

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 29 October 2015 at 2pm in the Raeburn Room, Old College

Present:	
Dr Linda Bruce	Academic Policy Manager, Academic Services
Professor Tina Harrison (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Dr Sheila Lodge	CMVM Head of Academic Administration
Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka	EUSA Academic Engagement Co-ordinator
Dr Robert Mason	Associate Dean (Quality Assurance) College of Humanities and Social Science
Ronnie Millar	Director, Student Counselling Service, Representative of Student Services
Barry Neilson	Director, Student Systems
Dr Claire Phillips	School Representative (Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Professor John Sawkins	External Representative. Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching), Heriot-Watt University
Dr Inger Seiferheld	School Representative (Business School), College of Humanities and Social Science
Professor Michael Summerfield	School Representative (School of GeoSciences), College of Science and Engineering
Dr Jon Turner	Director, Institute for Academic Development
Tom Ward	Director, Academic Services
Imogen Wilson	Vice President (Academic Affairs), EUSA
In attendance:	
Joy Candlish	Head of Academic Affairs CSE
Brian Connolly	Secretary to Senatus Quality Assurance Committee
Apologies:	
Erin Jackson	Co-opted Member: Distance Learning & E-learning
Professor Jeremy Bradshaw	Director of Quality Assurance, CMVM, Assistant Principal Researcher Development
Dr Gordon McDougall	Dean (Quality Assurance), College of Science and Engineering

1. Welcome

The Convener welcomed Joy Candlish, Head of Academic Affairs CSE, attending in lieu of Dr Gordon McDougall.

2. Minutes of previous meeting held 28 May 2015

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The Minutes of the meeting of 28 May 2015 were approved as an accurate record with the following amendment: Convener's title to be corrected to Professor.

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1 The following matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2015 were noted:

Item 5.3 - University Quality Framework Review

The Convener reported that initial discussions with the Deans about how to highlight and spread good and innovative practice from internal review and annual reporting had pointed towards potential changes to the annual 'Learning from Internal Review' event. The Convener would meet with Senior Vice Principal Jeffery to discuss how this could contribute to the celebrating positives strand of his actions on teaching and learning.

Item 7.5 – Annual Report of the Senate Committees

The Convener reported that at Convener's Forum Senior Vice Principal Jeffery had established the following priorities for his new responsibility for student experience, learning and teaching across the University: Simplification; Celebration of positives; Leadership; Performance Management. It was noted that the Committee's review of the quality framework, and the current work on student dashboards and improved data, would support these priorities.

Item 6.2 - Draft Principles for Student Staff Liaison Committees

The Convener suggested that it would be useful for the Committee to receive updates from the Schools regarding their experiences during the first semester of the changes to the student representation process. This would feed into the semester two communication.

Action: College representatives to gather feedback from Schools and report to the Committee meeting of Thursday 4 February 2016. (*Post meeting note: this action will be considered at the Committee meeting of Thursday 10 December 2015.*)

4. Convener's Business

- 4.1 **SFC agreement to reschedule Teaching Programme Review of Medicine from 2016/17 to 2017/18**

The Convener reported that the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) had agreed to reschedule the TPR from academic year 2016/17 to 2017/18 to align with the General Medical Council (GMC) review due to take place in November 2017.

5. For Discussion

- 5.1 **College Quality Assurance Priorities 2015-16**

The College of Humanities and Social Science Quality Assurance priorities 2015-16 were noted as follows:

1. Engagement with the review of the University Quality Framework

Consultation was due to take place during semester 1, with work continuing throughout the year. The review would be responsive to any issues emerging from the Enhancement-led Institutional Review and to the Scottish Funding Council's review of the Quality Enhancement Framework.

2. Support for the development of an online system for course and programme monitoring at the College level

Work had taken place in order to define the needs and goals of such a system, and it was hoped that development would be possible during the year ahead; it would be important to provide College Quality Assurance Committee (CQAC) guidance for its development.

3. Exploration of annual programme review in its implementation stage

Over the past few years CQAC has developed a framework for annual programme review across the College, which has been supportive of different approaches, according to the need of different programmes. It was suggested that CQAC continues to monitor the implementation of annual programme review, and to share ideas across the Schools.

4. Initiatives to share the results of QAE monitoring

In recent years CQAC has worked quite extensively with CUGLAT, in running a number of joint sessions on various themes; it was proposed to continue such work (beginning with a November session on assessment within the context of the three-week turnaround regulation). Last year the College incorporated discussion of TPR and PPR recommendations in CQAC, which would continue.

It was noted that these priorities had been developed with reference to Senatus Quality Assurance Committee priorities, the College Learning and Teaching Strategy 2013–2016, and consultation with College Deans. The priorities had been discussed at the meeting of CQAC on 16 September 2015.

With regard to item 2, development of an online system for course and programme monitoring at College level, the Convener emphasised that it would be essential to ensure alignment of the system with student data developments at University level.

With regard to item 3, exploration of annual programme review in its implementation stage, the Convener noted that the review of the Quality Framework would include consideration of a systematic mechanism for annual programme review across the University. The current varying mechanisms being developed by Colleges would be looked at in this light. It was noted that a University template for annual programme review could include prompts to identify practice suitable for sharing. Appropriate practice could also be developed as an IAD case study.

The Committee noted that the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine (CMVM) had adopted a new structure with effect from 1 August 2015. The Edinburgh Medical School was created, along new Deaneries of Clinical Sciences and Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences. Consequently, the opportunity was taken to review and revise the College's committee structure relating to learning and teaching, and the terms of reference of these Committees.

As a result, it was proposed that the current QA Executive, which met only once each year, be replaced by a College Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee. This would meet face-to-face up to five times a year, with provision also being made for electronic meetings. The membership of the Committee has been revised, making provision for student representation.

In the light of these current developments, the College Quality Assurance priority 2015-16 would be to develop the CMVM QA framework to fit with the new School structure and to maximise the opportunities for dissemination of good practice.

Action: Sheila Lodge to update the Committee on CMVM structures at the meeting to be held on Thursday 10 December 2015.

College of Science and Engineering

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The College of Science and Engineering Quality Assurance Priorities 2015/16 were noted as follows:

- 1. Co-ordinators of adjustment**
Review of role within Schools with the aim of raising CoA profile within Schools, particularly within Postgraduate Research.
- 2. Equality and Diversity**
Maximise Academic Affairs representation within the CSCE Equality and Diversity Committee as a means to raise student concerns.
- 3. Use of BI Suite data display to assist and enhance External Examiner reporting feedback analysis.**
Improvements regarding all areas of feedback is a key target in the College Learning and Teaching Strategy 2014-16.
- 4. Working with EUSA to improve student engagement within College Committees.**
This aligns with the enhancement of the student experience and ensuring students play an active role in developing College practices.
- 5. EvaSyS**
The College would like to use the system more constructively, however, to be able to do this effectively the College would like its implementation and use to be supported centrally. This will ensure sufficient resourcing and consistency of analysis.

The College's priorities were commended. It was noted that the coordinators of adjustments priority was very similar to a recommendation from the Periodic Review of the Student Disability Service, and that the Service was keen to work alongside other initiatives with the same aim. The Convener and the Director of the Student Disability Service would meet with coordinators of adjustments

shortly to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy.

The EUSA representatives noted their interest in the College's plans to improve student engagement within College committees. A new model of engaging student School conveners was being introduced.

Action: College Representatives: Appendix to College annual QAE reports to the meeting of 20 April 2016 to give update on progress in relation to College Quality Assurance Priorities 2015-16. Action: College Representatives & Convener: Learning from initiatives around coordinators of adjustments would also be shared at that point.

5.2 Use of Student Data to help enhance learning & teaching, the student experience and operational effectiveness

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The Director of Student Systems updated the Committee on the initial consultations in regard to the use of student data to help enhance learning & teaching, the student experience and operational effectiveness.

It was noted that a working group had been established (with representation from Student Systems, BIMl Programme, ISG, CHSS, GaSP), workshops held with staff across the University, and a series of meetings held with Heads of School, Directors of Professional Services, and colleagues at other institutions across the sector (University of Warwick, University of Sheffield and Oxford Brookes University).

The Committee noted a number of emerging areas which had been identified by Schools where enhanced use of student data could support:

- Understanding applications/admissions over a period of time and plan for the next year;
- Understanding the student cohort, their characteristics, trends, progressions and outcomes;
- Understanding the student experience via survey data, linked to student record and other sources, some local level internal and external benchmarking;
- Standard reports for annual course and programme reviews and TPRs to minimise the time spent looking for data;
- Understanding students on an individual level and what happens in-year;
- Are we teaching effectively? Assessment volumes, feedback and mark turnaround, internal and external comparison, contact hours.

The Committee noted a number of consistent themes that emerged from conversations with colleagues at other institutions across the sector:

- Accessibility, visualisation, simplicity and recognition enormously helpful in supporting change of approach in academic areas;
- Clear link to strategy and key indicators along with consistency of data and consistency of use, focussed at the level of need;
- Staff skills, technical capabilities and senior management support enormously important.

Members suggested that student data could be used as a predictive tool to enhance the admissions process; to evaluating teaching performance within and

across Schools; and using entry grades to analyse the relative performance of students and Schools. The overall aim should be to reduce the time spent manipulating data and thus increase the time for reflection and action.

The Director of Student Systems noted that the next step would be to develop a small number of prototypes and mock-up dashboards based on existing architecture and systems and start to understand the emerging data model requirements.

Action: Committee Secretary to circulate presentation slides to members.

5.3 Student Survey Unit Priorities

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The Director of Student Systems updated the Committee on the key priorities for the Survey Unit over the next 12 to 18 months (including EvaSys). It was noted that the Student Survey Unit moved into Student Systems on 1 August 2015 from the Student Experience Project primarily to help align and enhance the use of student data across the institution. The Student Survey Unit is in the process of finalising its priorities for the next 18 months as follows:

- Support EvaSys roll out to Schools and changes required to make this successful;
- Increase response rates in all surveys, with a particular focus on NSS and EvaSys;
- Extract maximum value and insights from survey (and other student) data;
- Review purpose and outputs of ESES and iSB Surveys;
- Review approach for surveying Distance Education students;
- Implement communication plan and link with other internal activity;
- Review service provision to and engagement with School and College Offices.

The Committee noted that the Surveys Unit would look at good practice in schools, including the Business School and the School of GeoSciences, with a view to extending it across schools. It was intended to reflect on priority areas for surveys, and to refresh the Learning From and Responding to the Student Voice Principles and potentially the approach to course evaluation.

With regard to iSB, PTES and PRES, it was noted that there was scope to use some of the questions for benchmarking without having to use the full survey.

6. For Approval

6.1 Internal Review Reports and Responses:

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The Committee received the following Internal Review Responses:

- TPR of Business School 2013/14 - year on response.
- TPR of Informatics 2014/15 - 14 week response.
- PPR of Online Distance Learning Postgraduate Taught Programmes in CMVM - 14 week response.

The Committee noted that, subsequent to the meeting, individual Members would be invited to comment on specific responses. These comments would then be consolidated by the Convener and circulated electronically to the Committee, in order to avoid undue delay to the subsequent dissemination to the relevant subject areas and support service. The comments would then be

submitted to the next meeting at which point the Convenor may wish to highlight specific points for discussion.

Action: Committee Secretary to allocate reports to lead readers for comment.

7. For Information

7.1 ELIR Update

The Convenor reported that the themes to be explored in Part 2 would include: learning & teaching strategy/vision; consistency across devolved institution; reward and recognition for teaching; PGR student experience; collaborative provision; PT system; student engagement in curriculum/co-curriculum; assessment & feedback.

There would be a range of meetings with staff and students: Senior staff; Heads of School & DoTs; a range of staff including enhancement & employability, teaching staff; UG; PGT (including ODL); PGR students.

Further information requested by the ELIR Panel included: L&T strategies/vision; PT system; collaborative provision; Edinburgh Award; student representation on committees; IAD; student surveys; reward and recognition for teaching.

7.2 Subject Benchmark Statements

The Committee noted that the following revised Subject Benchmark Statements had been circulated to the relevant Directors of Teaching:

[Languages, Cultures and Societies](#)

[Linguistics](#)

[Optometry](#)

The Committee noted that the following drafts for consultation had been circulated to the relevant Directors of Teaching with an invitation to comment:

[Creative Writing](#)

[Social Policy](#)

8. Electronic Business

8.1 Internal Reports and Responses - electronic approval requested by Committee by Monday 26 October

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The Convenor reported that no objections or further comments had been received during electronic approval period (19-26 October 2015). Therefore, the responses were **approved** and would now be disseminated to the relevant areas.

9. Date of Next Meeting

9.1 Thursday 10 December 2015 at 2pm in the Hodgson Room, Weir Building, the King's Buildings