

The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Quality Assurance Committee

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 25 May 2017
at 2pm in the Hodgson Room, Weir Building, King's Buildings**

Minutes

Present:

Professor Tina Harrison	Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Professor Jeremy Bradshaw	Director of Quality Assurance, CMVM, Assistant Principal Researcher Development
Patrick Garratt	Vice President (Academic Affairs), Students' Association
Nichola Kett	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team, Academic Services
Dr Sheila Lodge	CMVM Head of Academic Administration (Co-opted Member)
Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka	Students' Association Academic Engagement Co-ordinator
Professor Robert Mason	Associate Dean (Quality Assurance) College of Humanities and Social Science
Sarah McAllister	School Representative (Geosciences), College of Science and Engineering
Dr Gordon McDougall	Dean (Quality Assurance), College of Science and Engineering
Dr Claire Phillips	School Representative (Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Dr Jon Turner	Director, Institute for Academic Development

In Attendance:

Professor Susan Rhind	Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback
Gillian Mackintosh	Acting Secretary to Senatus Quality Assurance Committee
Megan Brown	Schools Engagement Officer, Edinburgh University Students' Association

Apologies:

Brian Green	Deputy Associate Principal (Learning & Teaching), University of Strathclyde
Dr Huw Lewis (Co-opted Member)	Senior Lecturer School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures
Dr Inger Seiferheld	School Representative (Business School), College of Humanities and Social Science
Barry Neilson	Director, Student Systems (Co-opted Member)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 April 2017

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved with the following amendment:

- Matters Arising Section 3 Undergraduate Degree Classification Analysis. The minutes to reflect the action to include Russell Group University level data trend analysis over a longer period.
- Section 4 – removal of the wording on ex-services and care leavers as committee members could not recall discussion on these particular cohorts.

2. Matters Arising

a) Convenor's Business

The Convener noted thanks to Professor Robert Mason who will demit office as College Associate Dean (Quality Assurance) and to Patrick Garratt in his role as Vice President Academic Affairs. His successor Ms Bobi Archer will be in attendance at the first meeting in September.

The Convener welcomed Megan Brown, EUSA Schools Engagement Officer, who attended the meeting for information.

b) QAA Enhancement Theme update

The Convenor gave an update on the next Enhancement Theme. The theme will focus on 'Evidence based Enhancement', which will focus on a data driven approach around quality, metrics and enhancement.

Discussions have taken place with the Convener, Senior-Vice Principal Professor Jeffery and with colleagues in Academic Services around institutional priorities.

The Convenor suggested that work continues with existing projects relating to data rather than introduce new initiatives. This could include:

- Learning analytics – enhancement from student perspective based on student performance data
- Data dashboards – student data to underpin monitoring and quality processes
- Assessment and feedback - better understanding of data, metrics and how this informs student development and performance

Concerns were noted by the Students' Association about the theme and how this will be articulated to the wider student body. It was felt that the theme is very broad and may not provide meaningful opportunities for students and staff to work together.

There was also concern around access to data, and data protection, and that there was an in-balance at the outset as the data is 'owned' by the University.

However it was discussed that it could be useful to look at evidence from mid-course feedback, and how feedback to staff could inform learning and teaching enhancements. It was suggested that this could form a student –led project.

It was noted that data to be considered would be both qualitative and quantitative and that it would be helpful to explore what data was useful to enhance learning and teaching. In addition, looking at the theme in a research informed way; looking at the granular data for Schools and Colleges and reviewing what is working in that area. Professor Rhind would be keen to work with the Students' Association in this area.

It was also suggested that the new school annual quality reporting process could contribute to the theme; Schools have been asked to provide a description of their quality model which should state when and how processes are carried out, and what data is used as evidence.

Action: The Student's Association are invited to provide comments to the QAA and in addition, the Convener will also feedback comments to the QAA.

Action: TH and NK to write some narrative around the suggested areas of work and seek feedback from the Committee

3. Mid-Course Feedback Surveys

The Committee received an update on the introduction of mid-course feedback for Honours courses in 2016/17 and a proposal to extend these arrangements to include all pre-Honours courses from 2017/18. The committee were supportive of the arrangements however there was discussion about programme level feedback and whether this could be considered for future surveys.

It was reported that ESES (the Edinburgh Student Experience Survey) considered this to a certain extent however there was not currently an appetite for another survey.

It was suggested that Student Staff Liaison Committee meetings could provide an opportunity for a more detailed programme level discussion. This was supported by the Students' Association who would welcome the opportunity for Schools to increase the number of representatives at programme level.

In proposing to extend mid-course feedback to pre-honours level, in some cases this will involve much larger student cohorts. It was highlighted that a small amount of extra resource may be required to add additional case studies to the IAD web-site with exemplars of successful, and manageable approaches in these large class scenarios.

The Committee approved the extension of the arrangements to include all pre-Honours courses from 2017/18.

Action: The Student's Association and Academic Services to review the Principles for SSLCs in light of the extension of mid-course feedback to all undergraduate courses, to include a reflection on opportunities for a programme-level feedback.

4. Student Support Services: changes to annual review process

The Committee received and noted a paper outlining updates to the policy and guidance documents, streamlining these to incorporate the QAC sub-committee remit within the policy document.

It was noted that the Service Expectation Review (SER) will proceed next year and that information/guidance will be circulated to Services in due course.

The Committee approved the paper with the amendment to the document to remove reference to SSSQAF in section 2.1.5 and 2.1.6.

5. Student Support:

a) Thematic Review Process

The Committee received a paper proposing new guidance in support of the Thematic Review process.

The committee agreed the new guidance.

b) Thematic Review 2017-18

The Committee received and discussed a paper providing the Committee with an analysis of the options for defining 'mature' students and a statistical analysis of the University's current cohort of mature students and those with dependents.

Members suggested that it would be useful to make the distinction between undergraduate and postgraduate students and in addition consider online learning students differently as their needs tend to be different from other Postgraduate Taught on campus students.

Members agreed that it would be useful for the review not to define underserved on age alone but to consider and explore for students as parents/ carers what are the issues/ challenges/ barriers. It was suggested that it would be helpful to include students who become a parent during their PhD, especially those who become a mother.

It was agreed that the review panel would agree the various groupings of students and staff to be included in the consultation stage of the process.

Members were asked for suggestions for review panel members.

Action: Committee members should forward suggestions for review panel members to the Committee Secretary.

6. Quality Processes – Simplification and Enhancement

The Committee received and noted a paper outlining the work that Academic Services has undertaken over the past academic session to simplify and enhance quality processes.

It was requested that there are no changes to the processes for the next academic year to allow them time to embed.

The Convener asked for the comments from the external member of the Committee to be forwarded to Gavin Douglas for information.

7. Review of Quality Code Mapping Documents

The Committee approved updated documents mapping the Quality Code chapters to the University's quality assurance framework. Mapping documents Chapter B5 and B8 were reviewed to check for factual accuracy, to reflect any obvious significant changes and to check for broken links. Editorial changes were also made to ensure consistency across the mapping documents.

The Committee approved the updated mapping documents.

8. Senate Annual Report

The Committee received and noted the paper outlining the achievements of the Committee in relation to priorities, and the core activities and task groups during the Academic year 2016/17.

9. Knowledge Strategy Committee Report

The committee noted the report from the Knowledge Strategy Committee meeting on 24 March 2017.

10. Internal Review:

a) Teaching Programme Review/Postgraduate Programme Review Reports and Responses

The Committee received and approved the following final reports:

- Joint TPR and PPR of the School of Economics
- TPR of Design
- TPR of European Languages and Cultures
- TPR of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies
- TPR of Social Work

The Committee noted the following 14 week responses:

- PPR of Business School
- PPR of School of History, Classics and Archaeology
- PPR of School of Physics and Astronomy

b) Thematic Review of Mental Health Services – Year on response

The Committee received and approved the response reporting on progress to remitted actions from the thematic review.

The Convener noted that the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy is due to be reviewed and relaunched. This will be carried out by the Convener and the Director of Student Disability Service and the Students' Association will also be involved.

11. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

12. Date of Next Meeting:

Tuesday 19 September 2017 at 2pm in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House