

There is an established process for appointment of Internal and External Examiners. Nomination forms are approved by Deanery Post-graduate Directors before submission to College Office. Forms have been adapted to clarify, when appropriate, the need for 2 externals and a non-examining Chair.

Updates on Actions requested of the College which are out-with the remit of CQAEC.

Some actions remain areas of concern in 2020/21 QA reports (rising student numbers on some programmes without a matching increase in resources to support teaching). These will continue to be highlighted. Update on actions:

- Consider streamlining/modifying PGT programme/(course) handbook template.

College PG L&T Committee agreed a review and re-development of the handbook during 2021/22. To be led by the College Academic Support Administrator (Taught).

- Consider a College registry for PhD students and post-docs to express an interest in teaching thus helping people find opportunities.

A blog has been proposed to address this action. The blog will be hosted at College level where Schools/Deaneries will be able to post local opportunities. Development of the blog is ongoing.

2. Reflection on School/Deanery reports

Overall, Directors of Quality favour the condensed, brief QA report template. More focussed and encourages clarity of School/Deanery and College objectives.

The collective School and Deanery QA reports reflect a background of very weary staff after the relentless pressures of the past 20 months. There is a widespread sense of continuation of last year in terms of coping with, working through and managing the best that can be achieved. Despite these challenges all areas, without exception, have continued to show impressive resilience with amazing innovation, good practice and sharing.

Themes from School/Deanery reports

Work responding to the pandemic to maintain standards, support student experience/ welfare.

- Hybrid lectures. Some students attend the lecture live, the rest attending online. Both sets of students are able to ask questions and interact (DBMS).
- Impact on clinical placement and huge efforts to ensure sufficient clinical placement activity. Ongoing dialogue and engagement with PSRBs throughout pandemic (MBChB, BVM&S, OHS).
- Enhancing communication with students - as Town Hall events (R(D)SVS), Deanery-wide SSLC targeted at online students (DCS), College-wide PGR newsletters and Q&A sessions.
- Video to record labs and practical sessions and to assess OSCEs. MS Teams used for oral resit examination (R(D)SVS).
- Development of a QAE process and forms for QAE of non-credit bearing courses. (R(D)SVS).
- Digital symposium for PGR students to share their research (R(D)SVS).
- Development and approval of a new (optional) year 3 masters level MSc Surgical Sciences course (Evidence Based Surgery). Includes a taught element, so is an exception to the usual 60 credit dissertation course (DCS).
- Move towards separating pastoral support from thesis committees. Pastoral support committees being piloted by MGPHS IGC. A PPR recommendation (College).
- Funding extensions for PGR students (College).
- Activity in the student support space across the College, including encouraging peer support initiatives (Well-Med group in MBChB) and staff-student community building (Medical Education Forum, UNCOVER in MGPHS, journal clubs), weekly support digests (R(D)SVS).
- Widespread involvement of alumni in teaching activities – peer mentoring, co-supervision, tutoring and presenting career options. Evidencing engagement with building academic community and involvement of stakeholders.

Work to enhance assessment process

- Marking and feedback sessions for staff (DBMS).
- Feedback audit leading to the development of a feedback guide as an outcome. Peer assessment of feedback (MGPHS).
- Development of moderation guidelines (DCS and DBMS) (see section 1).
- Curriculum review group set up, remit includes assessment review (R(D)SVS).

- Work to support greater alignment of practice in dissertation supervision, support dissertation supervisors and share good practice (MGPHS Usher), Development of a checklist to clarify expectations and support supervisor-PGR student dialogue (MGPHS IGC).

Challenges to good student experience and quality of provision

- Collective use of 'students' in Central communications when message relevant only to subset of students (ie UG, PGT, PGR, online etc).
- Need for enhanced/more granular data to support QA reporting; against attainment gaps such as attainment by year as well as at entry and completion, to determine differences between online and on-campus cohorts, ability to analyse outcomes and grades by international location and ethnicity, profession, different types of disability and fee status, greater granularity in age categories would support PGT reporting (ie not just over 25), enhanced availability of PGR related data to support PGR QA reporting. (see University Action 3)
- Student Support and Personal Tutor system. PGT - spectrum of opinion on suitability, applicability and workability of current system and the PT role. The proposed changes to student/staff ratios are of concern in some areas with the hope of different models or variations being available to best suit provision type and local areas.
- PGR students. Majority of research has taken place within Covid restrictions. Fewer opportunities to be part of the wider research community.
- Challenges due to staffing resources. In the context of recruitment freeze, post-approval processes and staff resources not matching a rise in student numbers. Pandemic context making existing challenges even more acute.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Details of local area attainment gaps - see School/Deanery annual QA reports. Discussions regarding conclusions, understanding any identified differences and further exploratory work are ongoing locally and at College.

It is clear there are similarities and differences in attainment gaps across the College. In some cases this leads to cancelling out the difference identified locally when examined just at College level. Thus both College-wide and School/Deanery level reviews, plans and initiatives will be required to address identified gaps.

One difference seen in all UG provision is that Scottish students perform less well in year 1 but appear to gain momentum and close the gap by year 4.

Current EDI initiatives include:

- Measures to diversify and decolonise the curriculum (MBChB, MGPHS, R(D)SVS).
- Two new groups (a short life working group Race Equality and Anti-Racism Group; and a longer term Inclusivity Group). Set priorities and develop objectives that improve inclusivity and diversity within the programme. (Medical Education).
- CMVM Good Practice showcase in Spring 2022 will be an opportunity to share these developments and initiatives. Theme – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Data can take us only so far. It does not explain why groups have different outcomes. Schools/Deaneries would now like support from the University to help identify and address the underlying causes. Both with strategy/guidance but importantly financial resources to enable work to identify and address these causes at College and School/Deanery level.

Student Feedback.

NSS

Overall satisfaction saw a fall at College level similar to that seen across the University (minus 8 % vs minus 7%) although it remains 10% above the University average. Variation seen across different areas of College. Analysis of free text comments show general positivity (but not without exception) for the engagement and support of staff, good sense of community in most areas, enjoyment of wide variety of courses. Common themes of negativity are delays in feedback, some lack of guidance around assessment, late timetabling changes. The latter has been particularly challenging at the time of Covid restrictions and short-notice changes in Scottish Government and University regulations and guidance.

PTES

Outstanding performances across the College. Overall satisfaction saw an increase at College level compared to a fall of across the University with the College being 18% above the University average. This may well be because many of our PGT programmes are delivered online normally so have changed little as the result of Covid. Some variation in results across Deaneries with falls from previous exceptionally high results but still well above the University averages. Some of this variation may be a reflection of the fact that many PGT students in the College are working in the health care professions alongside their studies. (CE and MGPHS). Main cross-College themes from the free-text comments – Late feedback, wanted more live interactions with staff and one area in particular, workload unmanageable particularly with employment commitments.

PRES

Overall satisfaction – CMVM – 76% (-7%), UoE – 71.3% (-8%). These results are commendable given that PGR students have been impacted significantly across 2 years. All themes lower compared to 2019 although supervision saw no decline. Small increase in Opportunities.

Across College no consistency in theme results. Common themes in the free text comments: felt lack of mental health support and experience would improve if there were greater opportunities to discuss their research with other researchers.

Overall NSS, PTES and PRES results are excellent given the challenging year. Different areas of the College clearly show different strengths and weaknesses. Thus, sharing ideas and good practice activities is invaluable as is the importance of more targeted local initiatives.

External Examiner themes from 2019/20 - UG and PGT (discussed at CQAEC, CULT and PGL&T)

- Fewer comments and issues flagged this year compared with previous years. Notable similarities across UG and PGT for themes of both commendations and recommendations.
- Commendations included: responsiveness, appropriate assessment changes, maintained standards, effective Boards on MS Teams. Recommendations included: more timely provision of information to External Examiners (understandable given the rapid changes and workloads experienced), visibility of moderation processes (see section 1).

Other relevant work not covered in School/Deanery reports:

During 2020/21 work was undertaken to enhance New Programme Approval.

UG – Previous absence of specific documentation for consideration of new programmes. A set of cross-College documents was developed and approved by CULT. Based on that already required by Boards of Studies, and informed by existing College PGT documentation requirements.

PGT - Programme approval process reviewed. Elements considering business plans and market insight required strengthening. Influenced by the current CSE process, the approval process was split into two stages. Stage one - the strategic case for development including fit with strategy and financial sustainability. Stage two focuses on programme development and delivery (programme design, learning and teaching, student experience etc.) PG L&T committee approved updated process and accompanying forms. In place for 2021/22.

The enhancement of this new process benefitted from access to review the CSE programme approval documentation and is a benefit of active inter-college liaison and openness to share practice across all three College Academic Administration teams.

PGR - A new PGR Programme Approval Board has been established to support programme teams to navigate development and approval processes.

SUMMARY

- Applications and entrants. Remained buoyant across College provision. Some areas saw significant increases, PGT in particular, but staff resources are still not increasing proportionately. Workload and staff shortages are at risk of impacting the reputation and quality of provision (see actions).
- It will be important to monitor and review the impact of the pandemic over the coming years. Perhaps in particular PGR, where first/second years of their programme have been so affected by Covid restrictions and/or students being employed in the health care professions. I.e. delayed effect.
- There is a general gap in overall reflection between on-campus and online programmes distinctly. A positive aim would be to be able to disarticulate PTES results, interrogation of metrics, student representation, PT support.
- There is sometimes uncertainty at College and School/Deanery levels as to what should be progressed and what we should hold back on as something more institution-wide, overarching coming our way, PT system and EDI especially. Greater clarity or early signposting with updates would reduce risk of redundancy of work done at College and School/Deanery level.

3. Actions

Actions for CQAEC -2021/22.

- 1) Monitor/Review local plans for compliance with new Student Voice Policy - feedback.
- 2) Review specific inclusion of EDI within course approval processes.
- 3) Support the development of QAE processes for non-credit bearing provision across College.
- 4) Continue work to enhance student representation on College committees.
- 5) Continue to Gather updates from **College committees on Actions requested of the College which are out-with the remit of CQAEC.**

Actions requested of the College: not directly within CQAEC remit but other College groups. The CQAEC have determined to where these requested actions will be directed.

1) Staff resources:

- a. Support for additional posts, both academic and professional services.
- b. Support staff replacements.
- c. Speed up the filling of vacant posts.
- d. Review the post approval system which is cumbersome.
- e. Additional resources to support work on EDI and attainment gaps - College and locally.

- #### **2) Identify and share best practice guidance** for operating secure assessments online, with consideration of how misconduct, such as collusion, might be evidenced.

Actions request of the University:

(ADDITIONAL to those themes already identified by SQAC subgroup as all these were also clear concerns across the College (Staff welfare and student experience, EDI, online/hybrid platforms, PGR Students, ESC, Student Support and Personal Tutor Review).

1) Online assessment:

- E-assessment tool support/ exploration of future options to ensure tools available to us are comparable with competitors.

- Identify and share best practice and provide guidance for operating secure assessments online with consideration of how misconduct, such as collusion, might be evidenced.

2) Staff resources:

- Support the recruitment of staff to properly resource teaching.
- Review Post approval system which is seen as cumbersome.

3) Power BI refinements - to be able to more clearly analyse outcomes and grades by:

- International location and ethnicity.
- Profession.
- Different types of disability.
- Fee status.

4) EDI – plan, intentions, guidance from the Centre.

Clear plan, what required or expected at College or Schools/Deaneries with accompanying resources to carry out this work.

GLOSSARY

BoE	Board of Examiners
BVM&S	Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery
CE	Clinical Education
CMVM	College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
CQAEC	College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee
CSE	College of Science and Engineering
CULT	College Undergraduate Learning and Teaching Committee
DBMS	Deanery of Biomedical Sciences
DCS	Deanery of Clinical Sciences
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
ESC	Extensions and Special Circumstances
IGC	Institute of Genetics and Cancer
L&T	Learning and Teaching
MBChB	Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery
MGPHS	Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences
OHS	Oral Health Sciences
OSCE	Objective Structured Clinical Examination
PPR	Postgraduate Periodic Review (pre- name change to Internal Periodic Review (IPR))
PSRB	Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies
R(D)SVS	Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies
REC	Research Experience Committee
SQAC	Senate Quality Assurance Committee
SSLC	Student Staff Liaison Committee

1. Reflection on progress with actions from the last year

1.1 Progression and classification rates - investigate reasons for differences in the Scottish student cohort and identify strategy to close differential attainment based on ethnicity between all groups

1.1.1 A paper was presented to the College's Joint Quality Assurance Committee and Learning and Teaching Committee (now College Education Committee (CEC)) on 1 June 2021 to initiate discussion on the topic of the attainment gap. It was later agreed at the 5 October 2021 meeting of the CEC that the College would form a working group to identify contributing issues and potential solutions to the Progression and Attainment Gap. At the time of writing, the Terms of Reference and membership are being established with plans to commence work in 2022.

1.2 EDI and Decolonising the Curriculum – learning from best practice in CAHSS and CMVM (Deanery of Biomedical Sciences) embed consideration of EDI in Curriculum Approval Processes. Link more closely with work being carried out by University-level committee on decolonising the curriculum.

1.2.1 The College has established a fixed-term Decolonising Working Group (DWG) to review and scope current decolonisation of the curriculum activity across the College. The DWG is jointly endorsed and led by the College's EDI and Education Committees, and will address actions identified by the Race Equality and Anti-Racism (REAR) Sub-Committee and within the College's own EDI Strategy.

1.2.2 Commencing activity in September 2021, the aim of the working group is to provide a coordinated approach and support for decolonising activity across the college, create a space to share best practice, enable dissemination of information, support the development of a collective understanding of decolonising curriculum requirements in the College, and identify College-wide stakeholders to bring about successful transformation. The Group will produce a briefing document of feedback and suggested actions for relevant University stakeholders, to share good practice and inform future CSE equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and decolonising strategy.

1.3 Need for continued development/ clarification of preferred online learning platforms. Ongoing issues around GradeScope implementation, reliability of Collaborate and TopHat, integration of MS Teams and/or Zoom, captioning issues, etc. Teaching tools need to be fairly stable and robust during the semester without regular changes to interface and behaviour.

1.3.1 This was raised as an ongoing issue by a number of schools in the 2020/21 reports, with several schools noting that existing tools do not fully meet the needs of schools and require renovation or replacement. Activity in this area is ongoing.

1.4 Action for College Admissions – improve flow of information to schools relating to WP recruitment, so that improved support can be identified and provided for students joining the University with a WP background.

1.4.1 In previous years Recruitment and Admissions have run a calling campaign where staff call SIMD 20 offer holders to congratulate them on their offer and to give them the opportunity to ask any questions they may have. Recruitment and Admissions are currently reviewing this campaign and considering what would be the most effective way

to increase conversion of SIMD 20 offer holders.

- 1.4.2 In terms of communicating to schools, there are some challenges in communication of this information as the WP flag within the Admissions database does not carry through to the Student Record database; however there are a variety of potential solutions to this and we are exploring options to improve the reporting availability to schools in this area.

1.5 Clarify processes around collaboration and exchange due diligence and approval.

- 1.5.1 **Collaborations:** Since May 2021 monthly meetings have taken place involving colleagues in the Academic Affairs Team and Global Partnerships Team to share information about proposed collaborations and ensure a joined-up approach to progressing due diligence activity, curriculum approval, and progression of formal documents (e.g. Memorandums of Agreement). The College is actively working with colleagues in the Global Partnerships Team, Academic Services, Legal Services, and the other colleges to clarify and streamline processes around collaboration and exchange due diligence and approval.

- 1.5.2 **Exchange Due Diligence and Approval:** The College undertook a significant exercise with the Study and Work Away Service (SWAY) in the summer of 2020 to review all existing European exchange agreements in anticipation of the end of the current Erasmus programme cycle and the UK's departure from Erasmus. This focused on reviewing the quality of student experience based on student feedback and partner-specific feedback reports, and a review of the reciprocity of arrangements. As a result, 9 CSE agreements were terminated where it was determined that exchanges were not offering the required experience or reciprocity. A similar exercise will be repeated in 2021/22 for EU agreements, and additionally for International Exchange Agreement renewals which have not yet undergone a review.

- 1.5.3 All new exchange agreements are referred to the College's Curriculum Approval Board for consideration and approval, which involves active checks that due diligence has been completed and allows the Board to have a view of agreements across the College.

- 1.5.4 Further clarification will be sought from SWAY in 2021/22 regarding the quality assurance activity that takes place around individual Student Learning Agreements (completed and approved by Exchange Coordinators prior to students going abroad).

1.6 Develop and disseminate PGR MScR Marking and Assessment Guidance.

- 1.6.1 College PGR Professional Services staff across the University will be meeting to progress this item in December 2021, with a view to providing feedback to the Doctoral College Operations Group.

2. Reflection on School/Deanery reports

- 2.1 The academic year 2020/21 represented another year of disruption and it should be noted that the progress on actions identified both at School and College-level was delayed further due to lockdown in January 2021, which required re-prioritisation of plans due to resumption of online delivery and increased constraints. We strongly commend the exceptional efforts of academic and professional services colleagues in continuing to deliver a high-quality student experience despite the significant challenges posed.

2.2 We were very pleased to see schools reflecting on positive changes arising from adjustments made in the pandemic and giving consideration to practices that could be retained as schools transition to a steadier state. Good practice examples are included in 2.17.

Key themes emerging from reports:

2.3 Most schools reflected concerns around **student wellbeing and sense of belonging**, particularly in the context of the pandemic. As noted in the School of Biological Sciences report, 'many students reported feeling lonely, unengaged, stressed and isolated.' Whilst schools made significant efforts to create a sense of community online and to maintain clear and timely communications, concern remained high about the ability to create a sense of cohort, with a general consensus across the College that students' ability to learn from each other was hampered because of constraints relating to in-person teaching.

2.4 Observations were made about the increased number of students taking interruptions of study, not only in relation to traditionally on-campus programmes but also in relation to the DSTI programme, which saw an increase in students requesting to withdraw from courses. DSTI noted that the main reasons identified for such requests were 'lack of time to commit or shifting responsibilities either back to work commitments or home life.'

2.5 It was unsurprising that **submission rates for PGR students** were affected by the pandemic. It is fortunate that many CSE students are UKRI funded and received additional financial support and also that some schools provided support in various forms. Pandemic-related delays to the submission of theses will have impacted completion timescales, and tracking falling completion rates is one of the CPRC Priorities for 2021/22. Some schools reported ongoing concerns about the **impact of the ongoing pandemic on the 2019 PGR student cohort**, as they have not been prioritised for funded extensions.

2.6 **Staff resilience and wellbeing** remains a significant concern for all schools, with concerns about resilience of academic and professional services staff alike due to high workloads coupled with the ongoing impact of the pandemic and repeated need to revise teaching, materials, and assessments in light of restrictions. Some schools reported particular challenges in relation to capacity of Learning Technologists and Teaching Organisation staff. Schools expressed concern about the capacity of staff to support increased intakes in 2021/22, particularly noting that many staff were already working beyond normal expectations.

2.7 Some schools reported **ongoing concerns from students about workload**, particularly in relation to the volume of in-course assessments and the clustering of assessment deadlines, in particular towards the end of semester. This was actively discussed in the College across the academic year, and reviewed by schools throughout the academic year in response to student feedback.

2.8 Some Schools noted an impact in **timeliness of return of feedback** to students, which was partly attributed to workloads exacerbated by the pandemic (note 2.6 above regarding staff workload), and also due to changes to submission of special circumstances.

2.9 Many schools acknowledge the forthcoming **Curriculum Transformation Programme**, wanting to have as much information about this as possible to be able to engage proactively. Several schools reflected on themes that align with curriculum transformation (Mathematics reflection on the identification of gaps in relevant skills; Engineering's reflection on their curriculum transformation plans and alignment with the Programme) but felt more

information was needed to enable them to engage fully with the Programme.

- 2.10 Similarly, several Schools acknowledged the forthcoming **implementation of changes as a result of the Student Support Review** and requested to be kept updated on developments in advance of implementation, along with any interim measures they should be focusing on.
- 2.11 **Suitability of systems** was a particular area of concern for some schools, and again featured as a significant discussion point across the College in 2020/21, with a number of developments requested by Schools (including accommodation of resit assessments within the Assessment and Progression Tool, and improvements to PGR Annual Monitoring). The College welcomed the re-establishment of the Student Systems Partnership Board, though notes the constraints relating to systems developments due to resource limitations.
- 2.12 Schools raised **reporting and analytics as an ongoing area for development**. Colleagues appreciated the work that had been done by the Student Analytics and Modelling Team to date but requested additional guidance on use of data to support work to improve student experience and diversity and inclusion activity. It is essential to continue to improve the availability, quality, and consistency of data in the context of different demographic groups, which is critical in relation to the planned Progression and Attainment Working Group.
- 2.13 **Attainment and Progression** was again noted as requiring further exploration and development. Some schools (particularly Engineering and Physics and Astronomy) reflected on the apparent difference in attainment for students with a declared disability and suggested this is analysed further to understand whether this is more prevalent for students with particular disabilities and, if so, any mitigations that might be put in place. This will be a particular focus of the College's Progression and Attainment Working Group.
- 2.14 References to the changes brought about by the introduction of the **Extensions and Special Circumstances Service (ESC)** were limited with CSE School reports, we note that ESC was a significant topic of conversation in CSE throughout the 2020/21 academic year. Schools have offered significant levels of feedback in relation to the impact on support offered to students as a result of the introduction of the service, and the ongoing technical improvements required to ensure the supporting system offers suitable outputs for Boards of Examiners. The College is strongly in favour of the proposed end-to-end review to identify and prioritise improvements.
- 2.15 Some Schools reported higher levels of **academic misconduct**, particularly the School of Engineering, which noted a substantial increase in cases relating to use of sites such as chegg.com, placing pressure on turnaround times in relation to Boards of Examiners. The College has worked with the School to clarify processes and expectations. We note that the removal of the 24-hour online examination format is expected to significantly reduce the opportunity for such misconduct in the 2021/22 academic year.
- 2.16 Particular examples of **good practice and innovation** are set out in [Appendix A](#).

3. Actions

Actions identified for the College:

- 1) **Establish Attainment and Progression Working Group with clearly defined outputs to mitigate identified issues.** Assigned to: Dean Education Quality Assurance and Culture
- 2) **Identify and deliver outputs within the remit of the Decolonisation Working Group.**
Assigned to: Dean Systematic Inclusion (Dean Learning and Teaching)
- 3) **Engage with SWAY on a) review of International Exchanges and b) clarification of arrangements around due diligence for individual student exchange agreements.**
Assigned to International Deans and Exchange Coordinators (a) and College Academic Affairs Team and College Quality Assurance Committee (b)
- 4) **The College's Postgraduate Research Committee have identified priorities and actions around the Health and wellbeing of PGR students, promotion of baseline training for all PhD students, diversity and inclusion in PhD recruitment, tracking falling completion rates, and tackling toxic research environments.**
CPRC to update CQAC on actions and progress related to these priority areas.

Actions requested of the University (key themes identified from School/Deanery reports and any additional actions identified by the College):

- 1) Continue to review the suitability of systems, particularly EUCLID, for support of critical activities in support of learning and teaching and student support (e.g. further enhancements to APT, considering whether enhancements are needed for PGR support tools such as PGR record-keeping, development of enhanced PGR Annual Monitoring within EUCLID, etc.). The University is urged to consider whether the Student Systems Partnership is adequately resourced to support these essential developments.
- 2) Continue to develop reporting and analytics capacity to enable more robust and detailed interrogation of data at school level in support of student experience and EDI activities. In particular further data/ analysis would be welcomed in relation to attainment and progression and PGR recruitment, with greater ability to delve into attainment of particular demographics.
- 3) In relation to significant transformational change programmes such as Curriculum Transformation and the Student Support Evolved Model, continue to take into account staff capacity to deal with new initiatives whilst ensuring an appropriate level of business-as-usual service in the context of time constraints and ongoing challenges around staff resilience in the context of the global pandemic.
- 4) Reflect on activity of ESC via End-to-end review and ensure clear prioritisation and communication of actions arising from the review.
- 5) Continue to invest in suitable learning platforms and resourcing of Learning Development staff.
- 6) Monitor the implementation plans in relation to the new Student Voice Policy, identifying and offering additional support to schools to aid effective implementation as appropriate.

- 7) We request that the Student Recruitment and Fee Strategy Group considers a comprehensive review of PGT Fees, particularly in the context of widening participation objectives, to ensure that fees are not exclusionary. This has arisen as a concern several times when discussing programme approvals at our Curriculum Approval Board and warrants further consideration.

**Professor Linda Kirstein, Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture, CSE
Heather McNeill, Deputy Head of Academic Affairs, CSE
1 December 2021**

Appendix A: Good Practice and Innovation across the College

Colleagues are encouraged to read individual School reports for further detail and other examples of good practice.

- The roll-out of online drop-in sessions at both taught and postgraduate level for students, along with in-person drop-in sessions when possible.
- Creation of a 'Student Lifecycle Team' in the School of Mathematics, consisting of both academic and professional services staff, giving wide-ranging support to students.
- The School of Engineering worked closely with the Student Council, which met with teaching leadership on a regular basis to address issues and provide support on a timely basis.
- Promotion of Piazza as an out-of-hours platform Q&A Forum in the School of Physics and Astronomy.
- Use of embedded padlets in Learn to enhance student learning and engagement with course material in the School of Biological Sciences.
- Implementation of an online, SharePoint-based system for the preparation of exam papers in the School of Mathematics.
- Adoption of live text chat feature during synchronous online lectures in the School of Physics and Astronomy, which facilitated interaction in the class and resulted in many more questions and points for clarification than in previous in-person sessions. The School is investigating how to enable this type of feature when delivering in-person lectures.
- Continued development of online virtual and remote laboratories as a substitute to in-person labs in multiple schools including Chemistry, Engineering, and Mathematics; and take-home low powered electronics assignments in the School of Engineering.
- Creation of innovative 'virtual field experiences' to replace field trips that could not run in person in GeoSciences and Biological Sciences; blending of recorded lectures and walking guides as an alternative to MA field courses in the Geography Small Research Project.
- Successful implementation of the Year 4/ 5 changeover in Chemistry which involved moving student placements to year 5 rather than year 4, with students giving acknowledgement to the logic behind the change. The variety of external placements offered is impressive, with anecdotal evidence suggesting that many students have been offered employment following their placements.
- Opportunities for students to intern in the School of Mathematics' Digital Creation Team, creating new digital resources for learning and teaching and adapting existing ones.
- Creation of a Digital Education Team and introduction of the Director of Technology Enhanced Learning role in the School of GeoSciences.
- The PGT Student Learning Advisor in Mathematics has organised events in support of student employability in collaboration with the Careers Service, including presentations from potential employers and curation of dedicated resources promoted via the School's webpages.
- Effective use of 'online live' sessions to enable national/ international guest speakers to be integrated more into UG Honours and PGT Masters teaching in the School of GeoSciences.
- Delivery of Workshops for PGT Programmes in the School of Mathematics to assist with the successful writing of dissertations, designed in collaboration with English Language Education at the Centre for Open Learning.
- Highly successful implementation of online submission of theses and remote PhD vivas across the College. From September 2021 vivas returned to in-person as default, but online vivas will no longer be viewed as being exceptional should all participants agree the viva can be online (with College approval).
- Significant attempts by schools to promote mental health and wellbeing initiatives. This included the roll-out of Charlie Waller Memorial Training across staff that support PGR activity, organisation of an online Mental Health Day in the School of Biological Sciences that was organised by PG Reps and well attended by staff and students, appointment of 10 mental health first-aiders (PhD students) in the School of Informatics.
- Engineering appointed deputy PGR advisers for each of the 7 Research Institutes, in addition to the main advisers for Institutes. They report that this has helped to spread the workload of the School's Postgraduate Progression Committee and ensured quick turnaround of student milestone and concession approvals, as well as providing additional student support where required.

- Introduction of 'Talking about Teaching' seminars in the School of GeoSciences to disseminate good teaching practice across the School.
- Introduction of a 'Managing your PhD' workshop in the School of Informatics to make students aware of how to address problems during the PhD, where to find help, and how to take action if there are issues with supervision.
- Introduction of a 'Draw the Line' training course for staff in the School of Informatics.
- Schools valued the coordination of ideas and sharing of good practice across the College over the past year and encouraged this approach to be retained and nurtured where possible.
- Introduction of an online student poster evening for PhD students was organised to encourage student – student and student – academic contact in the School of Physics and Astronomy.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

9 December 2021

Enhanced coordination of support and training for Tutors and Demonstrators

Description of paper

1. This paper proposes the creation of a Doctoral College working group to review the Policy on Recruitment, Support and Development of Tutors and Demonstrators and address ELIR recommendations regarding the training and support of tutors and demonstrators. This contributes to a number of areas of Strategy 2030 outcomes, most directly those in vi) and ix).

Action requested / recommendation

2. The committee is requested to approve the set up and aims of the proposed Doctoral College working group to review the Policy on Recruitment, Support and Development of Tutors and Demonstrators and address ELIR recommendations regarding the training and support of tutors and demonstrators.

Background and context

3. The current policy on [Recruitment, Support and Development of Tutors and Demonstrators](#) is due for general review. The responsibility for this review is shared by Academic Services, Human Resources and the Institute for Academic Development (IAD), although the policy is formally owned by Academic Services.
4. The recent Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (QAA) Technical Report (pg 16, para. 68) states, '*The team recommended that the University ensures effective implementation of its policy for the training and support of postgraduates who teach and ensures all PGR students are trained before engaging in teaching activities*'. Central University- Level training is provided by the Institute for Academic Development and this was considered sufficient by the ELIR team but it was found that there was considerable variation in local level training provision and oversight.
5. The Doctoral College, as a coordinating structure for postgraduate training and experience, is well-placed to bring together a representative working group to review the policy and to address the recommendations.
6. There are difficulties in the governance of tutors & demonstrators due partly to the variability of provision in Schools and partly to the broad nature of the issues which arise covering HR, recruitment, training and student support. Most tutors & demonstrators are PGR students but there are considerable numbers of other staff who are on casual contracts.

Discussion

1. We would propose that the project runs in two phases. In the first, we will focus on the ELIR response and plan for changes to be implemented for academic year 2022/23.
2. To ensure effective working and best possible implementation we will structure the task group in two levels. The first level will be a core working group will have the following membership:

- a. Postgraduate Research Dean, College of Science and Engineering (convenor) (Antony Maciocia)
 - b. Academic Services representative (tbc)
 - c. Human Resources representative (Linda Criggie/ Susan McNeill)
 - d. Institute for Academic Development representatives (Vel McCune, Fiona Quinlan-Pluck, Emily Woollen)
 - e. Deans of Learning and Teaching (Judy Hardy, Sabine Rolle, tbc)
 - f. Tutor/ demonstrator representative (x3) (tbc)
3. The second level will be a network with representation from the Doctoral College, all Schools and Deaneries as appropriate as well as other key stakeholders. This will act as a consultation panel and is not expected to meet but will provide a conduit to Schools and provide a structurally sound means to consult.

The overall aims of the task group are:

1. To review and consult on the current policy and propose amendments
2. To conduct background work into current support and training structures at the University
3. To identify areas of good practice in support and training for Tutors and Demonstrators and pinpoint ways for effective dissemination of these
4. To draft a set of clear recommendations for governance, recruitment and training of tutors and demonstrators - implement SEC

Resource implications

7. Resources for this group will be met from within existing budgets.

Risk management

8. There is considerable risk in not responding effectively to the ELIR recommendations and there is also risk in failing to improve our training for tutors and demonstrators.
9. There is little risk in setting up the proposed group.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

10. N/A

Equality & diversity

11. The work around training should have no direct equality and diversity implications but when we consider recruitment, these will move into the foreground and will need to be evaluated before any change is made to the policy.

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

12. The structure proposed should lead to full consultation with all key stakeholders. Updates to the policy will be cascaded and it is expected that guidelines clarifying the expectation of teaching organisations, graduate schools and course organisers will follow.

Author

Fiona Philippi
Antony Maciocia

Presenter

TBC

30th November 2021

Freedom of Information
OPEN

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

9 December 2021

**Thematic Review 2018-19:
Black and minority ethnic (BME) students'
experiences of support at the University**

Report on Recommendations/Remitted Actions

Description of paper:

1. The progress update of the implementation of the recommendations of the Thematic Review 2018-19: Black and minority ethnic (BME) students' experiences of support at the University.

Action requested / recommendation:

2. For discussion.

Background and context:

3. At the meeting held on Wednesday 18 September 2019, Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) approved the final report of the [Thematic Review 2018-19: Black and minority ethnic \(BME\) students' experiences of support at the University](#). The individuals and areas remitted actions have been asked to provide a year-on response to each, noting expected timescales for completion and highlighting potential barriers to progress.

Discussion:

4. Committee is asked to consider the responses and determine if sufficient progress has been made to implement the recommendations.

Resource implications:

5. Resource implications were considered as part of the review.

Risk management:

6. Risks were considered as part of the review.

Equality & diversity:

7. Equality and diversity was an integral part of the review.

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

8. Committee Secretary will feedback comments to relevant areas.

Author

Dr Emily Sena

Co-convenor, University of Edinburgh's
Race Equality and Anti-Racist sub-
committee (REAR)

Presenter

Brian Connolly,
Academic Services

Freedom of Information: Open

**Thematic Review 2017-18:
Black and minority ethnic (BME) students' experiences of support at the University**

Update on Recommendations/Remitted Actions

Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC), at the meeting held on Wednesday 18 September 2019, approved the final report of the [Thematic Review 2018-19: Black and minority ethnic \(BME\) students' experiences of support at the University](#). The recommendations of the review were then remitted to the individuals and areas identified in the report and a taskforce established by Professor Sarah Cunningham-Burley under the new Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee, to drive forward the recommendations. SQAC is required to oversee progress on the implementation of the report recommendations, via an initial 14 week report and then subsequent annual reports, until all outstanding actions have been resolved.

Recommendation	Timescale for completion	May 2021 Update	Current Update
The Review Panel recommends that the University work with the student BME Liberation Campaign, BME Staff Network, and the Race Equality Working Group (see section 4.1.5) to identify mechanisms for reporting racial micro-aggressions and racism.	June 2021	Three Black and minority ethnic counsellors have been appointed. Two full time have already started. Andy Shanks is currently in the procurement process for working with a third-party service and having Black and minority ethnic counsellors and Mandarin speakers is part of the tender.	One Pusumane (a PhD intern) completed research to understand the prevalence of hate crimes, racial harassment and microaggressions on campus and investigate current reporting structures and other institutional approaches. The final report will be shared with Gavin Douglas and Sarah Cunningham-Burley. The findings of the report were also shared at EDIC in November 2021.

<p>The Review Panel recommends that the University work with the student BME Liberation Campaign, BME Staff Network and the Race Equality Working Group (see section 4.1.5) to identify mechanisms that address BME staff-student experiences.</p>	<p>Semester 2, 2020/21</p>	<p>This was piloted in March/April 2021. Then it should be good to go but timing might be start of session 2021/22 given we are now in a period of exams and assessment.</p> <p>There has been a flurry of activities producing largely online resources which contribute to raising racial literacy. Staff led have been initiated by HR (Caroline Wallace):</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/training/self-directed</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/inclusion/race/stand-against-racism</p> <p>Student led- have involved a lead from the Careers Service Team (Shelagh Green), EUSA, IAD with individual academic staff supporting:</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/students/microaggressions/racial-microaggressions</p> <p>There is also a need for specific training for key staff e.g. personal tutors, security staff and discussions are progressing on how to take these forward.</p>	<p>Through work described below to address the attainment gap a need has been identified for a specific Student BAME support person to oversee this work more broadly. Progress is currently slow as it relies on efforts additional to existing workloads. The REAR co-convenors are in discussions with others to identify the feasibility of this.</p>
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		<p>Most schools now have a lead on Decolonising the Curriculum. CSE are taking a college led approach. No meeting took place in Semester 2 simply due to workload.</p> <p>6 podcasts on what decolonising means for 6 different academics including how they have taken this forward will be launched at the 2021 L&T Conference on 15th June. This is an initiative taken forward by REAR and IADF. This will be accompanied with a discussion paper about how this University is taking forward Decolonising the Curriculum. This paper will be given to Colm Harmon leading on the Curriculum Transformation Project to take forward.</p> <p>There is still work to be done on improving overall staff and student racial literacy particularly within areas like societies.</p> <p>Report and Support - EDIC Committee has endorsed launching a report/support platform for racism in January 2022 and Gavin Douglas and Sarah Cunningham Burley are exploring funding avenues. GD will fund a research assistant to consolidate insights and lessons from reporting across the University and amongst other institutions to contribute to development of platform.</p>	<p>The Institute for Academic Development has created a SharePoint site to support decolonising the curriculum across the institution. You can find it here. REAR are assisting IAD in gathering case studies from Schools.</p> <p>The podcast series is still ongoing and staff continue to request opportunities to participate.</p> <p>Updates on report and support above.</p>
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<p>The Review Panel recommends that University Leadership recognise the need to improve knowledge and upskill in the area of developing racial literacy.</p>	<p>Semester 2 2020/21</p>	<p>Staff resources have been produced to assist this.</p> <p>However what is now needed is to provide race equality and anti-racist training beyond static resources.</p> <p>This remains action to be taken forward.</p>	<p>Caroline Wallace is leading ongoing work to identify and implement appropriate anti-racist training for staff.</p>
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the Principal leads a conversation on ‘race’ in higher education and the implications for the University of Edinburgh.</p>	<p>Dec 2020</p>	<p>Townhall meeting has not taken place. REAR has asked the University Executive to give assurance that we will continue to tackle racism supported at cultural and institutional level – this was in response to the Report by the Commission for Racial and Ethnic Disparities (Sewell report) which attributes the issue of racism and racial disadvantage to Black and minority ethnic cultures, dispositions, individuals and communities. We await a response. It maybe that a Townhall meeting might be more effective in Semester 1 of the next session where the Principal can acknowledge progress but also raise issues of challenges and work still needing done.</p>	<p>There was a Race Equality Action Court Seminar in July 2021. Details of the action plan and REAR’s strategy were shared with members of court, including the Principal, and were well supported. This includes advocating for the “data collection person” described below.</p>
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the University provide each Head of College, School, and Professional Service area with a copy of ‘Why I’m No Longer Talking to White People About Race’.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>An e-book link has been sent to all service and school leads.</p>	<p>It is unclear whether recently in-post service and school leads continue to receive this link.</p>

<p>The Review Panel recommends that the University reapplies for the Race Equality Charter Mark (RECM).</p>		<p>This is being progressed. REAR Co-convenors have met with Sarah Cunningham-Burley and Caroline Wallace with the intention of applying for the Charter Mark in summer of 2022.</p>	<p>There is still uncertainty about whether the University will apply for the RECM. REAR co-convenors and staff and student networks have expressed a desire to do so but conversations are ongoing about whether this is the most effective use of limited resources.</p>
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the University conduct a benchmarking of approaches to supporting BME students across the UK. The findings of this exercise must be implemented at a level above the benchmarked basic level of provision.</p>		<p>The Student Experience Action Plan Team no longer exists as the plan and its associated budget were cut back at the end of last year in light of the pandemic challenges. So this item remains unactioned at this stage. Gavin Douglas agrees that it is an important action however.</p>	<p>The REAR action plan consultation is ongoing and the co-convenors are seeking input from key stakeholders on the most appropriate strategy to take this forward.</p>
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the EDMARC Report receives a high profile communication upon publication and that each College, School, and Professional Service is systematically required to provide a formal response each year.</p>		<p>Not progressed but data is available so this is a matter of workload.</p>	<p>No further progress.</p>
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the University review the collection of data for BME students to provide more granular data, accessible via the PowerBI Data dashboards.</p>		<p>CAHSS work was not progressed due to workload and not having a short-term post to assist in this. This remains a priority for the CAHSS EDI Committee. Schools are keen for this data.</p> <p>Work progressing at College level for each at the moment.</p>	<p>Sarah Cunningham-Burley, supported by REAR co-convenors, is in conversations with Strategic Planning regarding 6 months of resource for 1.0 FTE to support this data collection – “data collection person”. There is also need for some consultation to ensure the data are for purpose.</p>

		No progress on this but should be a priority area for 2021/22.	
The Review Panel recommends that the University requires Colleges, Schools, Deaneries, and Professional Services to respond to BME data as part of annual review processes.		Schools/Deaneries will be asked to reflect on student progression and outcomes data, and in particular the differences in attainment, during this year's cycle of annual quality assurance reporting.	In the school QA reports this year there was a significant increase in engagement with and reflection on EDI data and attainment gaps in particular. SQAC will consider how the University can move from reflection to action on the issues at the Committee's next meeting in September 2021. No further update.
The Review Panel recommends that the Sense of Belonging strand of the Student Experience Action Plan consider ways of specifically improving the experience of community and belonging for BME students.		The work being led by Mohini Gray on addressing issues of black and minority ethnic student attainment is progressing. Mohini Gray will identify some action that the University/Schools could take ahead of the final report from the PTAS grant. This report is not due till end of 2021 at the earliest.	This work has been delayed due to difficulties in recruiting a PhD intern on the PTAS grant and competing demands due to workloads. These challenges have highlighted the need to embed and appropriately resource such work. Led by Mohini, REAR are convening a short-life working group to look at attainment gap and recommendations based on findings from the research described above.
The Review Panel recommends that the University recognise and celebrate the contributions of BME staff and students.	October 6th	REAR did request ideas for this at the Feb 23rd meeting. No concrete ideas came forward. This remains an action recommendation that should be discussed again at the first REAR meeting in 2021/22 with a view to progress or amend.	REAR is currently undergoing a consultation of the Action Plan to gather ideas of how to implement actions. This will likely be available early in 2022.

<p>The Review Panel recommends that the University recruit a new BME Outreach Officer to work with BME communities. The Review Panel encourages the University to use positive action to diversify staffing.</p>		<p>No progress at this point.</p>	<p>Funding is in place and SRA have approval to recruit. A Job description has been drafted.</p>
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the University commit to increase the percentage of BME staff, both academic and professional services, with immediate priority in the professional services areas. The Review Panel encourages the University to use positive action to diversify staffing.</p>		<p>Dave Gorman is leading on this for Professional Services. Their focus at present is on gender/ethnic pay gaps. However, this is an area that Dave Gorman has asked for ideas and assistance on. This is a discussion that REAR will be having with him specifically by June 2021 with a view to progressing action next session.</p>	<p>The plan is to focus on professional services, REAR co-convenors are working with Sarah Cunningham-Burley to work with HR and the People Strategy on identifying what success looks like, who does this well, and useful next steps in addressing this area. Appointment of the “data collection person” will support this action.</p>
<p>The Review Panel recommends that Student Recruitment and Admissions consult with the Students’ Association and the student BME Liberation Campaign to explore how the pre-arrival information can be enhanced to better meet the needs of BME students.</p>		<p>Student Recruitment and Admissions (SRA) has started to revise the material being given out to students.</p> <p>Shelagh Green leading on Adaptation and Renewal Team (ART) work around EDI training for students.</p>	<p>The Students’ Association continually updates their BME student guide for new students that is included in their Welcome Week information.</p> <p>SRA have commissioned two pieces of research from Moray House that will support this action:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of data and literature to understand the application rates/barriers/issues regarding BAME applicants to UoE. The work is completed and report drafted.

			2. Interviews of S5/S6 BAME students (with a focus lower socioeconomic backgrounds) to understand what barriers might exist for these students in terms of applying to the University of Edinburgh. The work is in its final stages.
The Review Panel recommends that the Sense of Belonging strand of the Student Experience Action Plan consult with the Students' Association and the student BME Liberation Campaign to agree how best to target funding for BME groups, societies and networks.		Sense of Belonging strand of the Student Experience Action Plan will take this forward.	There has been no further action and it seems that the Sense of Belonging strand of the Student Experience Action Plan no longer exists.
The Review Team recommends that the Service Excellence Programme ensure that a systematic staff training programme is an integral part of the final recommendations of the current Personal Tutor and Student Support Team Review.		Conversations are happening with those leading on the Student Support Team review. The work by the team has been paused due to the pandemic.	No further progress.
The Review Panel recommends that the Student Counselling Service use positive action to diversify its staffing.	Completed	This work is completed – see comments above re counselling.	N/A
The Review Panel recommends that the Student Counselling Service should ensure that it has a Service Level Agreement in place with any organisation that it uses to support University of Edinburgh students.	Completed	This work is completed – see comments about re counselling.	N/A

<p>The Review Panel recommends that the Student Counselling Service conduct a benchmarking of approaches to supporting BME students across the UK. The findings of this exercise must be implemented at a level above the benchmarked basic level of provision.</p>		<p>Our priority was to recruit Black and minority ethnic counsellors and this is now completed. It is likely the Benchmarking exercise is redundant for now.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the proposed Curriculum Review enables BME students to be involved in diversifying content, including the co-design of curricula and assessments. Academic staff must collaborate with BME students to understand their experiences in the design, implementation and evaluation of their access, progression, and employability activities.</p>	<p>Dec 2020</p>	<p>See above comments on Decolonising the curriculum which in part relates to this item.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the University address the attainment/awarding gap. The action plan should include targets to reduce the attainment gap.</p>		<p>See above comments related to this grant and work taken forward by Mohini Gray.</p>	<p>As above. However, REAR co-convenors are of the view this activity requires protected time and resources to complete effectively.</p> <p>Additionally, a proposal from Laura Cattell to the Student Recruitment & Fees Strategy Group was accepted to introduce PGT scholarships from 2023 with BAME students as a proposed target group. This includes a plan for a</p>

			wider programme of support – advice and guidance about funding more general, more investment in scholarships management/administration, and a programme of support for current UG students and PGT students to nurture and support talent.
The Review Panel recommends that Senate Quality Assurance Committee implement systematic monitoring of retention, progression and degree outcome data for BME students and, if appropriate, recommend interventions where there are clear and consistent patterns of divergence between BME students and white students.		<p>SQAC has established a Data Task Group to progress this action.</p> <p>The Committee considered an enhanced set of student data papers at the April 2021 meeting. The Data Task Group continues to explore options for an enhanced system for monitoring retention, progression and degree outcome data for different student groups.</p>	The Data Task Group will link up with the Curriculum Transformation team in 2021-22 to drive this forward.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

9 December 2021

**Thematic Review 2017-18:
Mature Students and Student Parents and Carers**

Report on Recommendations/Remitted Actions

Description of paper:

1. The progress update on the implementation of the recommendations of the Thematic Review 2017-18: Mature Students and Student Parents and Carers

Action requested / recommendation:

2. For discussion.

Background and context:

3. The final report and recommendations of the [2017-18 Thematic Review of support for Mature Students and Student Parents and Carers](#) were approved at the meeting of the Committee held on 20 September 2018.
4. The Committee considered an update on progress to implement the recommendations from the review at the meeting held on 18 September 2019. The Committee was content with progress and agreed to receive an annual report until all actions had been completed.

Discussion:

5. Committee is asked to consider the responses and determine if sufficient progress has been made to implement the recommendations.

Resource implications:

6. Resource implications were considered as part of the review.

Risk management:

7. Risks were considered as part of the review.

Equality & diversity:

8. Equality and diversity was an integral part of the review.

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

9. Committee Secretary will feedback comments to relevant areas.

Author

Andy Shanks,
Director of Student Wellbeing

Presenter

Brian Connolly,
Academic Services

Freedom of Information: Open

**Thematic Review 2017-18:
Mature Students and Student Parents and Carers**

Report on outstanding Recommendations/Remitted Actions

Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC), at the meeting held on Thursday 20 September 2018, approved the final report of the [Thematic Review of Support for Mature Students and Student Parents and Carers](#). The recommendations of the review were then remitted to the individuals and areas identified in the report, which in most instances involved further consultative and developmental work during the 2018-19 academic session. SQAC is required to oversee progress on the implementation of the report recommendations, via an initial 14 week report and then subsequent annual reports, until all outstanding actions have been resolved.

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

Recommendation	Timescale for completion	September 2020 Update	Current Update
The review panel recommends that the Director of Student Wellbeing and Senate Curriculum and Student Progression Committee develop and implement a Student Parent and Student Carer Policy setting clear expectations for when the institution and the individual need to take action.	December 2020	Further discussions with Edinburgh Cares and Academic Services, agreed that policy on this may not be needed. Plan is to have a clear statement of intent on our web-pages regarding how we support student parents and student carers, articulating the types of support which we can put in place. We will then monitor and analyse ESC applications through	This work has been delayed due to the pandemic, and will be progressed through the Edinburgh Cares group.

		20/21, and if there are themes and support requests which are not covered through existing policies, then we will identify how best we can fill these gaps.	
The review panel recommends that Senate Curriculum and Student Progression Committee and the Director of Student Wellbeing consider developing a system of adjustments (covering issues such as extensions and examination arrangements) that are consistent with, but not the same as, those for disabled students.	Dec 2020	This will be integrated into the work within the recommendation above.	As above.
The review panel recommends that the Vice-Principal People and Culture and Director of Student Wellbeing conduct a strategic review of childcare provision, from the provision of child friendly spaces and crèche facilities to nurseries and childcare bursaries. The review must include benchmarking with peer institutions and consultation with students and staff in order to understand fully the needs of students and staff and to provide an evidence base for strategic decision making regarding the allocation of resources.	August 2020	This is being considered through University Court and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee.	Estates are now leading on this, and this work has now been integrated into the Action Plan for the Gender-Equality Sub-Group of the University's EDI Committee.

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

9 December 2021

Enhancement Themes: Year 2 Plan

Description of paper

1. Presents the University's plan of work for year two of the Enhancement Theme, Resilient Learning Communities.
2. This paper does not contribute to the Strategy 2030 outcomes. It is a regulatory requirement.

Action requested / recommendation

3. The Committee is asked to note the year two plan (attached).

Background and context

4. The Enhancement Themes are a programme of activity involving the whole higher education sector in Scotland. Staff and students collaborate on one or more topics to improve strategy, policy and practice. The current Theme (2020 to 2023) is Resilient Learning Communities. Engaging with the Enhancement Themes is part of the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework.

Discussion

5. Activity will focus around:
 - Appointing PhD Interns to support Theme work;
 - Sharing examples and supporting new activity; and
 - Progressing specific recommendations from the 2020/21 PhD Internships.

Resource implications

6. There are no resource implications identified in the report.

Risk management

7. The report does not identify any risks. Risks are considered as part of individual activities/projects.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

8. This paper does not contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a regulatory requirement.

Equality & diversity

9. Equality and diversity will be considered as part of individual activities/projects.

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

10. Enhancement Themes activity is communicated through a variety of mechanisms, including websites, SharePoint sites, emails, network meetings, and Teaching Matters.

Author

Nichola Kett
29 November 2021

Presenter

Nichola Kett

Freedom of Information

Open



Resilient Learning Communities

Institutional Plan for: University of Edinburgh

This document will form your year 2 plan and should be around three to four sides of A4. You can find your year 1 plan through this [web page](#).

Context	
Provide any statements that might be helpful in explaining your institution's context and approach and how this plan supports the achievement of institutional priorities. Any context statement could draw on salient points from the previous year's learning/outcomes from Theme work and reflect any changes in the strategic direction of your institution.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recommendations from the year one PhD internships have affirmed the continuing importance of the University focussing on community building as the main priority for year two of the Theme. • The recent Enhancement-led Institutional Review resulted in a recommendation relating to attainment gaps, and this is reflected in our plan below. • We are aware that there have been a vast number of online activities taking place across the University and the Students' Association to support community building. Reflections on the past year highlight the accessibility of such activities but also the impact on engagement due to digital fatigue. 	
Institutional team	
Please specify for each member whether staff or student and for staff, their role title. Where the Theme Leaders' Group (TLG) staff or student nominee is unable to attend meetings, an alternate can attend on their behalf.	
Institutional lead	Professor Tina Harrison, Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
TLG staff representative	Nichola Kett (Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement)
TLG student representative	Tara Gold (Vice President Education)

Edinburgh University Students' Association staff member	Stuart Lamont, Academic Policy Coordinator
Institute for Academic Development	Dr Jon Turner, Director
Doctoral education/researcher development representative	Dr Fiona Philippi (Head of Doctoral Education/Deputy Head of Researcher Development, Institute for Academic Development)
PhD Interns	To be appointed
The Institutional Team will remain small and focused, engaging with existing groups, committees and networks as appropriate. Additionally, students and staff who are working on community building activities will be invited to attend all or parts of relevant meetings.	

Overall outcomes/activity

Are there any changes to your key priorities, outcomes and delivery activities that you identified at the start of the Theme?

Our overall aim remains the same: to identify activities that effectively build a sense of community and belonging and share these across the University in order to enhance the student experience.

Year 2 outcomes/activity

In answering the following, identify what is continuing from year 1 and what is new:

What are your key priorities?

What outcomes do you want to achieve?

What activities will you deliver to achieve your key priorities?

Our main activities remain the same but build on the outcomes of year 1.

1. Appoint two PhD Interns to support Theme work

Main responsibilities will include:

- To progress the recommendations from the 2020/21 PhD Interns relating to communication and coordination, including working with the Students' Association to align actions with student representative structures;
- Analyse student feedback (quantitative and qualitative);
- Provide engaging summaries of activities and plans for stakeholders and update websites/SharePoint sites;
- Support pilot projects to test interventions to reduce attainment gaps (links to an Enhancement-led Institutional Review recommendation);
- Develop and support an evaluation plan for Theme activity.

2. Share examples and support new activity

- Continue to gather and share good practice and to support pilot activity, with a focus on those activities that make the most impact and that reduce attainment gaps (links to an Enhancement-led Institutional Review recommendation).

- Aligning with institutional strategic priorities as appropriate, primarily: the Curriculum Transformation programme; the Student Support and Personal Tutor project; and the Digital Education strand of the Digital Strategy.
- Revisit the School of Health in Social Sciences project to improve the experience for students with disabilities (funded June-July 2021).
- Explore the option of developing a framework or toolkit to support community building.

3. Progress specific recommendations from the 2020/21 PhD Internships

- Implement a Postgraduate Researcher Representative Roundtable (to be supported by a PhD Intern)
- Update [Giving Feedback: A Student Guide](#)

Evaluation

How do you intend to evaluate your year 2 projects and activities?

Prior to completing this section, it would be useful to refer to the QAAS website resource: [A Guide to Basic Evaluation in HE](#) (specifically, Section 8, Summary overview on page 23, and the Evaluation Checklist – Appendix A, on pages 28-29).

Please complete briefly the following 5 questions for each activity or intervention (N.B. Just cut and paste the table below as many times as necessary). This will help you complete your end of year 2 report.

Title of project/activity
Appoint two PhD Interns to support Theme work
What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)
A variety of actions as detailed above.
Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)
To build on year one Theme work through more targeted activities and to continue to engage students in our Theme work.
What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change envisaged)
This will be determined as the PhD internships progress.
How will we know? (How the change is measured)
This will be determined as the PhD internships progress.

Appoint two PhD Interns to support Theme work

What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)

A variety of actions as detailed above.

Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)

To build on year one Theme work through more targeted activities and to continue to engage students in our Theme work.

What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change envisaged)

This will be determined as the PhD internships progress.

How will we know? (How the change is measured)

This will be determined as the PhD internships progress.

Title of project/activity
Share examples and support new activity
What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)

Share examples and support new activity

What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)

A continuing exercise to gather and reflect on good practice examples of community building activities from across the University and Students' Association.

Supporting pilot activity, with a focus on those activities that make the most impact, that reduce attainment gaps and align with institutional strategic priorities as appropriate.

Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)

- To enable sharing of good practice examples of community building activities.
- To learn what activities make a positive impact in order to inform policy and/or practice.

What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change envisaged)

- An increase in good practice examples being shared and action taken as a result.
- For activities which make a positive impact on community building to have informed policy and/or practice.
- Ultimately, an increase in the effectiveness of community building activities.

How will we know? (How the change is measured)

- An increase in good practice examples being shared e.g. in network meetings and through Teaching Matters and examples of where action has been taken as a result of this.
- Changes to policy and/or practice have been implemented.
- Ultimately, through student feedback and attainment data.

Title of project/activity

Progress specific recommendations from the 2020/21 PhD Internships

What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)

- 1) Implement a Postgraduate Researcher Representative Roundtable
- 2) Update [Giving Feedback: A Student Guide](#)

Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)

In response to recommendations from PhD Interns appointed in year one of the Theme.

What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change envisaged)

- 1) Postgraduate researcher student representatives will have had the opportunity to find out about different community building practices and to share successes and failures.
- 2) Students will be clearer on the student voice mechanisms.

How will we know? (How the change is measured)

Student feedback

Dissemination of work

How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?

Communication methods:

- Internally: email; Institutional Team; Senate Quality Assurance Committee; Doctoral College Forum; Directors of Teaching Network; Teaching Matters blog; Learning and Teaching Conference; Students' Association groups/networks.
- Externally: Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC); Theme Leaders' Group (TLG); Enhancement Themes conference; and the University's and Students' Association's websites.

The Institutional Team will continue to use existing committees, groups and networks to communicate about the Theme, to engage staff and students in Theme work, and to disseminate University and sector Theme outputs. Additionally, the PhD Interns will support communication of Theme work as outlined above.

Community and academic community are established tags on the [Teaching Matters blog](#).

Supporting staff and student engagement

How will you support your community to engage with planned activities?

As outlined above the Institutional Team will continue to use existing committees, groups and networks to communicate about the Theme, to engage staff and students in Theme work, and to disseminate University and sector Theme outputs.

Student and staff involvement with the Theme itself has primarily been through the Institutional Team. However, we have supported staff and student engagement with Theme activities (not necessarily badged as such) through mechanisms such as the Learning and Teaching Conference and the Directors of Teaching Network.

The year one PhD Interns made recommendations about student engagement in the University's Enhancement Themes work and these will be taken forward in year two.

Staff and students will be kept informed of the work of the Theme through the communication methods outlined above. Support and guidance can be provided by the Institutional Lead and Theme Leaders Group staff member. Students will be supported through the Students' Association.

Plan author:	Nichola Kett (with contributions from the Institutional Team)
Date:	17 September 2021

Return to: ARCAAdmin@qaa.ac.uk

The University of Edinburgh
Senate Quality Assurance Committee

9 December 2021

Internal Periodic Review

Description of paper

1. Responses to Internal Periodic Review (IPR).

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is invited to confirm that it is content with progress in the year-on and 14 week responses.

Background and context

3. The following responses are published on the Committee wiki (<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SQAC/Thursday+9+December+2021>):
 - Politics and International Relations year-on response;
 - Chemistry year-on response;
 - Social and Political Science (postgraduate taught provision) 14 week response;
 - Clinical Education 14 week response.

Discussion

4. See wiki.

Resource implications

5. No additional resource implications.

Risk management

6. No risk associated.

Equality & diversity

7. An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the IPR process.

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

8. Comments will be reported back to the School/Subject Area and the responses published on the Academic Services website.

Author

Brian Connolly
Academic Services

Presenter

Brian Connolly,
Academic Services

Freedom of Information - Open