The University of Edinburgh

Senate Quality Assurance Committee e-business

Wednesday 13th September 2023 – Tuesday 19th September 2023 5pm

Note of e-business

1.	**School Annual Quality Reports 2022-23: Sub Group Report** To discuss and agree recommended actions.	SQAC 23/24 1D
	Comments received from members included the following: - Requests for clarification on the proposed actions of the reports analysis; these should be more clearly signposted within the report. - Suggestion that the sub-group makes specific recommendations for further action at University level to enhance the themes noted for development. - Support for Dr Laura Bradley to join the sub-group to enhance the focus on PGR themes. - There are many examples of good practice across the University; it would be beneficial to find efficient ways of sharing them. - More engagement on the Assessment & Feedback principles and priorities would be beneficial given how key these will be going forward. - A request for SQAC to think about how it can support future reports providing more concrete evidence of impact deriving from good practices. - Concern over the level of reporting around issues including recent difficulties with Timetabling, central initiatives such as ESC, staff experience, industrial action and EDI. **Action:** Dr Laura Bradley to be added to the sub-group in 2023/24 and onwards. **Action:** All comments to be passed to Academic Services for consideration in relation to annual monitoring reporting templates for 2023/24.	
2.	**Internal Periodic Review Themes 2022-23** To discuss and approve.	SQAC 23/24 1E
	A member of the Committee raised concerns around the effects of ongoing industrial dispute in the sector on the review themes and proposed that this is an area for further development in the	

	IPR process. Concerns were also raised around the standards of evidence that the Committee is required to uphold, with a note that reviewers should include proper evidence and examples to meet SQAC's reporting needs. Another member highlighted the ongoing challenge of resource and the scope for the Committee making recommended actions in the areas of further development. The member noted that progress appears slow and impacted by barriers, both perceived and real. It was highlighted that failure to respond to areas for further development constitutes institutional risk and SQAC should explore how to assist more with progress. One member recommended that SQAC do not approve and should consider a revision at a later meeting. **Action:** all comments to be passed to the IPR team within Academic Services. **Action:** IPR team to return to SQAC at February 2024 with a paper outlining proposed enhancements to the IPR process.	
3.	**Evaluation of Course Level Feedback** To approve.	SQAC 23/24 1F
	The Committee broadly supported the work to evaluate course level feedback. Comments received from members included the following points: • The evaluation team would be encouraged to look to the wider sector to find out what works, rather than undertake another (solely) internal focussed review. Doing one or two things consistently across the University might make a difference. • To ensure that the feedback loop is closed at all levels, it would be helpful to include an expectation for all levels to provide a response to course level feedback (not just course organisers). • The evaluation team must outline the planned measures to ensure that the student voice will be included in the review. • Will the review involve developing qualitative and/or quantitative indicators? • This should not become a circular issue of course evaluation cycling between the responsibilities of the central University and local areas. The proposed evaluation must get to the root problems and change must be sufficiently prioritised and resourced.	

	• In some subject areas, there appears to be a correlation between programmes with high student numbers and low response rates. It was suggested that the impact of individual staff on response rates might also apply elsewhere within the University. The consensus from the Committee was that the SAIM team have approval to review course evaluation, but this item should be on the SQAC agenda for the December meeting for further discussion on the approach and objectives of the review. **Action:** Committee Secretary to pass all comments received on this item to Marianne Brown for her information. **Action:** Marianne Brown to resubmit this item for the December meeting for further discussion.	
4.	**Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review 2022/23** To note and comment.	SQAC 23/24 1G
	The Committee was asked to note this paper. Comments received from members included the following: • More members on the Committee would allow for a more holistic view of the University and also a more robust feedback strategy to different groups within each College. • The 56% response rate is low; action should be considered for the 23/24 review to ensure that the response rate is in a range that can be considered fully representative of the Committee & statistically viable. • Concern that there is not strong evidence of the Committee elevating the voices and concerns of marginalised individuals and communities, and that there are too few BAME members on the Committee. • One member proposed an alternative approach to the EDI representation on the Committee with the suggestion of specific EDI in Policy, Strategy & Quality training for Committee members. It was suggested that this could be a combined training activity with the other Senate Standing Committees. • There is not currently an appropriate relationship between the Committee and Senate, and this requires rethinking of delegation and the flow of business between SQAC and Senate.	
5.	**Scottish Funding Council Annual Report 2022-23** To approve.	SQAC 23/24 1H

	Following review by SQAC members, several minor changes were made to the content of the report to reflect the comments received as follows: • Mention of the WP Strategy. • Modification of the text on Assessment and Feedback to reflect that the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities were only introduced at the start of the academic year. • Modification of the text referring to student feedback on the new student support model, to reflect that feedback is from a small proportion of students. • Modification of the text referring to EDI actions to reflect that this report captures new actions throughout the year, hence it is too soon for Schools to demonstrate impact. • Modification of the text on increase in student numbers to reflect that this has been uneven across Schools. • Reference to ESC has been added in relation to assessment and feedback. • Mention of the impact of the cost of living crisis on WP student recruitment. Several other comments received have not been reflected in changes to the report content because doing so would not fit the purpose of the report as specified by SFC. These will be noted for transparency and largely relate to suggestions to include reference to wider concerns or discussions from Senate members. The SFC report is a report on in-year monitoring and review activity from the routine quality assurance processes and not a report from Senate. Only one SQAC member indicated they would not approve the report. The reason for non-approval given was one of governance rather than content. Therefore, the content of the report has been approved by SQAC. The amended report was submitted to e-Senate (for noting and further comment) and to University Court on 9 October 2023 for approval. Any comments from e-Senate, along with a response, will be provided to Court members. Once approved, the report will be submitted to SFC. Following the confirmation of approval sent to SQAC members on 20th September 2023, one member noted their objection to this interpretation of their concerns and believe it is inappropriate for e-meetings to confirm papers that do not have unanimous consent.	
6.	**Committee Administration:**	SQAC 23/24 1I

	To note: • Committee Terms of Reference • Committee Membership 2023/24	Page 5 of 5
	This paper was noted by the Committee. Comment received included the suggestion of an EDI representative on the Committee and focus on the gender split of the Committee (over two thirds female). One member commented that Senate has not approved the TOR or membership. These items did not get discussed at the May 2023 Senate meeting and are on the October 2023 Senate agenda.	
7.	**Date of next meeting** Thursday 7th December 2023, Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House and Microsoft Teams	