

H/02/27/02

**Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)  
to be held online on Thursday 3 June 2021 at 2.00pm**

**A G E N D A**

1. **Minutes of the previous meeting held online on 25 March 2021** Enclosed
  2. **Matters Arising**
    - a) **Electronic Business – Draft annual report of the Senate standing committees 2020/21, Annual review of the effectiveness of the Senate standing committees 2020/21, Senate presentation and discussion themes for 2021/22 meetings (7 May 2021-14 May 2021)**
    - b) **Convener’s Action –Environmental Geosciences cohort graduating in 2020/21 (1 April 2021), SRUC measures to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic for BSc in Environmental Management (13 April 2021), Appointment of additional deputy Board of Studies Conveners (1 May 2021)**
- For Discussion**
3. **Edinburgh Futures Institute Postgraduate Taught Programmes: proposals for regulatory arrangements** APRC 20/21 4A
  4. **Online examination arrangements for 2021/22** APRC 20/21 4B
  5. **Course Organiser: Outline of Role Update** APRC 20/21 4C
  6. **Programme and Course Handbooks Policy Update** APRC 20/21 4D
  7. **College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad: Terms of Reference** APRC 20/21 4E
  8. **Taught Assessment Regulations 2021/22** APRC 20/21 4F
  9. **Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 2021/22** APRC 20/21 4G
  10. **Student Appeal Committee Membership 2021/22** APRC 20/21 4H
  11. **Student Maternity and Family Leave Policy** Verbal Update
  12. **Any Other Business**

The University of Edinburgh

**Minutes of the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) meeting  
held online on Thursday 25 March 2021 at 2.00pm**

**Present:**

Professor Alan Murray (Convener)	Assistant Principal, Academic Support
Dr Jeremy Crang	Dean of Students (CAHSS)
Dr Paul Norris	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS)
Kirsty Woomble	Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)
Professor Judy Hardy	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE)
Stephen Warrington	Dean of Student Experience (CSE)
Alex Laidlaw	Head of Academic Affairs (CSE)
Dr Antony Maciocia	Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE)
Philippa Burrell	Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)
Professor Neil Turner	Dean of Undergraduate Learning and Teaching (CMVM)
Dr Paddy Hadoke	Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM)
Fizzy Abou Jawad	Vice President Education, Students' Association
Gin Lowdean	Advice Place Manager, Students' Association
Dr Cathy Bovill	Institute for Academic Development (IAD)
Dr Adam Bunni	Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, Academic Services
Sarah McAllister	Student Systems and Administration

**In attendance:**

Tom Ward	Edinburgh Futures Institute
Rachael Quirk	Head of Taught Student Administration and Support (CAHSS)
Ailsa Taylor (Secretary)	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services

**Apologies for absence:**

Dr Lisa Kendall	Director of Academic and Student Administration (CAHSS)
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**1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 January 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

**2. Matters Arising**

Electronic business and Convener's Action had been conducted since the last meeting on 24 September 2020 as follows:

- a) Electronic Business – PGT Concession (credit on aggregate vs progression) 21 January 2021-15 February 2021;

- b) Additional time allowance for 24-hour duration examinations 24 February 2021-28 February 2021.

**3. Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) Postgraduate Taught Programmes: preliminary discussion about potential opt-outs for regulations (Paper A)**

Mr Tom Ward presented this item. EFI was in the process of developing a suite of new PGT programmes. The intention was to seek formal approval for these in April 2021 for the first six of these, and launch them in 2022/23. EFI was seeking the Committee's views on their proposed approaches to addressing the regulatory issues, with a view to submitting formal proposals for opt-outs in spring 2021 (after the EFI Curriculum Board had considered full proposals for the programmes at its meeting in April 2021). Comments on possible options for consideration at EFI were discussed:

- Viva could be considered as a possible resit option for the pass/fail course;
- Group projects pose issues when it comes to coursework extensions, so this would need consideration;
- Adding an item of individual element of assessment for the group project as well as group assessment may offset some concerns about group assessment;
- In CMVM PGT online would be interested in the flexibility for EFI programmes and introducing some of this in their programmes, therefore it would be worth EFI linking with CMVM PGT on this;
- Some areas of CSE have experience of running group projects on Integrated Master's and other programmes; CSE were happy to discuss, or put EFI colleagues in touch with the course organiser in Engineering for the MEng GDP projects;
- Regulatory elements to UoE credit in relation to the degree regulation on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) should be considered further by APRC; this regulation could be revisited in 2021/22 for the 2022/23 regulations. The intention was to form a clearer distinction between UoE and non-UoE credit. The consensus from the Committee was that we could be more relaxed about RPL for UoE credit than the current regulation suggested;
- Reference was made to the principles of avoiding double counting credit and ensuring enough Edinburgh credit for an Edinburgh degree;
- EFI was to discuss system issues further with Student Systems in April 2021;
- The Committee voiced a longer term desire to try to resolve some of the more general regulatory and administrative issues across the University around lifelong learning and non-graduating students.

**4. Una Europa PhD in Cultural Heritage (CLOSED B)**

This paper provided information on proposed arrangements for the Una Europa PhD in Cultural Heritage. APRC approved the concept of the certificate and agreed that the Convener of APRC could review the template certificate once it became available, on behalf of the Committee.

**5. Covid-19: further mitigation measures; Board of Examiners guidance (Paper C)**

Dr Bunni presented this item. APRC approved the additional concessions relating to credit on aggregate for final year Ordinary/General degrees and expansion of the PGT dissertation resubmission window to 40-49. This would be reflected in the

guidance for Boards of Examiners, which was expected to be finalised by mid-April 2021 and published on SharePoint. The case studies to support the guidance would take a little longer to put together, but work had already started on these.

**6. PhD by Research Oral Examinations by Video Link (Paper D)**

Dr Antony Maciocia presented this item. The paper was approved by the Committee.

**7. CSE: Extensions to Correction Periods in Doctoral Degrees (Paper E)**

Professor Antony Maciocia presented this item. The paper was approved by the Committee.

It was noted that it would be beneficial to return in the near future to a discussion about a potential role for the Doctoral College in the approval of individual student PGR concessions. APRC currently deals with a large volume of concessions of this type.

**8. CAHSS: Non-standard academic year for Executive MBA Part-Time (Paper I)**

This paper was approved by the Committee.

**9. CMVM: Online Postgraduate Taught Programmes (proposed amendment to start of academic year 2021/22) (Paper F)**

This paper was approved by the Committee.

**10. Undergraduate Degree Regulations 2021/22 (Paper G)**

These proposed Undergraduate Degree Regulations for 2021/22 were approved as presented, subject to amendment of any typos. These would be sent to University Court for formal approval.

**11. Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2021/22 (Paper H)**

These proposed Undergraduate Degree Regulations for 2021/22 were approved as presented, subject to the amendment of any typos. These would be sent to University Court for formal approval.

**12. Convenership and Vice-Convenership of APRC from 1 August 2021**

Dr Paul Norris (Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval, CAHSS) was approved as Convener of APRC from 1 August 2021.

Professor Judy Hardy (Dean of Learning and Teaching, CSE) was approved as Vice-Convenership of APRC from 1 August 2021.

**13. Any Other Business**

The Committee received an item of further business from Mr Scott Rosie, Head of Timetabling and Examination Services about the re-introduction of the resit diet. Any

comments could be fed back to Mr Rosie directly and he would co-ordinate feedback and an emerging position.

**Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**

**3 June 2021**

**Edinburgh Futures Institute Postgraduate Taught Programmes: proposals for Regulatory Arrangements**

**Description of paper**

1. EFI's distinctive academic vision, and the innovative and nature of its planned suite of new educational programmes, are likely to test the boundaries of the University's academic regulations and policies.
2. EFI is in the process of developing a suite of new PGT programmes. On 27 May 2021 the EFI Curriculum Oversight Board considered the first six of these programmes, which EFI plans to launch in 2022-23 – it agreed to approve them subject to Convener's action on some detailed points and to some further lead reviewer feedback on one of the programmes.
3. The programmes include some approaches not anticipated by the University's current regulations for the substantive project / dissertation element, and flexibility around duration of study and lifelong learning.
4. In March 2021, EFI sought the Committee's views on potential approaches to addressing these regulatory issues. We are now submitting formal proposals for the Committee's consideration.

**Action requested / recommendation**

5. We are asking the Committee to confirm whether it supports the following:
  - The regulatory arrangements associated with the substantive project / dissertation, which include a request for one formal opt-out and pose some other questions for regulations around assessment and progression (see paras 15 to 20);
  - The proposal to base the substantive 40 credit project for the MSc Creative Industries predominantly on group assessment (paras 21 to 25);
  - Opt-outs from Postgraduate Degree Regulation 16 and from the Models of Degree Types to facilitate transfer from lifelong learning to named and generic awards (see para 29); and
  - EFI's proposed arrangements for flexibility in duration of study (subject to subsequent confirmation that the University could manage the implications for business process and statutory returns) (see paras 30 to 39).

## **Background and context**

6. EFI is in the process of developing a suite of new interdisciplinary PGT programmes. It intends to seek formal approval for the first six of these programmes in April 2021 and to launch them in 2022-23. These programmes are:

- Narrative Futures: Art, Data and Society
- Data, Inequality and Society
- Education Futures
- Service Management and Design
- Creative Industries
- Future Governance

## **Discussion**

7. We are seeking the Committee's approval for solutions to the following regulatory issues for these programmes.

### ***A Regulatory issues associated with the project component for the portfolio***

#### **Overview of planned arrangements for the project**

8. Rather than taking a sequential approach (in which a student would complete 120 credits of taught elements before beginning a dissertation), as is most common in the University, EFI proposes that students on these PGT programmes would provisionally identify their substantive project topic relatively early on in their programme, and work on it in parallel with the taught components. The project would form a spine, rather than just an end-point, to their studies. During Semester 1, academic staff would supervise students on a group basis. Students would undertake initial project definition, and begin to undertake research skills and methods training (both as an element of compulsory credit-bearing courses, via non-credit guidance and training, and by constructing their own training programmes). During Semester 2, EFI would assign individual supervisors. Students would then firm up their project definition. They would undertake the more substantive work on their projects during the summer.

9. EFI proposes this approach in order to address the lack of knowledge integration which is a risk of highly interdisciplinary programmes. Students would base taught course choice at least in part on the knowledge they feel they need to complete their project, and would be encouraged to regularly re-visit their project idea and reflect on it, change it, adapt and refine it in light of the courses they take and the ways of understanding that they are introduced to. It would give a consistent point of reference to their studies.

10. The University's Models of Degree Types requires taught Masters programmes to include "60 points at level 11 for the research/dissertation element, that demonstrate that the student can show proficiency in research and/or analytical skills relevant to advanced work in the discipline". These EFI PGT programmes would fulfil this requirement for 60 credits of research / dissertation, since they

would include a 20-credit Knowledge Integration and Project Planning course and a 40 credit Project course.

11. For the **20-credit Knowledge Integration and Project Planning course**, during Semesters One and Two students would reflect on and synthesise their learning in relation to their project. EFI would require students to make regular blog posts during the period (eg covering accounts of methods training and implications for their project, accounts of changes in thinking regarding project design, reflections on different disciplinary perspectives in relation to their project and so on.) EFI would require students to demonstrate active engagement and meaningful, consistent posting in the blog, and would specify the detailed requirements for these blogs (for example frequency and format).
12. EFI would arrange for students to provide peer feedback on each other's blogs. In addition, EFI plans to arrange for teaching assistants to monitor the student blogs – they would not provide feedback on content, but rather would support the process and flag to supervisors where there is a risk of failure of this part of the assessment. At the end of semester 1, students would synthesise all their posts and write a 1,000 word reflective summary of them, relating their learning back to their project – their supervisor would provide formative feedback on this summary early in semester 2. Over April, students would reflect on all their posts from the year and present them as a coherent final project plan (approximately 2,000 words) in early May. The Board of Examiners would ratify the formal result for this course in June and the supervisor would provide students with informal feedback on their project plan as soon as the internal marking is complete, to allow them to take it into account when undertaking the 40 credit project output.
13. Students would submit their project report for the **40-credit project course** in mid-August. EFI will welcome creative approaches to the project assessment output, for example visualisations, reports, video productions and artefacts, as well as more conventional dissertation-style reports. For text-only reports, a word-limit of 13,000 will apply. EFI will establish guidelines for the appropriate volume of text and non-text outputs for approaches in creative formats.
14. For part-time students, we would establish equivalent timescales for the different stages of the project.

### **Pass / Fail assessment**

15. EFI plans to assess the 20 credit 'integration' course on a Pass / Fail basis, on the basis of evidence of (1) active engagement and meaningful, consistent reflection in the blog, and (2) sufficient quality of the project plan. Pass / Fail is particularly appropriate to an innovative approach like this one, since it can support risk-taking by students. Where we are asking students to think 'big' in their reflections, making connections between often very different disciplinary understandings and using multiple modes to present and share their work, it makes sense to support risk-taking in this way. It is not unprecedented for PGT programmes to take a Pass / Fail approach to the methods and project plan element of the project – for example, some programmes in the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures take this approach. While Taught

Assessment Regulation 35.3 permits a Boards of Studies to operate Pass / Fail courses for postgraduate taught programmes, the use of Pass / Fail for the project component creates some knock-on regulatory consequences for retrieval of failure and for calculations of awards.

### **Retrieving failure on Knowledge Integration and Project Planning course**

16. It would be disproportionate to prevent a student from passing the programme were they to fail a single 20 credit course. Therefore, while EFI anticipates that it would be very unusual for students to fail this course, we should nonetheless offer an opportunity for students to retrieve failure on it.

17. EFI considered the option of mitigating student failure on this course via credit on aggregate. However, the Committee expressed reservations about this approach in March 2021, since the combination of Pass / Fail and credit on aggregate would in effect mean that University would award credit irrespective of how much evidence of achievement a student has demonstrated.

18. Instead, EFI proposes to take the following approach to mitigating student failure:

- If a student demonstrated active engagement and meaningful, consistent reflection in the blog, but failed the project plan, EFI would hold an oral examination to offer the student an opportunity to explain their project proposals and to address any shortfalls in their proposed methodology. Two members of academic staff would conduct this oral, and would produce a report which the External Examiner could review. An oral examination has the benefit of allowing rapid re-assessment after the Board has ratified the course result, before the student is too far into the 40 credit project.
- If a student failed to demonstrate active engagement and meaningful, consistent reflection in the blog, EFI would offer the student an opportunity to produce an essay of 1,000 words to provide an account of how they had reflected on their learning throughout the programme and how they had applied these reflections when developing their project plan. Requiring a student to undertake this essay if they fail the blog provides an incentive for students to engage with the blog throughout their programme.

### **Arrangements for progression**

19. Given that the project will run in parallel with taught elements of the programme, there will not be a formal progression point between the taught element and the project component. This is allowable under Taught Assessment Regulation 56.

### **Calculation of Merit and Distinction**

20. Given the integrated nature of the project and taught elements, and that the Board of Examiners will only assign marks for 40 credits of the project, we plan to calculate Merit and Distinction based on a single average mark calculated from both the taught and project / dissertation elements. That is, to achieve Merit, a student must have an average of at least 60% across all courses, rather than the

normal requirement to achieve at least 60% for the project / dissertation and an average of at least 60% in the remaining taught elements. To achieve a Distinction, the equivalent would apply, but with a requirement to achieve at least 70%. When calculating average marks for these purposes, EFI proposes to disregard the 'Knowledge Integration and Project Planning' course, given that it is based on Pass / Fail, and that assigning a nominal mark of 50% for a pass would disadvantage students when calculating Merit and Distinction. These arrangements require an opt-out from Taught Assessment Regulations 59 and 60 (Award of postgraduate merit; Award of postgraduate distinction).

## ***B Proposal for project based predominantly on group assessment for MSc Creative Industries***

21. For one of the planned EFI PGT programmes, the MSc in Creative Industries, EFI plans to base the substantial project element on group rather than individual assessment. The programme as a whole will include a balance of individual learning and reflection with group-based projects. It will differentiate the programme from comparator programmes in the UK, which focus on individual learning and assessment. During market research into the programme, external stakeholders emphasised that the programme should produce graduates with collaborative skills that would allow them to work with a range of parties with different expertise and points of view. Some of these stakeholders (eg Historic Environment Scotland) are committed to contributing to the group project course.
22. This group project course will count 40 credits (students will also take a version of the 20 credit Knowledge Integration and Project Planning course – see above). For the group project course, student teams of 5-7 students will work either on a project based on a challenge that is either set by an external client or identified by an individual students.
23. The EFI Curriculum Oversight has approved the following assessment arrangements:
  - A team project report of 13,000 words (60%). This will include a summary of the challenge/goal, an analysis of the problem facing the organisation, a competitor analysis, data visualisations that interrogate the data to find new solutions, value proposition of the solution to key audiences, and clear and concrete actions and timelines that include the steps and risk/costs needed to realise solutions.
  - A team presentation (25%) This will assess the team's capability to: identify and concisely describe the challenge; offer a SWOT analysis if offering a new product/service; use engaging visuals and visualisation of data; speak with confidence, clearly and at pace that is understandable; and listen to client questions and concerns and respond in productive and informative way.
  - Peer review (15%). For this component, each team member will distribute among teammates points that add up to 100 points. They also offer one paragraph for each team member based on their agreed upon charter, highlighting strengths exhibited and areas for future development.
24. In order to mitigate any risks associated with free-riding and team conflicts, the programme team will hold a two-hour team-building exercise, and require each

team to develop a Team Contract (for example, covering rules for cooperation, who will fulfil which roles on the team, how the team will address performance problems) – the programme team will provide feedback on this Contract. The peer review mechanism will also discourage free-riding. While the project is predominantly based on group assessment, the MSc as a whole has a balance of individual and group assessment. For example, the ‘shared core’ courses that all students on the EFI PGT programmes will take are based c. 55% on individual assessment, and the core and elective courses for the programme are based c. 70% on individual assessment. Therefore, while the programme has a strong group assessment component, the Board of Examiners will base overall calculations on awards for the programme (including Merit and Distinction) predominantly on individual assessment.

25. While neither the Taught Assessment Regulations or the Models for Degree Types specify that the substantive project / dissertation cannot include group assessment elements, the Models for Degree Types document does imply that the project / dissertation focuses on individual rather than group proficiency in research skills. Therefore we are seeking the Committee’s approval for these arrangements

### ***C Regulatory issues associated with flexibility in duration of study and lifelong learning***

26. EFI plans to offer all programmes in the following modes of study:

- Full-time – one year, 180 credits
- Structured part-time – two years (90 credits per year)
- Part-time intermittent – up to three years in the first instance as the portfolio is established
- Lifelong learning – to accumulate credit without needing to register for a particular award

27. In order to facilitate lifelong learning, EFI proposes the following arrangements:

- **Allow students to remain registered on a lifelong learning basis for a long period of time (ideally c. 10 years) without registering for a programme leading to an award**
- **Offer the opportunity to transfer onto a programme leading to a named award**, subject to meeting the entry requirements for the programme. EFI would allow students to count up to 120 credits accumulated as lifelong learning with EFI towards the named programme (since they could take all courses other than the two project-related courses without being registered for the named programme). At the point of deciding whether to allow a student to transfer, an academic office-holder in EFI (eg the Programme Director) would decide whether all the credit the student has accumulated to date could count towards the programme. This would allow EFI to confirm that the relevant courses remain sufficiently current, as well as whether they fit the requirements for the relevant programme. Once the student transfers onto the programme leading to the named award, the prescribed period for that

programme would apply from the point that the student transfers. We are in discussions with CAHSS Postgraduate Admissions about the detailed arrangements for ensuring students have met the entry requirements.

- In order to provide flexible pathways for lifelong learning students who have accumulated the relevant number of credits but not taken the right combination to make them eligible for a named award, **EFI plans to offer a suite of generic awards** (MSc 'Interdisciplinary Futures', Postgraduate Diploma in 'Interdisciplinary Futures', Postgraduate Certificate in 'Interdisciplinary Futures'). Lifelong learning students would be able to transfer onto these generic awards at any point, and, once on them, would be subject to the prescribed period for that programme. Given that lifelong learning students would not necessarily have undertaken a project, we plan that eligibility for the MSc in Interdisciplinary Futures would be based on completion of any combination of 180 credits of EFI PGT courses, with no requirement to undertake a project. For this MSc, EFI plans to calculate credit on aggregate on the basis of students passing 120 out of 180 credits, and to base decisions about Merit and Distinction on average marks across the full 180 credits.

28. In some respects these arrangements would be a significant departure from typical University practice. For example, at present, where Schools / Deaneries offer opportunities for lifelong learning (sometimes referred to as Postgraduate Professional Development, PPD), they tend to limit this to a maximum of 50 credits over two years.

### **Transfer from lifelong learning to named and generic awards**

29. We think that the second and third elements of the proposed arrangements (opportunity to transfer to a named award, offering a suite of generic awards including a fully-taught MSc) are relatively straightforward. However, they do require two formal opt-outs:

- Postgraduate Degree Regulation 16 – Recognition of Prior Learning. This states that “The Head of College has the authority to recognise the transfer of a student’s credit previously gained either at the University or another institution and to count it towards their intended award...The maximum number of credits that the Colleges will grant RPL for taught programmes is one-third of the total credits for the award for which the student is applying.” Since EFI would like students to transfer from studying with EFI on a lifelong learning basis to study towards a named award with up to 120 credits of prior study accumulated during lifelong learning student with EFI (ie two-thirds of the total credits for the award), **we are seeking a formal opt-out from this Regulation.**
- The Models for Degree Types states that PGT degree programmes must include 60 credits of project / dissertation. We understand that the Senate Education Committee recently recommended that the University offer fully-taught PGT programmes, but that the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committees has not yet considered how to translate that

recommendation into formal policy. Therefore **we are seeking a formal opt-out from the provision in the Models of Degree Types.**

### **Flexibility in duration of study**

30. The proposal to allow lifelong learning students to remain registered for a long period of time (ideally c. 10 years) raises substantive business process and statutory returns issues, along with regulatory issues. We appreciate that the Committee would be unable to consider the regulatory arrangements unless it were satisfied that the University could manage the implications for business process and statutory returns. We are part-way through discussions with Student Systems and other stakeholders with a view to establishing operating arrangements that are compatible with student system and statutory return requirements.
31. Lifelong learning is central to EFI's academic vision, and, if at all possible, we want to secure the Committee's agreement for these arrangements in time to highlight them when we launch our marketing campaign for the new PGT programmes in September 2021. Were we to wait until we have concluded discussions with Student Systems and other stakeholders, and then (assuming we could agree a workable way forward) return with proposals to the Committee's next meeting (23 September 2021), we would not be able to highlight them when launching the marketing campaign – we need to prepare marketing assets well in advance of that. Therefore, we propose that the Committee considers the regulatory arrangements at this meeting with a view to approving them in principle subject to subsequent confirmation that the University can resolve the systems / statutory returns issues (either by Convener's Action or by correspondence).
32. The following paragraphs set the main regulatory and associated questions. In our view, none of these issues is significant enough to prove a barrier to offering a flexible approach to lifelong learning.
33. The proposed arrangements would be likely to lead to some individuals who undertook credit-bearing study at EFI at one point in the past remaining matriculated students of the University on an ongoing basis despite not currently studying and not expressing a firm intention to do so in the future. This poses **some questions regarding whether the University should treat them as if they are students**. In some respects, the same issues apply to students on part-time intermittent programmes, since they have the flexibility to matriculate while choosing not to register for credits in any given session. However, by registering for a named award, those students have expressed an intention to study until they had completed the award – making it reasonable to regard any year that they do not study as a temporary gap before they recommence their studies. In contrast, lifelong learning students may have registered for a single course without expressing an intention to study with EFI in the future.
34. One issue relates to **the Code of Student Conduct**. Were the University to become aware that a lifelong learner is behaving in a way that could affect adversely the reputation of the University, would it be reasonable (and justifiable)

for the University to take action under the Code of Student Conduct even if the individual is not currently undertaking credit-bearing study at the University and has not committed to do so in the future? In a formal / legal sense, by matriculating lifelong learning students would accept that they are subject to the Code. However, we think it may be reasonable only to consider using the Code in exceptional circumstances for lifelong learners not currently registered on a course at the University.

35. Another issue relates to **student support**. Should the University behave as if it has a duty of care to a lifelong learner even if they are not currently studying at the University? And should it assign Personal Tutors to lifelong learners simply because they are registered on a 'programme'? We suggest that it would be reasonable only to provide support and Personal Tutors to lifelong learners during a period that they are registered on a course, and not to consider the University as having any duty of care at other times.
36. Under these proposed arrangements lifelong learners are likely to continue to have **access to the full range of University services** (eg Library, subsidise access to the Centre for Sport and Exercise, student services such as Careers and Counselling) on an ongoing basis. Would it be reasonable to provide these services to lifelong learners who have not paid any tuition fees in any given academic session, simply because they undertook a course at some point in the past? We think that, in practice, lifelong learning students are unlikely to seek to access these services when they not studying with the University, and that it is unlikely that students would seek to exploit the situation by registering for a single credit-bearing course in order to access University services for a sustained period thereafter.
37. The operation of a published 'prescribed period of study' makes it clear to prospective and current students that the University has no obligation to keep offering a programme, or particular courses within it, on a longer basis. There is a risk that applying a long prescribed period (eg 10 years) for lifelong learning study at EFI could **raise expectation and create legal obligations under consumer law** to keep running this provision on an ongoing basis. However, we would make it clear in marketing materials that we would not have any obligation on the University to continue to offer specific courses or awards on an ongoing basis. We anticipate that this approach would avoid any material consumer rights and expectation-management risks.
38. Strictly speaking, the University's regulations and policies do not prevent the University from establishing a programme for lifelong learners with a ten-year prescribed period:
  - Postgraduate Degree Regulation 27 - Prescribed Period of Study. This limits the prescribed period for a PG Certificate to two years (maximum five years with concession / interruption of studies), the PG Diploma to four years (maximum eight with concession / interruption of studies), and the Masters six years (eleven with concession / interruption of studies). However, this regulation only applies to programmes leading to an award (eg PG Certification).

- The Visiting and Non-Graduating Study Policy and Procedure covers lifelong learning students studying for-credit without registering for an award. However, while this policy does not set a limit on the period of study for these students.

39. We are asking the Committee to discuss these issues and to decide whether (subject to subsequent confirmation that the University could manage the implications for business process and statutory returns) it supports EFI's proposed arrangements for flexibility in duration of study.

### **Resource implications**

40. The launch of the new EFI PGT programmes has a range of staffing, estates and facilities and other resourcing issues. The proposals for regulatory arrangements for the project have some modest resourcing implications (administrative and academic support for arrangements for retrieving failure on a course), as do the proposals for allowing lifelong learning students to transfer to named and general awards (administrative and academic input into managing these transfers). The proposals for flexibility in duration of study have potential resource implications for access to student services, but we think they are likely to be modest. The proposals for flexibility in duration of study have business process and statutory returns issues which may have resourcing implications. However, the paper does not ask the Committee to resolve those issues. The proposals for flexibility in duration of study may also have some implications for institutional licenses which are calculated on the basis of the number of students and staff - but this is likely to be very modest at least in the early years and can be kept under review.

### **Risk management**

41. By ensuring that the programmes are based on a well thought-through regulatory approach that has University-level support, EFI will minimise any risks associated with the arrangements for the project and flexibility in duration of study and lifelong learning.

### **Equality & diversity**

42. The proposed arrangements for the project do not raise any equality and diversity issues. The proposed arrangements for duration of study and lifelong learning will provide greater flexibility of study, which will enable students from a diverse range of backgrounds to study with EFI.

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

43. EFI will inform the Convener of the EFI Curriculum Oversight Board of outcomes of the Committee's discussions on the issues set out in this paper.

#### **Author**

Prof Sian Bayne  
EFI Director of Education

#### **Presenter**

Tom Ward

Tom Ward  
EFI Head of Education Administration  
and Change management

27 May 2021

**Freedom of Information**  
Disclosable

**Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**

**3 June 2021**

**Online examination arrangements for 2021/22**

**Description of paper**

1. The paper discusses options relating to some aspects of the delivery of online examinations during centrally-scheduled exam diets in the 2021/22 session. Senate Education Committee has agreed that examinations in the December 2021 diet will operate predominantly online, but revert to specific timed windows, rather than the preferred 24-hour format used in 2020/21.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. APRC is asked to discuss the options presented in sections 12 and 15 of the paper and agree a preferred approach to dealing with each issue.

**Background and context**

3. During the 2020/21 session, most examinations offered online have operated on a 24-hour format, with papers being issued at 13.00 and a deadline of 13.00 the following day being given. Additional time (usually 6 hours) has been offered as appropriate to students with disclosed disabilities, in line with Schedules of Adjustments. A relatively small number of examinations, primarily in quantitative subjects, have been offered on a 2 or 3-hour format. In these cases, an additional hour has generally been permitted to allow students to upload their answers, especially where they are required to handwrite and scan formulae, etc.
4. For online examinations, Schools have operated a 10-minute “silent window” for late submission. This means that where a student submits their answers up to 10 minutes after the deadline for submission, it will be accepted without penalty. Where a student submits more than 10 minutes after the deadline, their submission will only be considered in the event that they can provide evidence of Special Circumstances (and may lead to the student being awarded a “null sit”, rather than having their submission marked).
5. Senate Education Committee has agreed at its May meeting that the University will revert to a model of using 2 or 3-hour exams, rather than 24-hour exams, for the December 2021 diet at least. All exams are expected to start at 13.00 GMT.

**Discussion**

**A. Length of time allowed for examinations**

***Additional time for submission***

6. During 2020/21, exams which operated based on a standard time window of 2-3 hours have generally offered a further hour in addition to this in order for students to have time to submit their work. This was deemed especially necessary in subjects where students are expected to handwrite answers to questions, and

then scan and upload these. However, for other types of assessment, where students may be expected to upload typed answers, or have completed their assessment within an online environment in which their answers were automatically uploaded, the additional time may be less necessary.

7. Some Schools, particularly in the College of Science and Engineering, have encountered problems with allegations that students have been able to acquire answers to exam questions via websites such as Chegg.com. In order to mitigate the risk of this happening and protect the integrity of exams, there is a strong motivation to ensure that students are given only so much time in exams as is needed to complete the required tasks. There have also been concerns raised by students, especially with regard to 24-hour exams, that they were unclear about what depth they were expected to go into in their responses to exam questions. Providing a narrower window helps to set a clearer expectation in this regard.

### ***“Silent window” for late submission***

8. Operation of a grace period of this type for exams is likely to have prevented the need for some students to submit Special Circumstances requests where they narrowly failed to submit their exam answers by the relevant deadline. This not only has a beneficial impact for students, in reducing the stress associated with uncertainty about whether their submission will be accepted, but also for staff, by reducing the burden of considering Special Circumstances applications. The departure from the 24-hour exam format is likely mean that a larger proportion of students submit their exam answers marginally late, since most will be motivated to use all of the time available to complete their answers.
9. Although it is anticipated that the needs of students with disabilities will be met by being offered additional time for the exam itself, it remains the case that some disabilities may make students more likely to miss even an amended deadline.

### ***Options appraisal***

10. There is a clear interaction between the operation of a 1-hour submission period and any “silent window” or grace period. Were the University to offer no additional time for submission, this would be likely to lead to an increase in the proportion of students missing submission deadlines for exam answers. The likelihood is that any final deadline for submission will be treated as the “real” deadline, and that students will use almost all of the time up to this point to complete their answers. Under the stress of exam conditions, students may miscalculate the time required to upload their answers, since this requires more of them than putting their pens down in an exam hall. It is not desirable for a large volume of students to submit their work late, both because of the stress and uncertainty this causes students, and because it is likely to entail a significant volume of further work for staff in dealing with Special Circumstances requests.
11. Bearing in mind the additional logistical burden for students of having to upload their exam answers in the majority of cases, it appears necessary to offer some form of additional time for submission of exam answers, beyond the time required to complete the tasks set in the exam.

12. The options available for APRC to consider include the following:

- a. Students should be offered only an additional 10 minutes for submission, either as a “silent window”, or as a clearly-defined submission period, **except** where an exam requires scanning and upload of handwritten answers, in which case an additional 1 hour should be offered;
- b. Students should be offered an additional 1 hour for submission, with no further “silent window”;
- c. Students should be offered an additional 1 hour for submission, with a further 10 minutes being offered either as a “silent window”, or a clearly-defined period for late submission.

### **B. Handling of late submissions**

13. Whatever the agreed final deadline for submission of electronic exams, it is expected that students will be awarded a zero mark for any exam answers not submitted by the deadline, unless they have submitted a Special Circumstances application and this has been accepted. There may be circumstances where a student with accepted Special Circumstances is not required to undertake further assessment for an exam because the Board of Examiners decides to discount the exam mark when deriving the relevant course mark, or to award credit on aggregate. However, where a Board does not regard this as appropriate, they must decide what action to take. Where a student does not submit their exam answers at all and their Special Circumstances are accepted, they will usually be offered a null sit, and the opportunity to undertake reassessment, with a different exam paper or alternative assessment being set. Where a student submits their answers at some stage after the final deadline, and their Special Circumstances are accepted, there has been some variation in practice as to whether the work submitted will be marked, or reassessment will be offered.

14. Some subject areas have been willing to accept for marking exam answers submitted late, where Special Circumstances have been accepted, on the basis that they were satisfied that the student could not have gained an unfair advantage by submitting late. In other areas, however, students have been offered a null sit, and a new exam paper or alternative form of assessment, since Boards were concerned that accepting late work would compromise the integrity of the exam.

15. Some Schools have expressed a desire for a clear, University-level position on how to handle late submissions of exam answers, in order to ensure consistency of treatment of students. The options available to consider include:

- a. Schools must mark exam answers submitted late by students, where Special Circumstances have been accepted.

This option seems unviable, since it would unreasonably compromise the integrity of exams in areas where there is the potential for students to gain an unfair advantage by submitting late. This option could be amended by adding a proviso that only exam

answers submitted no more than a certain length of time after the final deadline should be marked, but this would add unreasonable complexity and create another “cliff-edge”. It may also still fail effectively to mitigate concerns about the integrity of exams.

- b. Schools must not mark exam answers submitted late by students, where Special Circumstances have been accepted, but should award a null sit and provide a further opportunity for assessment.

This option would promote consistency of practice, and eliminate the risk of advantage by submitting late. However, it involves additional burden for students, who have to undertake further assessment; and for staff, who may have to set and mark a further assessment, although an alternative exam paper may have been made available in any case for students who missed the initial exam due to Special Circumstances.

- c. Schools can decide whether or not to mark exam answers submitted late on a case-by-case basis, where Special Circumstances have been accepted; late submissions should only be marked where the Board of Examiners is satisfied that the student could not have gained an unfair advantage by submitting late.

This option would lead to variation in practice between subject areas, with students being required in some areas or circumstances to undertake reassessment, but not in others. However, this position is arguably defensible based on the significant variation between disciplines regarding the nature of exams, and the potential benefit to be gained by a student submitting late.

16. APRC is asked to consider the options set out above, and agree a preferred approach.

### **Resource implications**

17. Resource implications are considered in the discussion section of the paper.

### **Risk management**

18. Potential risks are considered in the discussion section of the paper.

### **Equality & diversity**

19. The possible impact of some of the options on particular groups of students are covered in the discussion section of the paper.

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

20. Whatever approach is agreed will be communicated to Schools and Deaneries via the Colleges and published in online materials relating to planning for 2021/22.

**Author**

Dr Adam Bunni  
Head of Academic Policy and Regulation,  
Academic Services

**Presenter**

Dr Adam Bunni  
Head of Academic Policy and  
Regulation  
Academic Services

**Freedom of Information**

**Open**

**Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**

**3 June 2021**

**Course Organiser: Outline of Role Update**

**Description of paper**

1. Presents minor updates to the Course Organiser: Outline of Role (non-mandatory guidance).

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. For approval.

**Background and context**

3. Academic Services conduct cyclical reviews of policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

**Discussion**

4. Minor changes have been made to the document, in consultation with content owners, to ensure it reflects current policy and/or practice (including the updating of hyperlinks). The document has also been reviewed to ensure wording is relevant for digital delivery.
5. The Committee is asked to approve the minor changes to the document.

**Resource implications**

6. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed amendments.

**Risk management**

7. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

**Equality & diversity**

8. None identified, no proposed change in policy or procedure.

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

9. Academic Services will communicate changes in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies.

**Author**

Nichola Kett, Academic Services

**Presenter**

Dr Adam Bunni, Academic Services

**Freedom of Information**

The paper is open.



# Course Organiser: Outline of Role

## 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.

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## Document control

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Approved:</b> 2008	<b>Starts:</b> 2008/09	<b>Equality impact assessment:</b> 12.5.17	<b>Amendments:</b> <a href="#">031.065.2148</a>	<b>Next Review:</b> <a href="#">202319/240</a>
<b>Approving authority</b>	<a href="#">Curriculum and Student Progression Committee</a> <a href="#">Academic Policy and Regulations Committee</a>				
<b>Consultation undertaken</b>	<a href="#">Minor review in 2016/17 took account of recent updates to a number of key academic process which themselves were consulted upon.</a>				
<b>Section responsible for guidance maintenance &amp; review</b>	Academic Services				
<b>Related policies, procedures, guidelines &amp; regulations</b>	Curriculum information: <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/curriculum">http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/curriculum</a>				
<b>UK Quality Code</b>	<a href="#">UK Quality Code Chapter B1: Programme design, development and approval</a> <a href="http://www.gaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/quality-code-B1.pdf">http://www.gaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/quality-code-B1.pdf</a>				
<b>Guidance superseded by this guidance</b>					
<b>Alternative format</b>	If you require this document in an alternative format please email <a href="mailto:Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk">Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk</a> or telephone 0131 650 2138.				
<b>Keywords</b>	Course organiser, course approval, course monitoring, roles, course management				



# Course Organiser: Outline of Role

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## 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](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](http://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 [given-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/schools-departments/student-disability-service)  
[http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/accessible\\_and\\_inclusive\\_learning\\_policy.pdf](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.



# Course Organiser: Outline of Role

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1.15 [Liaising with the Library within agreed timescales to ensure library resources for teaching are made available to students. Monitoring library provisions, and ensuring regular updating of stock relevant to the course.](#)

1.16 Liaising with ~~the~~ 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](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/assessment-regulations)

2.4 Advising students of the need to avoid plagiarism 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](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf)

2.9 Ensuring that students understand [how to access](#) the [Extensions and operation of Special Circumstances system procedures](#) and [the relevant deadlines for presenting requests for consideration of Special Circumstances](#). Providing [a supporting statement information](#) to the [Extensions and Special Circumstances system Committee](#) if requested. [Signposting students to the Extensions and Special 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 Personal Tutors



# Course Organiser: Outline of Role

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- 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 Personal Tutors about students who are absent or experiencing academic or other difficulties, and reporting to the relevant role within the subject area or School  
[http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/tier\\_4\\_student\\_engagement\\_and\\_attendance\\_policy\\_feb\\_2017\\_update\\_0.pdf](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/tier_4_student_engagement_and_attendance_policy_feb_2017_update_0.pdf) <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/immigration>
- 3.5 Liaising with the Student Disability Service regarding adjustments for disabled students
- 3.6 Ensuring that students are aware of the advice and help that can be offered through the Student Disability 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](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/schoolandprogrammerepresentatives>
- 4.3 ~~For Schools that are retaining class representatives<sup>1</sup>: arranging for the election/appointment of class representatives; ensuring that feedback is obtained through class or Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings; and advising class representatives of Edinburgh University Students' Association resources, training and~~

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<sup>1</sup>From 2018/19 the majority of Schools are moving to programme level student representatives.



# Course Organiser: Outline of Role

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support

<http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/classreps>

4.44.3 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.

4.54.4 ~~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: Ensure that mid-course feedback is collated and responded to for all courses at undergraduate level~~  
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studentvoicepolicy.pdf>

4.64.5 ~~On an annual basis, obtain written/electronic feedback from students on the course.~~  
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/data-matters/course-enhancement-questionnaire>

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

4.84.7 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>

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

4.104.9 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](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/prog_course_approval.pdf)

3 June 1 May 2021

**Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**

**3 June 2021**

**Programme and Course Handbooks Policy Update**

**Description of paper**

1. Presents minor updates to the Programme and Course Handbooks Policy.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. For approval.

**Background and context**

3. Academic Services conduct cyclical reviews of policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

**Discussion**

4. Minor changes have been made to the core content section, in consultation with content owners, to ensure it reflects current policy and/or practice (including the updating of hyperlinks).
5. The Committee is asked to approve the minor changes to the Policy.

**Resource implications**

6. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed amendments.

**Risk management**

7. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

**Equality & diversity**

8. None identified, no proposed change in policy or procedure.

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

9. Academic Services will communicate changes in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies.

**Author**

Nichola Kett, Academic Services

**Presenter**

Dr Adam Bunni, Academic Services

**Freedom of Information**

The paper is open.



# Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

## Purpose of Policy

To confirm the status, purpose and core content of programme and course handbooks.

## Overview

The main aim of this policy is to ensure that students know where to find particular information on their programmes and courses through the provision of core content in handbooks. Programme and course handbooks are part of the academic governance framework of the University. Additionally, there are external requirements in relation to the provision of information for students that the University must follow.

## Scope: Mandatory Policy

This policy applies to all staff who are producing programme and course handbooks and applies to both taught and research programmes.

## Contact Officer

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## Document control

Dates	Approved: 14.04.16	Starts: 01.08.16	Equality impact assessment: 25.05.15	Amendments: <del>0328.065.210</del>	Next Review: 2021/2022
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## Approving authority

Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

## Consultation undertaken

Staff in Schools, Colleges and support departments, Edinburgh University Students' Association, students, and the Project Board

## Section responsible for policy maintenance & review

Academic Services

## Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

[Creating Accessible Handbooks Guidance](#)

## UK Quality Code

[Advice and guidance: Course design and development; Enabling student achievement; and Research degrees](#)

## Policies superseded by this policy

## Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email [Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk) or telephone 0131 651 4490.

## Keywords

Programme, course, handbook



## Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

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### Status of Programme and Course Handbooks

Programme and course handbooks are part of the academic governance framework of the University and are referenced in the Degree Programme Regulations. Therefore, as well as providing information for students on their programme and courses, they can be used to stipulate requirements. Once approved and published, the details set out in programme and course handbooks must be adhered to by students and staff for the academic session to which it applies.

A **programme** of study is the sum of all the elements leading to a defined graduating curriculum. A **course** is a unit of teaching and learning formally offered within the University, which carries credit expressed in credit points and which may contribute to a University award.<sup>1</sup>

### Requirements

It is the responsibility of Schools to determine how best to provide students with programme and course information. The “home” School must ensure that students are provided with all the necessary information to cover their programme and courses (of particular importance for joint awards). Additionally, consideration should be given to ensuring that students who are taking outside courses are provided with all necessary information. It is not a requirement that handbooks are created for all programmes and courses, but students must be provided with the core content detailed below using an appropriate combination of programme and course handbooks. It is of particular importance that formal agreed assessment and feedback activities (as detailed in the course descriptor) and any related requirements are explicitly communicated in written form at the outset of each programme or course. This does not preclude additional formative assessment and feedback opportunities.

Other types of handbooks are not part of the academic governance framework of the University and are not required to adhere to this policy. Additionally, other types of handbooks (e.g. School or year level handbooks) should not contain any regulatory or academic compliance requirements.

Programme or course handbooks do not need to be physical documents. It may be that information is held on a website, wiki or virtual learning environment and forms the equivalent of a programme or course handbook. Students should be made aware of which form(s) of media their course and/or programme handbooks are held. This policy applies to all forms of media.

The [Creating Accessible Handbooks guidance](#) should be followed for programme and course handbooks. There are no other design requirements in relation to programme and course handbooks.

The core content listed below must be included in programme and course handbooks and can be presented in any order. Core content can be supplemented with any other information the School wishes to provide.

Where information is owned and maintained by another area, links should be provided rather than cutting and pasting it into handbooks. This approach aims to reduce the risk of misinforming students and also to reduce the time taken by staff to produce handbooks. Particular examples include course and programme information on the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS) and academic regulations, policies and guidance.

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<sup>1</sup> [University Glossary of Terms](#)



## **Programme and Course Handbooks Policy**

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Programme and course handbook content must align with the information on the DRPS (including the Degree Programme Specification, the Degree Programme Table and the course descriptor) which forms the definitive record of programme and course information.

Final versions of programme and course handbooks must be made available to students at the start of a programme or course. The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy requires reading lists (at minimum indicative core texts) be made available at least four weeks before the start of the course (with additional reading that indicates priority/relevance provided nearer to the start date of the course). Therefore, if reading lists are only contained within handbooks, these need to be made available to students within this timeframe. Arrangements should be made to provide handbooks in an alternative format upon request.

### **Approval Process**

Boards of Studies have responsibility for the formal oversight of programme and course handbooks. In practice the approval of handbooks can be delegated to members of staff within a School as part of an approvals process that ensures accuracy of information and all handbooks are approved prior to the commencement of a course or programme. Boards of Studies need to have formal oversight of the approvals process and would be expected to record that handbooks had been approved at the relevant Board of Studies meeting.

### **Changes**

Exceptionally, changes may need to be made to a programme or course handbook after publication. In this case, all students who are affected by the change must be informed as soon as possible. Changes which differ from the approved programme and course information in the DRPS (including the statement of assessment) are not permitted.

## **Purpose**

### **Programme Handbooks**

- A source of information and guidance for students on a specific programme or group of programmes.
- Work in conjunction with degree programme tables, degree programme specifications, degree programme regulations, and assessment regulations to provide students with all the information they require for their studies.
- A collection of information and “signposts” to information that exists elsewhere.
- Contain core content.
- An information resource for staff, external examiners, and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

### **Course Handbooks**

- A source of information and guidance for students on a specific course or group of courses.
- Work in conjunction with the course descriptor to provide students with all the information they require for a specific course.
- A collection of information and “signposts” to information that exists elsewhere.
- Contain core content.



## Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

- An information resource for staff, external examiners, and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

### Core Content

Core Content	Description/further information		Reference/Source
<b>Session that the Handbook applies to</b>	State the session that the handbook applies to and make it clear that the University may make changes to the course / programme for future sessions.		
<b>Organisation</b> (for accessibility)	Contents page Glossary <sup>2</sup> <b>Standard text</b> (in Arial 14 bold): "If you require this document or any of the internal University Of Edinburgh online resources mentioned in this document in an alternative format please contact [name and contact details]" It is good practice to provide two methods of contact e.g. phone number and email or email and postal address		
<b>Details</b>	<b>Programme</b> Name, date of publication	<b>Course</b> Name, code, level and credits, date of publication	<a href="#">Path</a>  Course descriptor in the <a href="#">DRPS</a>
<b>Overview*</b>	<b>Programme</b> Structure and core courses, aims, learning outcomes and graduate attributes	<b>Course</b> Timeline of activities: lectures; tutorials; laboratories; placements; syllabus; learning outcomes	Degree Programme Tables and Degree Programme Specifications in the <a href="#">DRPS</a>  Course descriptor in the <a href="#">DRPS</a>
<b>Assessment and feedback information<sup>^</sup></b>	To include: submission and feedback deadlines, extensions procedures, late penalties, word count, submission procedures, dissertation (or equivalent) arrangements (including supervision), and exam diet dates		<a href="#">Statement of Assessment in Taught Assessment Regulations</a>

<sup>2</sup> Can assist with the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy requirement: Key technical words and/or formulae shall be provided to students at least 24 hours in advance of the class.



## Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
<b>PGT handbooks only</b> <b>Dissertation or research project supervision</b>	<p><b>Standard text:</b> “The dissertation/research project is an independent piece of work. You will be allocated a supervisor, who will provide you with advice and guidance in relation to the dissertation/research project, but you should remember that the sole responsibility for the academic quality of your dissertation/research project lies with you. You should research and develop your own ideas, and discuss your proposed approaches with your supervisor. Feedback you receive from your supervisor is intended as guidance, and must not be interpreted as an indication that your work will receive a particular final mark/outcome.</p> <p>You may be allocated a supervisor whose area of expertise is not a precise match for your chosen area of research, but who has the required expertise to supervise a dissertation/research project. All supervisors are experienced and knowledgeable regarding academic writing.”</p> <p>Provide information regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expected timelines relating to supervision, e.g. when supervision starts and ends;</li> <li>• The number of meetings students can expect with their supervisor;</li> <li>• Expectations regarding email contact with the supervisor;</li> <li>• How many draft chapters the supervisor will review and comment upon;</li> <li>• Whom students should contact if they experience problems with their supervision.</li> </ul>	
<b>Referencing guidance</b>	Add referencing guidance	
<b>Marking scheme<sup>^</sup></b>		<a href="#">Extended Common Marking Scheme</a>
<b>Prioritised reading list<sup>3^</sup></b>	<p>Or learning resources</p> <p>It is a requirement of the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy that reading lists shall indicate priority and/or relevance.</p>	<a href="#">Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy</a>
<b>Contacts</b>	<p>Key programme staff contact details</p> <p>It is good practice to provide two methods of contact e.g. phone number and email or email and postal address</p>	
<b>Dates+</b>	Important dates not detailed elsewhere (including timescales for online distance learning students)	
<b>Timetable<sup>^</sup></b>	Link to student-facing timetabling service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">My Timetable</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Course Timetable Browser</a></li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Please note the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy requirement: Course outlines and reading lists shall be made available at least 4 weeks before the start of the course. Reading lists at this stage may focus on the core texts only (where they are used). Additional reading may be provided nearer to the start date of the course.



## Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
<b>Lecture recording</b>	If the course involves lectures, inform students which of their lectures will be recorded or not. An appropriate explanation should be provided to students where a lecture will not be recorded.	<a href="#">Lecture Recording Policy</a> <a href="#">Virtual Classroom Policy</a>
<b>Key locations</b>	Teaching Office, laboratories, online environments (VLE, etc.), etc.	
<b>Progression requirements and award criteria</b>		Degree Programme Regulations in the <a href="#">DRPS</a>
<b>“Local” requirements+</b>	College, School, programme, or course-specific requirements	
<b>Attendance requirements</b>	Please note there are particular requirements for <a href="#">UKVI sponsored Tier 4 Ss</a> students: Schools should ensure that students are made aware of their attendance, engagement and on-campus obligations. Handbooks should include this information, together with guidance on how all students should submit requests for absences (special circumstances, interruptions of study, leave of absence, etc.).	<a href="#">Tier 4 Student Attendance and Engagement Policy</a> <a href="#">Student Immigration Service</a>
<b>Reference to relevant University regulations</b>	Add links to University regulations, policies and procedures	<a href="#">Academic Regulations</a> <a href="#">Student Complaints Handling Procedure</a> <a href="#">Academic Appeals</a> <a href="#">Academic Misconduct (including plagiarism)</a> <a href="#">Special Circumstances</a> <a href="#">Dignity and Respect</a>  For general information on rules, regulations and policies: <a href="#">Student Contract webpage</a>
<b>Student Support</b>	Including what happens when things go wrong	School Personal Tutoring Statements



## Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
<b>Student Wellbeing</b>	<b>Standard text:</b> “As with all transitions in life, applying to and studying at university can be both exciting and challenging – whether it is your first time at university or you are returning to higher education, and whether you have a pre-existing mental health condition or not, it is important to look after yourself. University can be busy and stressful at times, this can in turn cause our state of wellbeing to fluctuate. We all have strategies for coping with ups and downs in life and it is important to continue using and revising these skills, to help support and maintain your wellbeing which is crucial to allow you to experience a positive and happy university journey. We provide a range of evidence-based resources, workshops and support which are available to you and can enable you to cope with the ups and downs of university life. These are provided by a number of different services, including the Centre for Sport and Exercise, Chaplaincy, <a href="#">Student Counselling &amp; Disability Services</a> and the Edinburgh University Students' Association.”	<a href="#">Health and wellbeing student webpages</a>
<b>Student Feedback</b>	Detail the opportunities available for students to provide feedback on their experiences and how they will be informed of action taken in response to feedback provided	<a href="#">Student Voice Policy</a>



## Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
<b>Student representative structure</b>	<p><b>Standard text:</b> <a href="#">“Student representatives – both Programme and Elected Representatives – work closely with staff to ensure your voice is heard on the issues that matter to you, from teaching and learning, to student support, key services, and your sense of belonging to the University community. Throughout the year, representatives will gather feedback from you, share that feedback with relevant staff and other student representatives including the five full-time Sabbatical Officers, and work to enhance your student experience. Your School will facilitate communication between you and your representatives, in-line with this guidance. Student representatives are trained and supported by staff within the Students’ Association. Staff members at the University of Edinburgh work closely with student representatives. Edinburgh University Students’ Association coordinates student representation and provides training and support for student representatives across the University. Student representatives (‘Reps’) listen to you to identify areas for improvement, suggest solutions, and ensure that your views inform strategic decisions within the University, building a stronger academic community and improving your student life. All Schools are expected to facilitate communication between student representatives and the students they represent. Schools should either share with student representatives the University student email address of the students they represent (following the guidelines in the <a href="#">Guidance</a>) or facilitate alternative ways for representatives to contact all classmates e.g. via m-list.”</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Students’ Association Representation</a> <a href="#">Students’ Association Your Voice</a></p>



## Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

<p><b>Peer Support+</b></p>	<p><b>Standard text (edit as appropriate to course/programme):</b> “Peer Learning and Support in the context of the University means a student with more experience sharing their knowledge, skills, abilities and expertise with a new or less experienced student. Peer Learning and Support Schemes may focus around advancing your academic work, providing <u>1-2-1 mentoring, or</u> opportunities to socialise with other students within your School or offering additional support to ensure your wellbeing while at University. The Students’ Association, in partnership with <u>your Schools and University Services</u>, provide some of these opportunities, facilitated by <u>experienced-trained</u> student volunteers, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level of study at Edinburgh. Other peer support opportunities are also provided by the University. <b><u>Peer Assisted Learning Schemes</u></b> (more commonly known as <u>PALS</u>), involve trained volunteers in second year and above who plan and facilitate structured study sessions for other students. <u>These academic sessions cover a variety of topics, including settling into university life, study skills, course content, module choices, assessment and the skills students need to excel in their degrees.</u> <b><u>Peer Support Schemes</u></b> (e.g. academic families, buddies, clans or similar) aim to building a sense of community for students, enhance student well-being and enrich the university experience. Peer Support Schemes are based on a model where higher year’s students plan and run regular sessions to foster a sense of community and belonging through the integration of the year groups. Sessions can vary depending on the Scheme, but sessions usually have a specific well-being or academic focus, while others provide more social opportunities to facilitate meeting new people. <b><u>Peer Mentoring Schemes</u></b> are a form of peer support that take place in a 1-2-1 environment, whether this is in person or online. Peer Mentoring Schemes usually have a pastoral/welfare or academic focus, however we do also have some identity based Schemes available for example our <u>LGBTQ+ Peer Mentoring Scheme</u>. <u>Peer Learning or PALS Schemes are facilitated, structured, out of class, study sessions to help attendees become familiar with their disciplines, consolidate their knowledge and improve their grades.</u> Peer Support Schemes (e.g. academic families, buddies, mentoring or similar) focus on providing pastoral and wellbeing support to students both within the School and beyond. There are also identity based Schemes available for example <u>LGBTQ+ and BAME Mentoring</u>. All of these Schemes offer a place to make friends, build your social networks and feel part of the wider University community”</p>	<p><u>Peer Learning and Support</u></p> <p><u>Peer Learning and Support schemes</u></p>
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## Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
	Detail available Peer Support opportunities	
<b>Reference to University and Students' Association Support Services</b>	Provide information via the thematic student website	<a href="#">Students</a> <a href="#">My online resources</a> <a href="#">My Personal Tutor</a> <a href="#">Curriculum, assessment and exams</a> <a href="#">Study Support</a> <a href="#">Student conduct</a> <a href="#">Adapting well</a> <a href="#">Disability support</a> <a href="#">Careers and opportunities</a> <a href="#">Money, fees and finance</a> <a href="#">Students' Association – Advice Place</a>  Link to <a href="#">A to Z of University Student Services</a>
<b>Accreditation to external bodies, discipline-specific career/industry information+</b>	Detail here as appropriate	
<b>Name, position and institution of External Examiner(s)^</b>	Where an External Examiner is appointed to fulfil a role on behalf of a professional body, this will also be stated. Students must be informed in the handbook that they must not make direct contact with External Examiners, and that other routes exist for queries about the assessment process.	<a href="#">External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy</a>



## Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
<b>Health and safety</b>	<p><b>Standard text:</b> “The University has a duty, so far as reasonably practicable, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees and students while at work, and the safety of all authorised visitors and members of the public entering the precincts of the University. The University Health and Safety Policy is issued upon the authority of the University Court and contains the Health and Safety Policy statement and summary of the organisation and arrangements of health and safety within the University. The successful implementation of the University Policy requires the support and co-operation of all employees and students - no person shall intentionally interfere with, or misuse anything provided by the University in the interest of health, safety or welfare.</p> <p><b>The University Health and Safety Policy</b> The University Health and Safety Policy is supported by a Framework document published in two parts on the Organisation and Arrangements of health and safety within the University. Individuals are required to comply with any procedures or arrangements formulated under the authority of this Policy. Any questions or problems about matters of health and safety can be taken up initially with the School Safety Adviser. Further guidance on health and safety matters can be found on the Health and Safety Department website at <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/health-safety">http://www.ed.ac.uk/health-safety</a> including contact details for all professional staff within the corporate Health and Safety Department.”</p> <p>Provide information on local health and safety arrangements (including for online distance learning students).</p>	<p><a href="#">Health and Safety Policy</a></p>



## Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
<b>Data Protection</b>	<p><b>Standard text:</b> “Under Data Protection Law, personal data includes all recorded information about a living, identifiable individual. Students using personal data as part of their studies must comply with the University's data protection policy and the related responsibilities as outlined in the linked guidance. Before using personal data as part of their studies students must become familiar with the linked guidance, discuss implications with their supervisor and seek appropriate ethics approval. They must also obtain consent from the data subjects to take part in the studies. Failure to comply with the responsibilities under the policy is an offence against University discipline. A breach of the University policy can cause distress to the people the information is about, and can harm relationships with research partners, stakeholders, and funding organisations. In severe circumstances the University could be sued, fined up to £20,000,000, and experience reputational damage.”</p> <p>Provide information on local data protection arrangements (including for online distance learning students).</p>	<a href="#">Student responsibilities when using personal data</a>
<b><i>PGR handbooks only</i></b>		
<b>Supervision</b>	Information on supervisory arrangements and expectations, including annual progression review.	
<b>Thesis (or equivalent) requirements</b>	To include local context on expected thesis length	
<b>Training and development</b>	To cover: research culture; professional development; research skills training; and teaching.	<a href="#">Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators</a>
<b>Code of Practice</b>	Provide a link to the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students	<a href="#">Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students</a>

+ If applicable

\* As applicable for research programmes

^ Taught programmes only

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

3 June 2021

College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad: Terms of Reference

**Description of paper**

1. Updates to the College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad Terms of Reference. The key changes are included under "Discussion" below.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. For discussion and approval.

**Background and context**

3. Academic Services conduct cyclical reviews of policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Colleges are asked to provide comments regarding any policies or regulations which require necessary amendment or clarification, and Academic Services then draft amendments.

**Discussion**

4. APRC is invited to discuss the draft Terms of Reference for the College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad. Following this meeting, Academic Services will amend the Terms of Reference to take account of any Committee comments.
5. Key changes to the regulations for 2021/22:

Section	Change
Throughout	Hyperlinks updated as necessary.
1.1	Removal of reference to UK Quality Code which has since been superseded
2.7	Amended to replace reference to International Office with the Study and Work Away Team of Edinburgh Global
3.2	Amended to replace reference to Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC) with Academic Policy and Regulations Committee.
4.2	Removal of stipulation that meetings cannot be held electronically
4.4	Amended to replace reference to International Office with Study and Work Away Team.  Amended to replace reference to Erasmus Co-ordinator with Exchange Co-ordinator

4.7	Amended to remove reference to the 'Informing Taught Students of Their Final Programme, Course and Progression Results Policy', which is now incorporated into the Taught Assessment Regulations. Replaced with reference to Taught Assessment Regulations governing publication of results.

6. A track-changed version of the Terms of Reference is attached as Appendix 1.

### **Resource implications**

7. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed amendments.

### **Risk management**

8. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

### **Equality & diversity**

9. None identified, no proposed change in policy or procedure.

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

10. Academic Services will communicate approved regulations in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies. Academic Services will also cover any changes to regulations in Boards of Examiners briefings and other relevant briefing events for staff in Schools and Colleges.

#### **Author**

Stuart Fitzpatrick, Academic Policy Officer

#### **Presenter**

Dr Adam Bunni

### **Freedom of Information**

The paper is open.



# College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad: Terms of Reference

THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

## Purpose of Policy

The Terms of Reference provide information to ensure consistent and effective operation of the College Progression Boards considering the credit obtained by students who have optional periods of study abroad.

## Overview

The Terms of Reference provide information on the remit, composition and responsibilities of the Progression Boards in Colleges which make progression decisions for University of Edinburgh students who undertake optional study abroad during their degree programmes.

## Scope: Mandatory Policy

The Terms of Reference apply to all students who study abroad during their degree programmes and to the members of the College Progression Boards which consider their academic achievements for progression purposes. The Terms of Reference do not apply to students studying for a Modern Language (single or joint honours), whose progression decisions for their study abroad are made by the relevant Board of Examiners.

**Contact Officer**    Stuart Fitzpatrick    Academic Policy Officer    [Stuart.Fitzpatrick@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Stuart.Fitzpatrick@ed.ac.uk)

## Document control

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Approved:</b> 19.3.15	<b>Starts:</b> 1.8.15	<b>Equality impact assessment:</b> 23.3.15	<b>Amendments:</b> <a href="#">2017/18,</a> <a href="#">2020/21</a> n/a	<b>Next Review:</b> <a href="#">2017/18</a> <a href="#">2024/25</a>
<b>Approving authority</b>	<del>Academic Policy and Regulations Committee</del> <del>Curriculum and Student Progression Committee</del>				
<b>Consultation undertaken</b>	Via CSPC and through College Offices and the International Office The Terms of Reference are an implementation activity following on from the work of CSPC's Credit for Study Abroad task group, which reported to CSPC in April 2014. <a href="#">Policy reviewed in 2021 in consultation with College Offices.</a>				
<b>Section responsible for policy maintenance &amp; review</b>	Academic Services				
<b>Related policies, procedures, guidelines &amp; regulations</b>	The policy is subsidiary to the Taught Assessment Regulations. <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf">www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf</a> It is part of a suite of policies and guidance that support the Board of Examiners process: <a href="http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners">www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners</a>				
<b>UK Quality Code</b>	<del>UK Quality Code Chapters B6 Assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning, and B10 Managing Higher Education Provision with Others</del> <a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b">www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b</a>				
<b>Policies superseded by this policy</b>	<del>The 2017/18 version of this document</del> <del>The work carried out by College Progression Boards was previously done by a University level Credit for Study Abroad Progression Board which reported to CSPC.</del>				
<b>Alternative format</b>	If you require this document in an alternative format please email <a href="mailto:Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk">Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk</a> or telephone 0131 650 2138.				
<b>Keywords</b>	Study abroad, progression board, college progression board, credit for				



## College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad: Terms of Reference

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### 1. Purpose and Remit

- 1.1 The University offers periods of study abroad within its teaching and the learning experience. The College Progression Board for Study Abroad is responsible for ensuring that consistent progression decisions are taken for students who have a period of optional study abroad. The College Progression Board confirms the award of credit for this study abroad. The College Progression Board does not consider students studying for a Modern Language (single or joint honours), or students who are studying on degree programmes whose title contains "...with a Year Abroad", whose progression decisions for their study abroad are made by the relevant Board of Examiners. The College Progression Board also recommends appropriate courses of action following its progression decisions. Progression Boards operate within the University's Taught Assessment Regulations and Degree Regulations and are consistent with the UK Quality Code, ~~Chapters B6 Assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning and B10, Managing Higher Education Provision with Others.~~  
[www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf)  
<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/>
- 1.2 The remit of College Progression Boards for Study~~ent~~ Abroad is:
  - 1.2.1 to make decisions on the award of credit for students returning from periods of study abroad, including the award of credit on aggregate where appropriate;
  - 1.2.2 to make progression decisions for these students; and
  - 1.2.3 where students have insufficient credits for progression, to consider appropriate action and to make recommendations for any concessions required from the Taught Assessment Regulations to be considered as appropriate by the relevant College or, if required, by the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC).
- 1.3 In reaching its decisions, the College Progression Board ensures that:
  - 1.3.1 credit conversions are academically appropriate and supported by evidence and documentation;
  - 1.3.2 decisions align with relevant criteria and requirements in the University's Curriculum Framework; the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study and Degree Programme Tables; the Taught Assessment Regulations; and ~~the~~ Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework;
  - 1.3.3 its decisions are consistent and, where appropriate, take account of any relevant special circumstances, in line with the Special Circumstances Policy.  
[https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special\\_circumstances.pdf](https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf)  
[www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Policies/Special\\_Circumstances.pdf](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Policies/Special_Circumstances.pdf)
- 1.4 The College Progression Board operates in accordance with the University's models of degree classification (Appendix 1 below).
- 1.5 The College Progression Board for Study Abroad operates as a Progression Board, in accordance with the Undergraduate Progression Board Policy, unless specified otherwise



## College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad: Terms of Reference

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in these Terms of Reference.

[www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ug\\_progression\\_boards.pdf](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ug_progression_boards.pdf)

- 1.5 The University has two College Progression Boards for Study Abroad: one for the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and one which covers the Colleges of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine<sup>1</sup> and Science and Engineering.

### 2. Composition

- 2.1 The Head of the relevant College<sup>2</sup> appoints a Convener for the College Progression Board. The Convener is eligible for appointment for a period of three years and may be re-appointed. In the absence of the Convener at any meeting, the College Progression Board is chaired by a Deputy Convener appointed by the Head of the relevant College. The Convener of the meeting shall have both a deliberative and a casting vote.
- 2.2 Each College Progression Board consists of at least one internal examiner from each School in the College which sends students on study abroad. Where appropriate, these internal examiners may be the School's Exchange Coordinator.
- 2.3 Each College Progression Board has at least one member from the other College Progression Board within the University; and at least one member from the International Office.
- 2.4 Each College Progression Board is the responsibility of at least one External Examiner, who has oversight of the process. This oversight may be done remotely; the External Examiner does not need to be physically present.
- 2.5 The Head of College has the right to appoint an ex officio College member to the College Progression Board.
- 2.6 The College Progression Board is supported by an administrator appointed on behalf of the relevant College and by a regulations expert.
- 2.7 The College Progression Board is quorate if at least two internal examiners, the College Progression Board Convener, a member from the other College Progression Board and a member from the Study and Work Away Team of Edinburgh Global International Office are present.

### 3. Governance

- 3.1 The College Progression Boards shall report decisions via Schools using the usual progression board decision reporting route.
- 3.2 In addition, for the first three years of their operation, College Progression Boards report at least annually, following conclusion of their decision-making process for the year, to the Academic Policy and Regulations Curriculum and Student Progression Committee. These reports will provide some statistics on the students considered by the College Progression

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<sup>1</sup> Only students in the School of Biomedical Sciences undertake optional study abroad.

<sup>2</sup> The Convener of the CSE/CMVM Progression Board needs to be agreed by the Heads of both Colleges.



## College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad: Terms of Reference

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Board, including the numbers in each of the different categories considered (see paragraph 4.4); whether there were any issues regarding receipt of transcripts; and other relevant issues in relation to study abroad.

- 3.3 The College Progression Boards liaise with College and University concession processes when necessary.

### 4. Operation

- 4.1 At the beginning of each academic year the relevant Colleges produce an agreed list of the members of the College Progression Board for Study Abroad.

- 4.2 Each College Progression Board must meet at least once in each academic year at the appropriate time, and prior to the start of the following academic year. ~~This meeting cannot be a virtual or electronic meeting.~~

- 4.3 College Progression Boards shall hold such meetings as the Convener may call, including electronic or virtual meetings.

- 4.4 Responsibilities for the College Progression Boards are as follows (see definition of categories below):

The ~~Study and Work Away Team~~**International Office** will:

- liaise with Student Systems and provide each College Office with an accurate list of candidates for the board to consider, highlighting any potential category 3 cases;
- liaise with Partner Institutions and students to gather in academic transcripts;
- forward transcripts to the relevant College Offices as they are received; and
- provide guidance on partner grading and credit conventions.

The ~~College Offices~~ will:

- categorise each transcript as it is received;
- forward copies of transcripts to the relevant School Exchange Coordinator for confirmation of the category;
- liaise with the relevant School to gather further documentation for category 3 cases, for example on special circumstances;
- prepare all required documentation, summaries and statistics for the exam board;
- following the Board meeting, provide Student Systems with a list of the students who were on optional study abroad and their confirmed credit allocations for their period abroad; and
- send each School the relevant progression decision for students in the School who were on optional study abroad so the School can upload and publish the progression decisions in EUCLID.

The following classifications shall be used for processing transcripts.

**Category 1:** This comprises students who have undertaken a normal load of study (equivalent to 120 SCQF credits, as agreed in the Exchange Learning Agreement); who appear to have taken all courses at an appropriate level, and who have successfully passed all courses.



## College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad: Terms of Reference

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**Category 2:** This comprises students who appear to have taken fewer courses than expected; or who have taken courses at a lower level; or who have failed elements of their programme abroad but still met the requirements of the University's Taught Assessment Regulations for the award of credit on aggregate or for the provision of a further assessment opportunity.

**Category 3:** This comprises students who appear to have failed badly or for whom there are other problems with the transcript. For all such cases, the relevant Personal Tutor/~~Exchange~~Erasmus Co-ordinator is asked to comment on the student's performance and is offered the opportunity of recommending how to proceed.

- 4.5 The College Progression Board will decide the process for dealing with transcripts that are received out of cycle, for example, for category 1 and straightforward category 2 cases the decision could be covered under Convener's Action.
- 4.6 Each College Progression Board will consider special circumstances in line with the University's Special Circumstances Policy.  
[https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special\\_circumstances.pdf](https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf)  
~~[www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Policies/Special\\_Circumstances.pdf](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Policies/Special_Circumstances.pdf)~~
- 4.7 Progression decisions are sent by the Board to the relevant Schools, so the School can upload and publish the progression decisions in EUCLID for their students who were on optional study abroad. Progression decisions are reported using EUCLID Student View. The College Board liaises with Schools to ensure that the School can meet its responsibility to support students under [regulations governing the publication of results \(Taught Assessment Regulations – Publication of Results\)](#)  
~~<https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf>~~ ~~[the Policy on Informing Taught Students of their Final Programme, Course and Progression Results.](#)~~  
~~[www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Policies/Informing Taught Students of their Final Programme Course and Progression Results.pdf](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Policies/Informing_Taught_Students_of_their_Final_Programme_Course_and_Progression_Results.pdf)~~

**May 202119 March 2015**



# College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad: Terms of Reference

## Appendix 1

### Credit for Study Abroad Classification Models

The models below use degree classification information from the Taught Assessment Regulations. <https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf> [www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Regulations/TaughtAssessmentRegulations.pdf](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Regulations/TaughtAssessmentRegulations.pdf)

- Model A: Degree programme, except for modern languages, with two honours years with an **obligatory** period of residence/study abroad:  
Credit for study abroad awarded at the level attained for the courses, usually SCQF level 9 or 10 equivalent  
Classification based on both honours year equally weighted
- Model B: Modern language degree programmes, with two honours years with an **obligatory** period of residence/study abroad:  
Credit for study abroad awarded at the level attained whether by study or language acquisition, usually SCQF level 9 or 10 equivalent  
Classification based on both honours years, with the credit points for language acquisition through residence abroad aggregated with final year language learning credit in the calculation
- Model C: Degree programme with two honours years with an **optional** period of residence/study abroad:  
Credit for study abroad awarded at the level attained for the courses, usually SCQF level 9 or 10 equivalent  
Classification is based on the final year only
- Model D: Integrated masters degree programmes with three honours years with an **obligatory** period of residence/study abroad (MChem and MChemPhys “with Industrial Experience” and “with a Year Abroad” and MPhys “with a Year Abroad”):  
Credit for study abroad awarded at the level attained for the courses, usually SCQF level 9, 10 or 11 equivalent  
Classification is based on all three honours years, weighted 20,20,60
- Model E: Integrated masters degree programmes with three honours years with an **optional** period of residence/study abroad:  
Credit for study abroad awarded at the level attained for the courses, usually SCQF level 9, 10 or 11 equivalent  
Classification is based on the other two honours years only have the following weighting:  
students studying abroad in year 3: 0,50,50 (i.e. years 4 and 5 equally weighted);  
students studying abroad in year 3: 33.3, 0, 66.6 (i.e. years 3 to 5 in the ratio 1:2)

### Rationale

The University’s practice is consistent with the QAA Quality Code, ~~and in particular “Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others”.~~ Our approach to degree classification takes account of Indicator 11 of B10 which states:



## College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad: Terms of Reference

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~~“Degree-awarding bodies are responsible for the academic standards of all credit and qualifications granted in their name. This responsibility is never delegated. Therefore, degree-awarding bodies ensure that the standards of any of their awards involving learning opportunities delivered by others are equivalent to the standards set for other awards that they confer at the same level. They are also consistent with UK national requirements.”~~

~~[www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b)~~

The University adopts the above models of degree classification for students who have studied abroad for the following reasons.

1. Where students' degree programmes include an obligatory period of study abroad this requires the attainment of both credit and grades for the study abroad.
2. A primary learning outcome for modern language students is language acquisition, especially in the year abroad. This can be attained via study or work and in all cases through immersion in the target language and culture. The model recognises the importance of this by weighting the language learning with the final year language learning. By awarding credits but not grades for the year abroad this increases the flexibility of students to blend study, work and residence abroad arrangements.
3. Where the study abroad is optional then students need to attain credit. These students are on degree programmes where most of the cohort studies only within Edinburgh. The University therefore classifies these degrees solely on the grades from Edinburgh for consistency and robustness.
4. Integrated masters spending their three honours years at the University of Edinburgh have them weighted 20,40,40. The integrated masters with an obligatory year abroad are weighted 20,20,60. As study abroad is not taken in the final year this means the study abroad year is weighted 20%, regardless of whether taken in third or fourth year. This is consistent for the cohort taking those degree programmes.
5. Integrated Masters students spending their three Honours years at the University of Edinburgh have them weighted 20, 40, 40. For those who have an optional year abroad in years 3 or 4, the rationale for the weighting is that the ratio of the years at the University of Edinburgh should be in the same proportion as for students spending their three Honours years at University of Edinburgh.

~~**May 2021 Confirmed by CSPC, 20 November 2014**~~

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

3 June 2021

Taught Assessment Regulations 2021/22

**Description of paper**

1. Draft Taught Assessment Regulations 2021/22 (proposed changes in Appendix 1). The key changes are included under “Discussion” below.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. For discussion and approval.

**Background and context**

3. Academic Services conduct an annual review of the assessment regulations to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Colleges are asked to provide comments regarding any regulations which require necessary amendment or clarification and Academic Services then draft amendments.

**Discussion**

4. APRC is invited to discuss the draft Taught Assessment Regulations for academic year 2021/22. Following this meeting, Academic Services will amend the draft regulations to take account of any Committee comments. The current regulations are available at:  
[www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf)
5. Changes to the regulations are attached as Appendix 1.
6. Key changes to the regulations for 2021/22:

Section	Change
Throughout	Hyperlinks updated as necessary
<b>31 Moderation and standard setting</b>	<p>Amended to clarify provisions relating to marking adjustments, where moderation indicates that these are required. The updated regulation clarifies that marking adjustments are a legitimate means of ensuring that marks for a cohort fairly reflect performance against relevant learning outcomes, according to the Common Marking Scheme. The additional content provides guidance around the timing of marking adjustments, and methods that may be used to adjust marks.</p> <p>The amended content makes specific reference to retrospective scaling of marks, in order to</p>

	<p>address a previous lack of clarity around this issue. Scaling of this kind is treated as separate from any process of routine standard-setting used to arrive at final marks.</p> <p>The amended content mitigates risks around marking adjustments by clarifying that these should apply fairly to a cohort. The new wording does not require marking adjustments (including scaling) to be applied more or less frequently than previously, and does not represent a change in policy.</p>
<b>39 Board of Examiners: Quorum</b>	<p>Amended as agreed at APRC in January 2021. Meetings of Boards of Examiners may be held in person or virtually, at the discretion of the Convener. Virtual meetings should operate synchronously where possible, with all members participating in real-time. However, virtual meetings may operate asynchronously where necessary, provided that a quorum of members take part.</p>
<b>48 Degree examination scripts</b>	<p>Amended to clarify the position regarding return of physical and electronic examination scripts to students. Students may be provided with copies of examination scripts for examinations completed electronically at all levels. Physical degree examination scripts (or copies) may be returned to students on SCQF level 7 and 8 courses after results have been ratified. Physical scripts will not be returned to students on courses at SCQF levels 9-12.</p> <p>Providing students with copies of electronic scripts should be no more onerous than arranging for them to view physical scripts, where this is the current practice. Where electronic scripts are provided to students, Schools will retain a copy of the script, so there is no risk of being unable to respond effectively to appeals.</p>
<b>56 Postgraduate assessment progression</b>	<p>Amended in the “application of the regulation” section to take account of specific programme provisions for the MBA only, in relation to the Capstone Project.</p>
<b>58 Resubmission of postgraduate dissertations or research projects</b>	<p>Amended in the “application of the regulation” section to take account of specific programme</p>

	provisions for the MBA only, in relation to the Capstone Project.
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**Resource implications**

7. Any potential resource implications of the proposed changes are discussed in the key changes section.

**Risk management**

8. Any potential risks of the proposed changes are discussed in the key changes section.

**Equality & diversity**

9. Any equality and diversity implications of the proposed changes are discussed in the key changes section.

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

10. Academic Services will communicate approved regulations in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies. Academic Services will also cover any changes to regulations in Boards of Examiners briefings and other relevant briefing events for staff in Schools and Colleges.

**Author**

Ailsa Taylor, Academic Policy Officer and Dr Adam Bunni, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, Academic Services

**Presenters**

Ailsa Taylor and Dr Adam Bunni

**Freedom of Information**

The paper is open.

### Taught Assessment Regulations 2021/22

#### Regulation 31 Moderation and standard-setting

The marking of all components of assessment must be subject to moderation in a way that is appropriate to the discipline, the nature of the assessment, and the credit weighting of the component of assessment. Boards of Examiners can apply standard-setting processes to the marks of assessments, provided that the choice of standard-setting methodology is defensible.

##### Application of the regulation

- 31.1 Moderation occurs before External Examiners review the operation of the marking and internal moderation process. Forms of moderation include sampled second marking, double-marking, and checking the operation of computer-based assessment. Any single item of assessment which is equivalent to 40 credits or more must be double marked.
- 31.2 Moderation may result in recommended mark or grade adjustments (including scaling of marks) and associated changes to feedback for a specific component of assessment. The purpose of any mark or grade adjustments is to ensure final marks for all students more accurately reflect performance against the learning outcomes on the relevant Common Marking Scheme. No changes can be made to marking without the original marker's knowledge. Where possible, any changes should take place in discussion with the original marker. Mark or grade adjustments may be made before or after the release of provisional marks to students. Where there are concerns about the appropriateness of marks for a whole cohort, any method of adjusting or scaling marks should be applied fairly to all students in the cohort. It is unlikely to be appropriate to adjust the mark for an individual student in isolation. Marks or grades may be adjusted by simple addition or subtraction, multiplication by a factor, or the use of another method of scaling deemed appropriate by the Board of Examiners. Boards of Examiners must keep clear records and publish explanatory information to students about any scaling that has been applied on a cohort basis.
- 31.3 Records of the operation of the occurrence and the outcome of the moderation processes must be kept. Records must show the rationale for decisions taken, including any decision that marks or grades should not be altered.
- 31.4 Boards of Examiners are responsible for determining the form of moderation for each component of assessment, and for ensuring the appropriate operation of moderation processes. Course Organisers are responsible for the organisation and supervising of the marking and moderation processes for their courses' assessments.
- 31.5 Boards of Examiners are responsible for reviewing marking and moderation arrangements, and the outcomes of students' assessments, across related courses

(for example, Honours level courses in a subject area) in order to ensure that assessment criteria have been applied consistently.

- 31.6 Standard-setting is the process whereby decisions are made about boundaries or 'cut-points' between the marks or grades of candidates. It is separate from any process of retrospectively scaling or adjusting marks, following moderation. Any standard-setting process must aim to ensure that students' results reflect the learning outcomes they have achieved and that the assessment is fair. Standards can be relative or norm-referenced (taking account the performance of candidates), absolute (defining minimum levels of competence) or a compromise between these two approaches.
- 31.7 Schools need to state what practice each course uses for internal moderation, and (where relevant) the methods of standard-setting, in the Statement of Assessment (see Regulation 14).
- 31.8 Resources and publications are available from the Institute for Academic Development: [www.ed.ac.uk/iad](http://www.ed.ac.uk/iad)

### **Regulation 39 Board of Examiners: quorum**

A Board of Examiners meeting is quorate if at least half the internal examiners **attend participate** and at least one External Examiner participates in and approves the decisions of the Board. No Board may have fewer than two internal examiners **attendingparticipating**. See taught assessment regulation 2.4 for the definition of an internal examiner.

#### **Application of the regulation**

- 39.1 ~~“Attendance” means being physically present at the meeting of the Board of Examiners. Meetings of Boards of Examiners may be held in-person or virtually, at the discretion of the relevant Convener. Where meetings are held virtually, these should operate synchronously wherever possible, with all present members participating in real-time. However, virtual meetings may operate asynchronously where necessary, provided that a quorum of members take part. Any External Examiner must have sufficient information and access to the Board’s deliberations to allow them to approve the decisions taken by the Board. The minute needs to reflect the nature of their participation. “Participation” by an External Examiner does not require physical presence at the meeting of the Board of Examiners, but involves the External Examiner contributing to the meeting, ideally by video, telephone or web-camera and otherwise by email. The External Examiner must have sufficient information and access to the Board’s deliberations to allow them to approve the decisions taken by the Board. The minute needs to reflect their participation.~~
- 39.2 In exceptional circumstances and by prior written agreement with the Head of the College and the Convener of the Board, representatives nominated and authorised by them may substitute for internal examiners.

- 39.3 Each subject discipline must be represented and, whenever practicable, an External Examiner from each subject should participate. Where more than one School is involved, the composition of the Board reflects the contribution of the Schools to the assessment of the courses or programmes.
- 39.4 The University's External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy outlines External Examiners' participation in Boards of Examiners meetings.
- [www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf)
- 39.5 It is not necessary for the same members of a Board of Examiners to attend all meetings of the Board in an academic year, provided each Board is quorate.

## **Regulation 48 Degree examination scripts**

Degree examination scripts are received by the University in confidence. Physical dDegree examination scripts, or copies of such scripts, may be returned to students on SCQF Level 7 and 8 (usually Year 1 and 2 pre-honours) courses after the Board of Examiners has published ratified course results. Physical sScripts will not be returned to students on courses at SCQF levels 9-12 (usually Honours and postgraduate taught level). However, students may be provided with copies of examination scripts for examinations completed electronically at all levels.

### **Application of the regulation**

- 48.1 Students are entitled to see their examination scripts to assist with the provision of feedback and their self-reflective learning.
- 48.2 Course organisers, or their delegates, may show and discuss students' examination scripts with them for feedback purposes. Local arrangements are made for ways to implement the opportunity for students to see their exam scripts.
- [www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/feedback](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/feedback)
- 48.3 Other forms of assessed summative work may be returned to students after the Board of Examiners has published ratified course results.
- 48.4 The potential return of scripts to students on Year 1 and 2 pre-Honours courses does not apply to multiple choice questions which are not defined as degree examination scripts.
- 48.5 Schools will need to make arrangements to make exam scripts available to students taking Year 1 and 2 pre-Honours courses to take away (on individual request) after the retention period is over. Schools may wish to decide to keep the scripts for longer than the minimum required retention period, for example in order to make them available for release to the relevant students returning in the following semester (this is at the discretion of individual Schools).

## **Regulation 56 Postgraduate assessment progression**

For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project or dissertation component, students must pass the assessment requirements of the taught stage at an appropriate level at the first attempt before progression to the dissertation. In order to progress to the masters dissertation students must:

- (a) pass at least 80 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits; and
- (b) attain an average of at least 50% for the 120 credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression; and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the masters degree programme, that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.

When all the marks for the taught components of the programme (120 credits) are available, if the student has achieved PASS marks in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses.

For programmes where the taught and project or dissertation components are taken in parallel, or where there are not identifiable taught and research project or dissertation components, the requirements for progression are determined at programme level, stated in the Programme Handbook.

#### **Application of the regulation**

56.1 For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project / dissertation component (e.g. 120 credits of taught courses in semesters 1 and 2, followed by a 60 credit project / dissertation component):

- (a) Postgraduate Boards of Examiners are normally convened at least twice during the year for full-time students. The initial meeting to decide matters relating to progression (to masters), or failure, is held at the end of the coursework component. A second meeting to consider the dissertation results and the final award of degrees (or diplomas) is held soon after completion of the programme. Both meetings are equally important.
- (b) The Postgraduate Board of Examiners has the responsibility to decide which students can progress to the dissertation required for candidature for the award of a masters degree; or, in the case of other awards, exit either directly or following satisfaction of any outstanding requirement.
- (c) Exceptionally, with the permission of the relevant College Committee, a student who has been unable to sit an examination because of illness or other extenuating circumstance may, if that circumstance is certified, be allowed to progress to the dissertation stage prior to completion of the coursework assessment on condition that the dissertation will subsequently be set aside if the student is eventually unsuccessful in the coursework element of the programme.

- 56.2 For MFA programmes (240 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to masters dissertation/project the student must pass at least 120 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the 180 credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression to dissertation/project, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above.
- 56.3 For postgraduate taught programmes involving 360 credits, information regarding progression requirements is included in the relevant programme handbook.
- 56.4 In general failed course are not included in the student's transcript, but any failed course for which the student has been awarded credits on aggregate must be shown in the transcript as a fail but with credit on aggregate. In reporting course marks, Schools are required to upload a fail but with credit on aggregate outcome on to the student record system, along with other final course marks.
- 56.5 In Regulation 56(a) above, where some of the 80 credits are pass/fail courses, then where these courses are passed, they can be included in the 80 credit total. However, a mark of 50% is the mark that is to be applied in calculations under Regulation 56 (b).
- [www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme](http://www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme)
- 56.6 PASS marks are defined in the "PASS" section (A1 to PS) of "Recording of Course Assessment Results within EUCLID"
- [www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/Staff/FAQ/Assessment\\_Results.html](http://www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/Staff/FAQ/Assessment_Results.html)
- [56.7 For MBA programmes \(180 credits\) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to the Capstone Project the student must pass at least 100 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 \(c\) above.](#)

## **Regulation 58      Resubmission of postgraduate dissertations or research projects**

Students may be permitted to resubmit the dissertation or research project in line with the provisions of the Special Circumstances Policy where a student's performance in assessment has been affected by illness, accident or circumstances beyond their control (58.1-58.2).

Students are also entitled to one resubmission of the dissertation or research project for postgraduate Masters programmes where the student has achieved a mark of 45 to 49% at the first attempt (58.3-58.9).

### **Application of the regulation**

- 58.1 Where a student is granted the opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project due to special circumstances, the Board of Examiners will be responsible for providing the student with a statement which outlines the deficiencies in their original submission, and agreeing an appropriate deadline and appropriate supervision. The student will be granted a null sit for their first attempt, and the recorded mark for their revised dissertation or project will not be capped. Paragraphs 58.3 to 58.8 do not apply to students granted the opportunity to resubmit their dissertation or research project due to special circumstances.
- 58.2 Students who have been granted an opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project due to special circumstances may be permitted one further resubmission under this regulation (with reference to paragraphs 58.3 to 58.9), provided they meet the eligibility requirements.
- 58.3 Where a student receives 48 or 49% for the dissertation or research project at the first attempt, they may be considered as a borderline candidate for the award of the Master's degree, in line with published information regarding consideration of borderline cases (see Regulation 44).
- 58.4 Since the concept of borderlines (see Regulation 44) does not apply to the threshold for entitlement to resubmit a dissertation or research project, Boards of Examiners are not able to permit students with marks of 43 or 44% at the first attempt to resubmit their dissertation or project unless special circumstances apply.
- 58.5 Students who achieve a mark of 45 to 49% for the dissertation or research project at the first attempt as a result of a marking penalty, either for late submission or for academic misconduct, are entitled to one resubmission, in line with this regulation.
- 58.6 The relevant Board of Examiners will provide a student permitted to submit a revised dissertation or research project with a statement which outlines the deficiencies in their original submission. The student is also entitled to receive further written advice from their dissertation or research project supervisor on one occasion before resubmission. The student must include with their revised dissertation a statement outlining the changes made to the previous submission. This statement will not be marked.
- 58.7 The Board of Examiners will advise the student of the deadline for submission of their revised dissertation or research project, which will be three months from the date of the student receiving notification of their original result. Extension requests and special circumstances submissions in relation to this deadline will be handled in line with provisions outlined within the Taught Assessment Regulations and the Special Circumstances Policy. Where special circumstances affect the resubmission, Boards of Examiners are permitted to offer a further resubmission under the Special Circumstances Policy, if they consider this appropriate. The mark for a dissertation resubmitted under these circumstances will be capped at 50%, in line with Regulation 58.9.
- 58.8 Where a student declines the opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project, or fails to submit by the stated deadline, the mark they had received for their

first attempt will be treated as final and they will be considered for a relevant exit award.

58.9 If the Board of Examiners agrees that the revised dissertation or research project meets the requirements for a pass at Masters level, the student will be awarded the Masters degree. The recorded mark for the revised dissertation or research project will be capped at 50%.

58.10 For MBA programmes students are entitled to one resubmission of the Capstone Project where the student has achieved a mark of 40 to 49% at the first attempt. The Board of Examiners will advise the student of the deadline for submission of their revised Capstone Project, which will be two months from the first meeting meeting/communication with the supervisor to complete the work. Since the concept of borderlines (see Regulation 44) does not apply to the threshold for entitlement to resubmit a Capstone Project, Boards of Examiners are not able to permit students with marks of 38 or 39% at the first attempt to resubmit their Capstone Project unless special circumstances apply. Regulations 58.1-3 and 58.5-9 also apply.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

3 June 2021

Postgraduate Assessment Regulations  
for Research Degrees 2021/22

**Description of paper**

1. Draft Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 2021/22. The key changes are included under “Discussion” below.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. For discussion and approval.

**Background and context**

3. Academic Services conduct an annual review of the assessment regulations to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Colleges are asked to provide comments regarding any regulations which require necessary amendment or clarification and Academic Services then draft amendments.

**Discussion**

4. APRC is invited to discuss the draft Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees for academic year 2021/22. Following this meeting, Academic Services will amend the draft regulations to take account of any Committee comments. The current regulations are available at:

[https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgr\\_assessmentregulations.pdf](https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf)

5. Key changes to the regulations for 2021/22:

Section	Change
Throughout	Hyperlinks updated as necessary.
<b>17.1 Deadlines for the submission of a thesis for assessment – application of the regulation</b>	Amended to state that, “The thesis, containing an abstract and lay summary, must be submitted to the relevant College Office. Only the submission sent by the College Office is assessed by the examiners.”  This amendment reflects common practice introduced across Colleges of electronic only submission of the thesis for assessment.
<b>20.1 Preparation for oral assessment – application of the regulation</b>	Amended to state that “Oral assessment may be conducted by video link as set out in the University’s PhD by Research oral examinations by video link policy.”

	<p>This policy was approved by APRC in March 2021 and sets out the approval of, criteria for and operation of video link vivas. Resources for such vivas will be met from within existing College or School resources. No significant equality impacts are anticipated. Colleges will assess equality implications when granting approval for remote vivas. There are some risks associated with remote vivas (as set out in the policy) and Colleges have experience of taking steps to mitigate these.</p>
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6. Changes to the regulations are attached as Appendix 1.

### **Resource implications**

7. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed amendments.

### **Risk management**

8. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

### **Equality & diversity**

9. Any equality and diversity implications of the proposed changes are discussed in the Key Changes, see section 5 above.

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

10. Academic Services will communicate approved regulations in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies. Academic Services will also cover any changes to regulations in Boards of Examiners briefings and other relevant briefing events for staff in Schools and Colleges.

### **Author**

Dr Adam Bunni, Head of Governance and Regulatory Framework Team, Academic Services and Susan Hunter, Academic Policy Officer

### **Presenter**

Dr Adam Bunni

### **Freedom of Information**

The paper is open.

## Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 2021/22

### Regulation 17      Deadlines for the submission of a thesis for assessment

A student must submit their thesis for assessment, to the relevant College, within 12 months of the completion of their prescribed period of study, except:

- For the degree of **PhD by Research Publications** a student must submit their thesis within three to twelve months of registration.

#### Application of the regulation

- 17.1 ~~At least two soft bound copies of each~~ The thesis, containing an abstract and lay summary, must be submitted to the relevant College Office. ~~If more than two examiners are appointed then additional copies of the thesis will be required.~~ Only the submission sent by the College Office is assessed by the examiners.
- 17.2 All theses must conform to regulations and guidance in Section C.
- 17.3 Once a student has submitted a thesis they cannot retract it.
- 17.4 The relevant College Office is responsible for transmitting the thesis and the examiners' report forms to the examiners.

### Regulation 20      Preparation for oral assessment

All examiners must participate in any oral assessment of the student. The College has responsibility for overseeing the oral assessment of the student.

#### Application of the regulation

- 20.1 Oral assessment may be conducted ~~using technology such as video conferencing, enabling the student or an examiner to participate but not be physically present at the University. Such remote assessment must have the permission of the College Postgraduate Committee, the student, all examiners and any Non-Examining Chair. The College has responsibility for approving and overseeing this process.~~ by video link as set out in the University's PhD by Research oral examinations by video link policy.  
[www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/videolinked\\_phd\\_oral.pdf](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/videolinked_phd_oral.pdf)
- 20.2 The Internal Examiner is responsible for consulting with the relevant Graduate School and ensuring that all the necessary arrangements for the oral assessment are made. The arrangements, including the date and place of the

oral, the chairing of it, and the names of all those participating in it, must be provided in advance to all those who are to be present (i.e. the student, all examiners, any Non-Examining Chair and any observer). Where a Non-Examining Chair has not been appointed the Internal Examiner will chair the oral. (See regulation 4.)

20.3 If an examiner is unable to participate in the oral assessment, it may be postponed to a later date. If postponement would be a serious hardship to the student, the College Postgraduate Committee will consider appointing an alternative examiner.

20.4 The examiners complete and submit the relevant forms by the specified deadline:

[www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/forms/school-college-forms](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/forms/school-college-forms)

**Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**

**3 June 2021**

**Student Appeal Committee Memberships 2021/22**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper contains the membership lists for the Student Appeal Committee for Academic Year 2021/22, as well as nominations for new Conveners and Vice Conveners of the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Student Appeal Committees.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. For approval.

**Background and context**

3. The membership of the Student Appeal Committee is approved by APRC on behalf of Senate. The Convenerships of the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Student Appeal Committees are five year terms.

**Discussion**

4. The Committee Membership and Convener nominations lists are provided as an appendix. The Membership lists have been created in consultation with the Appeal Committee and the University's three Colleges.

**Resource implications**

5. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed amendments.

**Risk management**

6. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

**Equality & diversity**

7. None identified, no proposed change in policy or procedure.

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

8. Academic Services publish the Appeal Committee memberships on the Academic Services website.

**Author**

Stuart Fitzpatrick, Academic Policy Officer

**Presenter**

Academic Services

**Freedom of Information**

The paper is open.

## **1. Student Appeal Committee Membership Academic Year 2021/22**

### **Undergraduate Student Appeal Committee**

#### College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Mr Alan C Brown, Business School (Vice Convener)

Dr Chris Perkins, Literatures, Languages and Cultures

Dr Robert Lane, Edinburgh School of Law

Professor Mary Brennan, Business School

Professor Alexis Grohmann, Literatures, Languages and Cultures

Dr Sandra Bingham, History, Classics and Archaeology

Dr Alison Jack, Divinity

Dr Jonny Murray, Edinburgh College of Art

Dr Paul Norris, Social and Political Science

#### College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

Dr Alison Scott, School of Medicine

Dr Deborah Shaw, Biomedical Sciences

Dr Claire Phillips, R(D)SVS

Dr Simon Riley, Clinical Sciences

#### College of Science and Engineering

Dr Caroline Nichol, GeoSciences

Dr Chris Mowat, Chemistry

Dr Jennifer Skilling, Engineering (Convener)

Dr Max Ruffert, Mathematics

Professor Heather McQueen, Biological Sciences

Mr Stephen Warrington, Engineering

### **Postgraduate Student Appeal Committee**

#### College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Dr Raluca Bunduchi, Business School

Professor Simon Kirby Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences

Dr Colin Chandler, Health in Social Science

Dr Emily Taylor, Health in Social Science

Professor Mitsuhiko Ota, Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences

Professor Laura Bradley, Literatures, Languages and Cultures

Professor Andrew Lang, Edinburgh School of Law

Dr Angus Bancroft, Social and Political Science

Dr Andrew Hancock, Moray House School of Education

#### College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

Professor Cathy Abbott (Convener), Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences

Professor Ruth Andrew, Clinical Sciences

Dr Kim Picozzi, Biomedical Sciences

#### College of Science and Engineering

Professor Judy Hardy (Vice Convener) Physics and Astronomy

Dr Paul Taylor, Biological Sciences

Dr Julian Hall, Mathematics

Dr Prashant Valluri, Engineering

### **Student Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee Membership Academic Year 2021/22**

#### College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Dr Simon Beames (Education)

Professor Tonks Fawcett (Health in Social Science)

Professor Kay Tisdall (Social and Political Science)

#### College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

Professor James Garden (Deanery of Clinical Sciences)

Professor David Argyle (R(D)SVS)

Dr Jen Foley (Deanery of Clinical Sciences)

Professor Bruce McGorum (R(D)SVS)

Professor Moira Whyte (College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine)

## **2. Nomination of Conveners and Vice Conveners**

2.1 The Convenerships of the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Student Appeal Committees are five year terms, as prescribed by the Student Appeal Regulations. The current Conveners are now at the end of their terms. The Vice Convenerships carry no maximum term.

2.2 APRC are asked to approve the following nominations for the Conveners and Vice Conveners of the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Appeal Committees:

- Undergraduate Appeal Committee Convener: Dr Jennifer Skilling  
Dr Skilling is a long serving and highly experienced member of the Undergraduate Student Appeal Committee. She is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Engineering.
- Undergraduate Appeal Committee Vice Convener: Mr Alan C Brown  
Mr Brown is a long serving and highly experienced member of the Undergraduate Student Appeal Committee. He is a Senior Lecturer in the Business School and has previously served as the Associate Dean of Academic Progress in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.
- Postgraduate Appeal Committee Convener: Professor Catherine Abbott  
Professor Abbott is a long serving and highly experienced member of the Postgraduate Appeal Committee. She has previously served as Vice Convener of the Postgraduate Appeal Committee. She is the Director of the IGMM Graduate School.
- Postgraduate Appeal Committee Vice Convener: Professor Judy Hardy  
Professor Hardy is a long serving and highly experienced member of the Postgraduate Appeal Committee. She has previously served as Convener of the Postgraduate Appeal Committee. She is the Dean of Learning and Teaching in the College of Science and Engineering.

Stuart Fitzpatrick

Academic Policy Officer

May 2021