

H/02/27/02

**Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)  
to be held online on Thursday 25 November 2021 at 2.00pm**

**A G E N D A**

1. **Minutes of the previous meeting held online on 23 September 2021** Enclosed
  2. **Matters Arising**
    - a) **Convener's Action – School of Engineering Joint PhD Award (19 November 2021)**
    - b) **Electronic Business – Special circumstances – late deadlines (3-8 November 2021)**
- For discussion**
3. **Edinburgh Futures Institute – revised curriculum approval arrangements** APRC 21/22 2A
  4. **Extensions and Special Circumstances Service Review** APRC 21/22 2B
  5. **CSE: Joint Institute between University of Edinburgh and Huazhong University of Science and Technology, China: early Notification to APRC** CLOSED (C)
  6. **Including Publications in Postgraduate Research Theses Updated Guidance** APRC 21/22 2E
- For information and formal business**
7. **Any Other Business**

The University of Edinburgh

**Minutes of the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) meeting  
held online on Thursday 23 September 2021 at 2.00pm**

**Present:**

Dr Paul Norris (Convener)	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS)
Professor Jeremy Crang	Dean of Students (CAHSS)
Rachael Quirk	Head of Taught Administration and Support (CAHSS)
Kirsty Woomble	Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)
Stephen Warrington	Dean of Student Experience (CSE)
Alex Laidlaw	Head of Academic Affairs (CSE)
Professor Antony Maciocia	Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE)
Professor Jamie Davies	Dean of Taught Education (CMVM)
Dr Deborah Shaw	Dean of Students (CMVM)
Professor Patrick Hadoke	Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM)
Tara Gold	Vice President Education, Students' Association
Charlotte Macdonald	Advice Place Manager (interim)
Dr Cathy Bovill	Senior Lecturer in Student Engagement, 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:**

Ailsa Taylor (Secretary)	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Stuart Lamont	Observer (Students' Association)
Dr Susan Morrow	Deputy Programme Director (MSc Surgical Sciences) and Deputy QA Director (Clinical Sciences) (CMVM)

**Apologies for absence:**

Professor Judy Hardy	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE)
Philippa Burrell	Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)

Dr Norris opened the meeting and welcomed those present, including the new members. Dr Norris also welcomed Stuart Lamont (Students' Association) who was to attend APRC as an observer during this academic year 2021/22.

**1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 June 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

**2. Minutes of the Previous Special Meeting**

The minutes of the previous special meeting held on 5 August 2021 were approved as an accurate record, subject to the following amendment:

Item 2 Coursework Extensions and Special Circumstances (page 3). There was a typo at the bottom of page 3 under the section about additional grounds which were added to the special circumstances during the pandemic. The first bullet point referred to 'Been required to carry out more paid work than usual...' when it should have been 'Being required to carry out more paid work than usual....'

### **3. Matters Arising**

#### **3 June 2021 – item 3 Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) Postgraduate Taught Programmes**

At the June 2021 meeting, the Committee had discussed the EFI proposals and the Committee had proposed that EFI should approach Senate Education Committee (SEC) to discuss the proposed arrangements for flexibility in duration of study for Lifelong Learning students further. SEC had met on 15 September 2021 to discuss the institutional position on this, and had approved the EFI proposals.

Following SEC's approval, no further action was needed from APRC. The Committee noted, however, that there had been discussion about the application of the Code of Student Conduct to Lifelong Learning students. APRC could be asked to give more consideration to this issue, should any problems arise in the future.

#### **5 August 2021 Special meeting – item 2 Special Circumstances – MSc Dissertations**

At the APRC special meeting on 5 August 2021, the Committee had been asked to consider whether College approval should continue to be required in order for students to re-submit a dissertation at MSc level. It had been noted at the time that this was current practice within Colleges. The Committee had agreed that this would require further discussion at a later date, however it had highlighted that Colleges were able to devolve such decisions to Schools, and should do this in the meantime. The Committee had agreed to return to this matter and discuss again during 2021/22, in advance of approving the regulations for 2022/23.

#### **Convener's Action**

Convener's Action had been conducted since the last meeting on 3 June 2021 as follows:

- a) Approval of a concession relating to regulations for optional study abroad;
- b) Approval of non-standard assessment arrangements for a joint PhD between University of Edinburgh/University of Groningen.

### **4. CMVM: Proposal for an alternative third year in the MSc in Surgical Sciences (Paper A)**

Dr Susan Morrow presented this item. The paper was a proposal for an alternative 60 credit SCQF Level 11 Evidence Based Surgery course, which had been designed to sit alongside the current final year 60 credit MSc Surgical Sciences dissertation

course. The Committee discussed and gave their support for the 60 credit SCQF Level 11 Evidence Based Surgery course as an alternative to the currently offered Dissertation (Surgical Sciences) course. It was agreed by the Committee that the proposals had some similarities with other proposals that they had seen and approved, and was in the spirit of existing regulations because of the substantial research component.

Following queries by Committee members, it was noted that it had not yet been decided whether to offer the option to all students, and they may need to cap numbers and approve on a case by case basis, for example allow it for those students who could not find a local Supervisor.

It was noted that the Models for Degree Types were due for review soon. The Committee expressed a desire for wider institutional discussion on acceptable alternatives to dissertation at MSc level, to help inform the review of the Models for Degree Types.

**ACTION: Dr Paul Norris to approach Professor Colm Harmon (Senate Education Committee) to have a wider discussion about the Models for Degree Types and the institutional position on acceptable alternatives to dissertation at MSc level. Dr Paul Norris would report back to the Committee in November 2021.**

#### **5. Study Abroad for one Semester: credit on aggregate (Paper B)**

Dr Adam Bunni presented this item. The paper considered an issue relating to the application of credit on aggregate in cases where undergraduate students studied abroad for one semester only.

The Committee discussions on this item included the following:

- CSE had raised a concern that an initial proposal on this that had been circulated to some members of the Committee by draft had treated UoE and study abroad credits differently, but compensation had since been added to the proposal in both directions, therefore this was believed to have addressed CSE's concerns.
- The effect of the proposals on what would be seen by students on their EUCLID record, and on classification.
- It was recognised by the Committee that in some cases students managed course selection with little assistance, therefore effective communication was important so that the changes were clear to students.
- The Committee understood that the proposal was intended to resolve the immediate issues that had been presented, rather than change the year abroad structure.
- If the Committee were happy with the principals outlined in the paper then there would need to be further work between the CAHSS and CSE and SWAY on the workflow to aid implementation. There would be queries, for example, around what appeared on transcripts, and on Progression Board processes/timing to work out.

- The Committee expected to be able to reflect upon how well the processes were working this time next year.
- The Committee noted that they did not wish to set a specific average for the UoE course element.

The proposal was agreed by the Committee as follows:

Eligibility for credit on aggregate would continue to be calculated separately for a semester spent abroad and a semester spent at University of Edinburgh (UoE), in line with Taught Assessment Regulation 52.5. However:

- a. Where a student fails 30 or 40 credits of UoE courses, they will be allowed to progress provided they fall into Category 1 for their study abroad, irrespective of the average mark achieved for their UoE courses;
- b. Where a student has passed all 60 credits during their semester in UoE, but is placed in category 3 for their study abroad, they may be awarded full credit for their study abroad, provided their credit deficit is roughly equivalent to no more than 40 UoE credits (20 ECTS).

#### **6. Vice President Education Priorities 2021/22 (Paper C)**

Tara Gold presented this item for information. This paper provided an overview of the Students' Association Vice President Education's priorities for 2021/22. Priority areas included strengthening the University's response to the pandemic, modernising Edinburgh's curriculum and increasing transparency, responsibility and accountability.

#### **7. APRC Membership and Terms of Reference 2021/22 (Paper D)**

The APRC membership list was approved subject to the following amendments:

- Dr Paul Norris' role as Convener was not an ex-officio position.
- Dr Cathy Bovill's title was added (Senior Lecturer in Student Engagement, Institute for Academic Development (IAD))
- Charlotte Macdonald's title was changed to Advice Place Manager (interim).

The Committee discussed the Terms of Reference, with reference to the extent of student representation on APRC and other Senate Committees, and also in particular with reference to the extent of online distance learning student and postgraduate student representation. The Committee noted that it would be important to reflect on student representation in any discussion about membership of Senate committees.

#### **8. Review of Senate Committee Effectiveness (Paper E)**

The Committee considered the results of the review and, whilst recognising the low response rate, approved the proposed actions in section 4 of the Appendix. The results of the effectiveness review and agreed actions were to be reported to the October 2021 meeting of Senate.

## 9. Any Other Business

Sarah McAllister confirmed that there would be an end-to-end review of Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) based on Board of Examiner practice seen in the previous session, and available data. The review would look at policy and practice in the medium term, and consider in the longer term the sector discussion that was just beginning. The goal was to provide a detailed process for running Board of Examiners meetings, and the intention was that ESC data would be supplied to match this process. APRC would be updated periodically on progress.

The Committee discussed a concession request from CMVM. The Committee raised no objections to this, and it was agreed that the individual concession should be forwarded by Dr Patrick Hadoke to Dr Paul Norris to consider by Convener's Action on behalf of the Committee.

**ACTION: Dr Paddy Hadoke to send individual concession request to Ailsa Taylor ([ailsa.taylor@ed.ac.uk](mailto:ailsa.taylor@ed.ac.uk)) for consideration by Dr Norris on behalf of APRC by Convener's Action.**

Dr Bunni raised an item of business in relation to what regulations should apply to students who were due to complete the taught component of a PGT programme or an Honours year of a UG programme in 2020/21, but had been allowed to repeat some or all of that year during 2021/22 based on upheld special circumstances (i.e. null sits). The questions related specifically to the rules relating to Credit on Aggregate, which were amended by concession during 2020/21. The Committee discussed this, and agreed the following:

- Students repeating courses/a whole year of study during 2021/22 will be treated under the regulations applying to all students taking courses in 2021/22, i.e. NOT those applied by concession during 2020/21; this means that students can qualify for up to 40 credits to be awarded on aggregate;
- Where there are cases in which this could lead to a perverse outcome for an individual student, the School can approach the College to request that a concession be considered for that student. An example of this may be where a student could have been awarded Credit on Aggregate in 2020/21, but was instead offered null sits/repeats on the basis that they wanted to improve their performance, but they subsequently went on to fail those courses again.

**ACTION: Dr Adam Bunni to email relevant College contacts to confirm what had been agreed by the Committee in relation to the regulations that should apply to these students.**

Dr Norris noted that the intention was that the Committee would still meet online on Microsoft Teams for the time being, rather than meeting "in person". Members noted that there were some disadvantages to meeting in person when there would likely be a mixed economy with some persons online and some attending in person, which they felt would likely add complexity.

**Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**

**25 November 2021**

**Revised curriculum approval arrangements for Edinburgh Futures Institute**

**Description of paper**

1. The EFI education vision is to offer courses and programmes different from those currently offered by the University. While some models for interdisciplinary education already exist, EFI's programmes involve substantially more Schools than any current offerings, and are distinctive in the extent of interdisciplinarity at course level. The EFI education vision is also distinctive in its emphasis on challenge-led, data-focused, and externally-engaged approaches.
2. At its meeting on 19 September 2019, the Committee agreed to establish an EFI Curriculum Oversight Board to take responsibility for curriculum approval for EFI courses and programmes, as a non-standard arrangement to meet the requirements for EFI's innovative educational vision. The Committee approved the establishment of the Board on the basis that it would be interim until the end of 2021-22. However, EFI, the Board's Convener and Deputy Convener, and the CAHSS College Office have now had sufficient experience of operating the Board, and are proposing some changes at this point rather than waiting until the end of 2021-22.

**Action requested / recommendation**

3. The paper invites the Committee to approve the changes to the membership and operation of the EFI Curriculum Oversight Board, and to allow the Board to operate on this basis for the next three sessions (2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24). At the end of 2023-24, EFI would work with the Board Convener and Deputy Convener to evaluate the effectiveness of arrangements and report to the Committee. The Committee would also have the option to conduct a review at an earlier point.

**Background and context**

***EFI operating model***

4. In December 2019, the Senate Education Committee approved EFI's operating model for education. Under this model, EFI takes formal responsibility for courses and programmes, and Schools' academic staff teach and provide leadership for curriculum development and undertake academic management functions such as Course Organiser and Programme Director. While located within CAHSS in governance and organisational hierarchy terms, EFI is working with Schools across the three Colleges to deliver its educational vision. For example, the six new PGT programmes that EFI is launching in 22-23 involve fifteen Schools from all three Colleges.

## ***Current arrangements for EFI Curriculum Oversight Board***

5. In September 2019, the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee approved the following membership, remit and operation arrangements for the EFI Curriculum Oversight Board:

### **Membership**

- Vice-Principal (Students) (Convener)\*
- CAHSS Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (Vice-Convenor)
- CSE and CMVM representatives\*
- EFI Director of Education
- EFI Undergraduate Education Lead
- CAHSS Finance and Planning representative
- One student member nominated by the Students' Association
- The Convener(s) of the Boards of Studies for the Schools that have lead responsibility for or are contributing to the delivery of proposed EFI courses and programmes - would attend as full members and represent their Schools' views (taking account of their Schools' prior academic and management discussions on the proposals)
- One academic representative external to the University
- A member with an industry or community focus

\* Subsequent to the September 2019 meeting, the Vice-Principal (Students) decided to convene the Board (the Committee had previously agreed that the CAHSS Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval would do so), and extended the membership to include key CSE and CMVM office-holders

### **Remit**

6. The Board decides whether to approve all new programmes within the EFI portfolio (whether formally administered by EFI or not), all new courses administered by EFI, along with changes to these programmes and courses. In addition, for the programmes and courses that EFI administers, the Board will fulfil functions that the University normally requires School Boards of Studies to undertake (for example, overseeing the production of programme handbooks).

### **Levels of approval**

7. When EFI plans to hold overall administrative responsibility for a course or programme, the EFI Curriculum Oversight Board would fulfil both the level 1 and level 2 review functions (the former of which is normally undertaken at School level, the latter normally at College).

### **Responsibility for reviewing business cases**

8. For programmes that are the administrative responsibility of EFI, the EFI Curriculum Oversight Board would review the overall business case information

when considering proposals (with CAHSS management inputting through CAHSS Finance and Planning membership of the Board). The CAHSS Finance and Planning team would also need to sign off proposals for tuition fees before seeking University-level approval.

### **Mode of operation**

9. The EFI Board would operate in a Committee format, and via one-off validation events as appropriate.
10. In order to be quorate, the Board would require the Convener, the EFI Director of Education, and at least two Conveners of Schools Boards of Studies to participate.

### ***Arrangements for approval of non-credit provision***

11. At its meeting on 21 January 2021, the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee agreed to create a small sub-group of the existing EFI Curriculum Oversight Board to consider some non-credit courses. The Board has operated these arrangements by correspondence rather than scheduled meetings.

### ***Business to date***

12. To date, the Curriculum Board has held four full meetings, and four sub-Board meetings, and has approved the following:
  - Four new undergraduate optional courses
  - Six new postgraduate taught programmes, and sixty new postgraduate taught courses to support these programmes
  - Six new non-credit Executive Education courses

### ***Anticipated business in 2021-22***

13. In 2021-22, EFI plans to seek formal approval for the following:
  - One new undergraduate programme, including c. 10 new UG courses to support it
  - Four new postgraduate programmes, including c. 35-40 new courses to support them
  - A small number (c 2-3) of new non-credit Executive Education courses (the number of new Executive Education courses is likely to scale up significantly in subsequent years)
14. EFI and the Deputy Convener of the Board plan to manage the Board's review of these proposals through the following:
  - A full Board meeting in April 2022 to consider the UG programme and associated courses

- A full Board meeting in May 2022 to consider the four new PGT programmes and core courses, followed by sub-boards to consider proposals for elective courses
- Sub-boards in August 2022 to consider proposals for any UG and PGT courses not ready in time for the April / May 2022 meetings
- Rolling decision-making by correspondence for non-credit Executive Education course proposals

## **Discussion**

### ***Reflection on operation to date***

15. The Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee agreed the arrangements for the EFI Curriculum Oversight Board in order to:

- Move beyond current approval processes, which are built on a mono-disciplinary model of ownership which hinders the building of connections and shared ownership across Schools and disciplines;
- Ensure the EFI educational portfolio is aligned with the broader EFI education vision;
- Give Schools a strong stake in these approval processes, and a genuine sense of confidence in the quality of the EFI offer; and
- Enable the University to test approaches which may assist it to deliver its long term aims and aspirations for learning and teaching.

16. The Committee approved the arrangements for the Board on the understanding that, while the Board would streamline the formal stage of curriculum approval, it would be the final stage of an extensive process of dialogue with Schools regarding the disciplinary and management / resourcing aspects of the proposals.

17. EFI, the Deputy Convener of the Board, and other key CAHSS College Office staff, have reflected on how well the Board has worked to date. The College also invited the other Board members to comment. In various respects, the operation of the Board has been positive:

- It has provided sufficient scrutiny of the course and programme proposals to give the University confidence in the quality of EFI's portfolio (the sub-board arrangements have proved more effective than full-Board meetings for scrutinising individual course proposals);
- It has provided a workable forum for academic input from a large number of Schools – which would not have been workable if handled through conventional School Boards of Studies and College Committees;
- It has provided meaningful and valuable academic / industry input from outside the University;
- It has assisted Board members to understand the academic vision for EFI's educational plans;

- When combined with extensive discussions with Schools' management about the academic and resourcing dimensions of the proposals, it has enabled EFI to secure formal buy-in from all Schools that has allowed it to go ahead and launch the programmes and courses.

18. However, in some respects the operation of the Board has been suboptimal:

- The operation of the Board has been very administrative complex, and in some respects the work involved may have been disproportionate to the value added by the Board;
- While many Board members have engaged very actively with proposals and their comments have added considerable value, engagement from some Board members has been more limited;
- While some School representatives on the Board have been very active in consulting within their academic communities on proposals, it is not clear that all School representatives have done so;
- While the Board membership includes a range of externality (eg both the external academic and industry representatives and the College representatives), in practice externality of scrutiny or proposals has been variable;
- The operation of the approvals arrangements for non-credit Executive Education on a correspondence basis has led to rather drawn-out decision-making processes.

***Proposed amendments to membership, quorum and operation***

19. In general, we think that the formal arrangements have worked sufficiently well, and that we should not make any major changes. However, we propose some relatively modest changes to membership, quorum and operation.

20. We propose the following changes to **membership**:

- Rather than specifying that the School representatives should be the Convener(s) of their Boards of Studies, we would allow Heads of Schools to determine their academic representatives on the Board (for example, giving them scope to nominate their Director of Teaching, and giving them the flexibility to assign individuals with responsibility either for UG or PG depending on the business at the relevant Board meeting); and
- We would add one additional external member of the Board (someone with expertise from government or third sector), assuming we can identify a suitable individual.

21. When seeking Heads of Schools' confirmation of their representatives on the Board, we would emphasise that their representatives are responsible for consulting internally on proposals and representing the School's academic views.
22. In order to strengthen external scrutiny of proposals and engagement from Schools, we propose to amend **quorum** so that, in order to be quorate, the Board or sub-Board would require the following to participate:
  - The Convener or Deputy Convener
  - The EFI Director of Education
  - The representatives of all Schools that would contribute to the delivery of the proposed courses or programmes
  - At least one College's representative.
23. We propose to amend arrangements for **operation** in order to speed up the process for reviewing non-credit Executive Education proposals by setting maximum timescales for Board members to comment on proposals and for course proposals to respond to feedback. We will also aim that at least two of the members of the sub-group for considering non-credit proposals will have specific expertise in external education.
24. While the operation of the Board has been administratively complex, we have not identified any obvious actions (other than those relating to Executive Education) that would address this while still enabling the Board to fulfil its functions. We will however keep this under view, and identify efficiencies where possible
25. We are inviting the Committee to approve these arrangements for the Board, and, on this basis, to allow the Board to continue operating for the current session and subsequent two sessions (2022-23, 2023-24). At the end of 2023-24, EFI would work with the Board Convener and Deputy Convener to evaluate the effectiveness of arrangements and report to the Committee. The Committee would also have the option to conduct a review at an earlier point, for example should developments associated with Curriculum Transformation have implications for EFI curriculum approval processes.
26. Various discussions are underway across the University at present about the management of non-credit and credit-bearing microcredentials (including Executive Education). Should these broader discussions around microcredentials suggest that we should modify the Board arrangements for considering non-credit Executive Education provision (and other forms of non-credit provision) in advance of the end of 2023-24, then we would present proposals to the Committee.

### **Resource implications**

27. The EFI education team works with the EFI academic leadership to support the curriculum development process. The CAHSS College Office supports the operation of the Board, with the EFI education team coordinating the preparation of proposals and follow-up actions with course and programme proposals.

## **Risk management**

28. The proposed amendments to arrangements will assist EFI to deliver its educational portfolio on schedule, while ensuring that the programmes and courses are of a high quality.

## **Equality & diversity**

29. The proposals do not have any implications for equality and diversity.

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

30. The CAHSS College Office will take responsibility for communicating with Schools and Colleges regarding the implementation of these amended arrangements.

### **Author**

Professor Sian Bayne (Director of Education, EFI)  
Dr Paul Norris (Deputy Board Convener)  
Tom Ward (Head of Education Administration and Change Management, EFI)

### **Presenter**

Tom Ward (Head of Education Administration and Change Management, Edinburgh Futures Institute)

**11 November 2021**

## **Freedom of Information**

31. This paper is Open

**Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**

**25 November 2021**

**Extensions and Special Circumstances Service Review**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper provides APRC with an update on plans to review the Extensions and Special Circumstances service. This paper aligns with strategy 2030 point (ix); we will have more user-friendly processes and efficient systems to support our work.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. This paper is for information and is being presented to APRC as the gatekeepers of the Extensions and Special Circumstances policy.

**Background and context**

3. The Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) service was created and launched in March 2020 further to analysis of the ESC processes conducted during the Service Excellence Project (Student Administration and Support strand). An opportunity for improvement was identified through the creation of a new single central service at University level to manage applications from students of Special Circumstances, Coursework Extensions and Learning Adjustments, supported by the development and implementation of an online application and workflow system. It is pragmatic to undertake an end to end service review to understand practice across the University and to inform changes required to deliver benefit.

The role of the central ESC team is to validate applications and ensure supporting evidence aligns with the taught assessment regulations and any adjustments made, for example, mitigating measures. Schools remain the primary contact in providing pastoral care, setting assessment deadlines, and determining the impact of special circumstances on a student's performance. The ESC service is therefore transactional, with Schools remaining responsible for the delivery of pastoral care.

**Discussion**

4. The approach to this review will be to gather detailed information from every school via a survey, perform desktop analysis to inform topics for discussion, observe processes in Schools and use of system (e.g. in preparation for Semester 1 exam boards), meet with Teaching Office managers and, separately, nominated relevant academic colleagues, to discuss and take forward topics identified in the survey and produce recommendations for consideration by an oversight group. The desired outcome of the review is for:
  - A more consistent (and better) student experience
  - Greater confidence in ESC system and service
  - Greater consistency in practices across schools
  - More common understanding of policy and application of policy across Academic and Professional Services staff

- Schools and ESC have shared ownership of the process, ideally supported by community of practice
- Time saving realised in schools and ESC service
- A greater understanding and visibility of benefits of ESC

**Resource implications**

5. Resource from Student Systems and the ESC team will support this review along with colleagues within Schools to support the gathering of data to form an evidence base. It is recognised timescales may have to be adjusted due to industrial action.

**Risk management**

6. The risk of not undertaking a review is a system will have been delivered with end to end processes not fully understood therefore benefits will not be realised and variation will remain across Schools.

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

7. This review can be linked to goal number 9, Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

**Equality & diversity**

8. An EIA for this service will be undertaken as part of this review.

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

9. An oversight group will be formed to oversee and review the recommendations of this review. On formation of this group a communication plan and timeline will be created and shared. An introductory communication has been issued to Heads of College, Registrars and Heads of School to inform them of this review.

**Author**

*Lisa Dawson*

*18<sup>th</sup> November 2021*

**Presenter**

*Lisa Dawson*

**Freedom of Information** (*Is the paper 'open' or 'closed'*): *Open*

**Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**

**25 November 2021**

**Including Publications in Postgraduate Research Theses  
Updated Guidance**

**Description of paper**

1. The paper comprises updates to clarify the guidance on including publications in postgraduate research theses.

**Action requested / recommendation**

2. To formally note.

**Background and context**

3. Guidance was originally developed by a task group of the Senate Researcher Experience Committee. Clarification was indicated from questions raised by students and the attached update prepared in consultation with the Doctoral College Operational Group.

**Resource implications**

4. This guidance is reviewed as part of Academic Services core business.

**Risk management**

5. Academic Services has not identified any significant risks associated with this guidance.

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

6. Not applicable to this paper.

**Equality & diversity**

7. Academic Services does not anticipate any equality and diversity implications in relation to this guidance.

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

8. Academic Services will communicate the update to key stakeholders. Student questions will continue to be monitored to assess whether future revisions are indicated.

**Author**

*Susan Hunter  
Academic Services  
19 October 2021*

**Presenter**

*Kirsty Woomble  
Head of PGR Student Office  
College of Arts Humanities and Social  
Sciences*

**Freedom of Information** *The paper is open.*



# Including Publications in Postgraduate Research Theses

## Purpose of Guidance

To provide guidance on including publications within a thesis for students matriculated on a programme of doctoral study. It supports the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees. This guidance does not relate to the PhD by Research Publications. There is no requirement in the assessment regulations for publications to be included in PhD thesis and this guidance is for students who choose to include publications as a part of their thesis.

## Scope: Guidance is not Mandatory

Doctoral students (except those matriculated for PhD by Research Publications), postgraduate research supervisors and professional support staff involved in doctoral thesis submission.

Contact Officer **Susan Hunter** Academic Policy Officer [Susan.Hunter5@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Susan.Hunter5@ed.ac.uk)

## Document control

Dates	Approved: 23.04.2015	Starts: 15.09.2015	Equality impact assessment: 10.06.2015	Amendments: 20.05.19	Next Review: 2024/25
Approving authority	Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee				
Consultation undertaken	Colleges via Task Group of Researcher Experience Committee				
Section responsible for guidance maintenance & review	Academic Services				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	<a href="#">Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees</a> Postgraduate Degree Regulations ( <a href="http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk">www.drps.ed.ac.uk</a> ) <a href="#">Guidance on Signed Declaration in Thesis</a> <a href="#">Thesis Format and Binding Guidance</a>				
UK Quality Code	UK Quality Code Expectations and Core Principles				
Guidance superseded by this guidance	Previous versions of this guidance.				
Alternative format	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 651 4990.				
Keywords	PhD thesis, publications in PhD, publications in thesis, journal articles in thesis, journal articles in PhD thesis				



# Including Publications in Postgraduate Research Theses

---

- 1.1 The University acknowledges that publishing journal articles is increasingly important for PhD students, particularly for career development in some disciplines. The University also recognises the tension between the need to write a traditional monograph thesis in addition to publishing journal articles.
- 1.2 This guidance relates to students matriculated on a programme of doctoral study, producing a traditional thesis with publications included. It should not be confused with the PhD by Research Publications award for which there are separate regulations and guidance. PhD theses containing publications are subject to the University's degree and assessment regulations.
- 1.3 All PhD theses must form a coherent body of interrelated work that shows ability for critical analysis. Therefore it is important that a PhD thesis including publications must present a similar body of work to that expected in a monograph style thesis. Where publications are to be included, they should in effect form a thesis chapter with introductory and concluding text added to place the publication within the structure of the thesis (see example below). Assessment of the standard of the thesis will remain with the examiners thus ensuring that discipline specific standards are met.

Example of chapter structure:

- o Chapter X
- o Introduction
- o Published journal manuscript\*
- o Conclusion

\*published articles need not be reformatted and can be printed off, or electronically inserted, as they appear in the publication.

- 1.4 Published journal articles cannot be expected to be subject to correction. However, corrections the student may wish to make or indicated by the thesis examiners can be dealt with in the introduction or conclusion of the chapter containing the publication.
- 1.5 Articles included in the thesis which have been submitted for publication but which have not been published, or which are in proof, will be included in a format comparable to monograph thesis content. For example, text from unpublished or proof articles can be copied and pasted to match the format of the body of the thesis. The complete body of work submitted, including published articles should be equivalent to that expected of a monograph thesis and adhere to similar word lengths, as laid out within University regulations and local discipline specific guidance.
- 1.6 It should be emphasised that whilst peer reviewing of publications is a good measure of progress, it does not guarantee success at examination.



# Including Publications in Postgraduate Research Theses

---

- 1.7 Responsibility for the quality of the submitted thesis lies with the student and the assessment of the standard of the submitted thesis rests with the examiners. Examiners will assess the standard and appropriateness of papers and publications included within a thesis.
- 1.8 Articles may not be included in the thesis for which students do not retain copyright. As students are responsible for the quality of the submitted thesis, it is therefore also the student's responsibility to ensure that the thesis complies with copyright law and advice should be sought in relation to copyright implications. Supervisors may be able to offer advice in relation to copyright matters.
- 1.9 The signed declaration in the thesis must include a statement that any included publications are the student's own work, except where indicated throughout the thesis and summarised and clearly identified on the declarations page of the thesis. (See also the University's guidance on [Signed Declaration in a Research Thesis](#).)
- 1.10 The inclusion of journal articles is also permissible for other postgraduate research degrees which are exit routes for the PhD, for example MPhil and MSc by Research.

**XX October 2021**