Course Organiser: Outline of Role

THE UNIVERSITY *of* **EDINBURGH**

Purpose of Guidance

The guidance provides information of the role of course organisers. The Head of School or Director of Teaching appoints course organisers to take responsibility for individual courses. The scope of the course organiser's remit varies according to local school organisation, but in outline the course organiser is responsible for:

- general course management
- assessment and feedback
- advising and supporting students on course-related matters
- monitoring and reviewing courses
- agreeing minor changes to courses

Scope: Guidance is not Mandatory

This guidance applies to all staff with the role of course organiser and those supporting them in this role.

Contact	Academic Quality and Standards	academicpolicy@ed.ac.uk

Document control

Dates	Version Approved: 13.06.24	Effective Date: 01.08.24	Equality impact assessment: 12.5.17	Last Reviewed: 13.06.24	Next Review: 2025/26
Approving authority		Academic Policy and Regulations Committee			
Alternative format		If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 650 2138.			
Keywords		Course organiser, course approval, course monitoring, roles, course management			

Course Organiser: Outline of Role

1 General Course Management

1.1 Checking that sufficient lecturers and tutors have been allocated to teach the course and know what their duties and responsibilities are in regard to the course

1.2 Ensuring staff (including technical staff and demonstrators) know their commitments and that proper communication channels are in place; chairing meetings of the course team

1.3 Specifically, allocating tasks to tutors and demonstrators, supporting and overseeing their work, and carrying out annual reviews of tutors and demonstrators as detailed in the Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators
https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/tutorsdemonstrators_policy.pdf

1.4 Encouraging and supporting the course team in a variety of approaches to teaching; monitoring, advising and supporting new course team members. Advice on reviewing teaching is available from the Institute for Academic Development.
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/institute-academic-development/learning-teaching

1.5 Liaising with Teaching Office or equivalent support staff

1.6 Liaising with the relevant Student Support Services

1.7 Ensuring bookings are made for lecture theatres, laboratories, and tutorial rooms and/or making arrangements for digital delivery

1.8 Organising appropriate audio-visual and/or IT support through Information Services Group

1.9 Ensuring that the organisation of the course, and the materials provided to students, take account of accessibility issues and any adjustments required for individual students (working with the School's Coordinator of Adjustments)
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-disability-service
http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/accessible_and_inclusive_learning_policy.pdf

1.10 Checking that laboratories have been assessed for risks in accordance with the University Health and Safety Policy

1.11 Ensuring that there is a budget available for consumables required to run and organise the course

1.12 Ensuring the production and distribution of course documentation and materials, including the course handbook. Required core content for course handbooks is detailed in the Programme and Course Handbook Policy.
http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/progcoursehandbooks.pdf

1.13 Arranging for the allocation of students to tutorial groups, practical groups, etc. and ensuring that students, tutors and demonstrators know times and venues and/or making arrangements for digital delivery

1.14 Ensuring in due time that bookshops are aware of any set book requirements.

1.15 Liaising with the Library within agreed timescales to ensure library resources for teaching are made available to students. Updating resource lists as appropriate.
https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/research-teaching-staff/resource-lists

1.16 Liaising with Information Services Group regarding any special equipment or arrangements. Reporting any problems with computer laboratories

1.17 Overseeing course web page and virtual learning environment, Learn, etc. if appropriate. Using the VLE to make course materials and other information available as appropriate.

2   Assessment and Feedback

2.1 Co-ordinating the load and timing of assessments across the course and liaising with other course organisers to take into account other deadlines, including those for dissertation or project-based activities

2.2 Informing students about the structure of assessments, expected standard of presentation, marking criteria, timescales and arrangements for feedback on assessments, and an individual assessment's contribution to the overall course mark

2.3 Drawing students' attention to the University Taught Assessment Regulations
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/assessment-regulations

2.4 Advising students of the need to reference appropriately and drawing their attention to the University guidelines
http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/conduct/academic-misconduct/plagiarism

2.5 Ensuring that assessments are set and returned within the stipulated timeframe

2.6 Co-ordinating marking in accordance with published School procedures for moderation and standard-setting, and ensuring that accurate records are maintained

2.7 Co-ordinating the secure preparation of examination papers or questions (class and degree exams), including question vetting and checking, in consultation with the Chair of the Board of Examiners and the External Examiners

2.8 Preparing material for the Board of Examiners in line with published Policy and attending meetings.
http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf

2.9 Ensuring that students understand how to access the Exceptional Circumstances system and relevant deadlines for consideration of Exceptional Circumstances. Providing a supporting statement to the Exceptional Circumstances system if requested. Signposting students to the Exceptional Circumstances system for applying for an extension.

3   Advising and Supporting Students

3.1 Dealing with queries from prospective students on the course, and from their Student Advisers.

3.2 Advising students on course matters

3.3   Ensuring that students are aware (normally through the initial course information) of the action they should take in case of difficulties, whom to consult, or what guidance material they should look at

3.4   Monitoring student engagement, contacting defaulting students, informing Student Advisers about students who are absent or experiencing academic or other difficulties, and reporting to the relevant role within the subject area or School
       https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/immigration

3.5   Liaising with the Disability and Learning Support Service regarding adjustments for disabled students

3.6   Ensuring that students are aware of the advice and help that can be offered through the Disability and Learning Support Service

3.7   Ensuring that the course or any elements of the course comply with Disability legislation and the University's Accessible and Inclusive Learning policy.
       http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/accessible_and_inclusive_learning_policy.pdf

3.8   Ensure that appeal and complaint procedures are published to students, and that tutoring staff are aware of these

4   Monitoring and Reviewing Courses

4.1   Working in collaboration with Programme Directors, other relevant staff, and the Students' Association to support student representatives including:
       - Ensuring an appropriate number of Programme Representatives have been recruited at the start of each academic year and their details have been shared with the Students' Association;
       - Ensuring that feedback gathered throughout the year is shared with student representatives, both directly and through Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs);
       - Ensuring that student representatives are encouraged to engage with Programme, School and Students' Association opportunities including meetings, consultation events, and trainings.

4.2   Working in partnership with student representatives to respond to feedback, ensuring there is transparency regarding those responses, including when no action has been taken, and escalating issues identified through the relevant School, College or University channels where appropriate.

       https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/yourvoice/yourrepresentatives/schoolandprogrammerepresentativ es

4.3   Proactively working in partnership with student representatives to address feedback, ensuring that the results of such ongoing consultation and evaluation are made known to students; and responding to points raised in the SSLC.

4.4   Offer at least one opportunity for all students to provide feedback on their course each year. See the Student Voice Policy for further information on roles and responsibilities:
       https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studentvoicepolicy.pdf

4.5 On an annual basis, obtain written/electronic feedback from staff involved in course delivery

4.6 Undertake annual course monitoring which will be taken into consideration as part of Annual Programme Monitoring Reporting.
http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality/monitoringandreview/annual-monitoring-review-and-reporting

4.7 Implement and monitor changes made as a result of previous feedback

4.8 Assisting in the preparation and presentation of course changes to the Board of Studies

5 Agreeing Minor Changes to Courses

5.1 Approving minor changes to existing courses in line with the Programme and Course Approval and Management Policy (in some circumstances Boards of Studies approval is also required).
http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/prog_course_approval.pdf

13 June 2024