

H/02/27/02

**Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
to be held online on Thursday 27 January 2022 at 2.00pm**

A G E N D A

1. **Minutes of the previous meeting held online on 25 November 2021** Enclosed
2. **Matters Arising**
 - **Convener's Action - Appeal Committee membership, Student Discipline Committee membership**
- For discussion**
3. **Centre for Open Learning - International Foundation Programme** APRC 21/22 3A
4. **CMVM - MSc Clinical Education Year 3** APRC 21/22 3B
5. **CMVM - MSc Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health (non-standard dissertation)** APRC 21/22 3C
6. **CMVM - Professional Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine** APRC 21/22 3D
7. **Student Support Model** APRC 21/22 3E
8. **Support for Study** APRC 21/22 3F
9. **ESC Review - Coursework Extension Update for Semester 1 2021/22** APRC 21/22 3G
10. **Deadline for Submission of Special Circumstances** APRC 21/22 3H
- For information and formal business**
11. **Academic Year Dates 2023/24 and Provisional Academic Year Dates 2024/25 and 2025/26** APRC 21/22 3I
12. **Any Other Business**

The University of Edinburgh

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

Present:

Dr Paul Norris (Convener)	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS)
Professor Jeremy Crang	Dean of Students (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)
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
Dr Cathy Bovill	Senior Lecturer in Student Engagement, Institute for Academic Development (IAD)
Dr Adam Bunni	Head of Academic Policy and Regulation, Academic Services
Sarah McAllister	Student Systems and Administration

In attendance:

Ailsa Taylor (Secretary)	Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Lisa Dawson	Director of Student Systems and Administration
Isabel Lavers	Academic Administration Manager (CMVM)
Sudha Mani	PCIM and SSPT Project Team
Professor Ian Underwood	Director of International Partnerships, School of Engineering
Tom Ward	Head of Education Administration and Change Management, Edinburgh Futures Institute

Apologies for absence:

Philippa Burrell	Head of Academic Administration (CMVM)
Stuart Lamont	Observer, Students' Association

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 September 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

2. Matters Arising

- a) **Convener's Action – School of Engineering Joint PhD Award (19 November 2021)** Dr Norris had taken Convener's Action on 19 November 2021 in relation to a situation regarding a single student currently registered on a joint PhD degree at a University in China.

- b) Electronic Business – Special circumstances – late deadlines (3-8 November 2021)** A paper concerning special circumstances deadlines and their alignment with the results publication dates had been approved by the Committee by electronic business between 3-8 November 2021. It was agreed that special circumstances deadline dates should be debated more widely by the Committee at the next meeting in January 2021, so that a longer term decoupling of the special circumstances deadlines and the University's key dates could be considered further.
- 3. Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) – revised curriculum approval arrangements (APRC 21/22 2A)**

Professor Judy Hardy chaired this item, given Dr Norris' involvement in this area.

Mr Tom Ward presented this item. The Committee approved the proposed changes to the membership and operation of the EFI Curriculum Oversight Board (subject to further consideration by EFI in relation to the possibility of greater student representation on the Board). It was further agreed to allow the Board to operate on this basis for the next three sessions (2021/22-2023/24). At the end of 2023/24 EFI would work with the Board Convener and Deputy Convener to evaluate the effectiveness of arrangements and report back to the Committee; the Committee would also have the option to conduct a review at an earlier point, if that was felt to be necessary or desirable.

4. Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) Service Review (APRC 21/22 2B)

Ms Lisa Dawson presented this item.

The approach to the forthcoming ESC service review would be to gather detailed information from every school via a survey, perform desktop analysis to inform topics for discussion, observe processes and use of systems in Schools (e.g. in preparation for Semester 1 exam boards), and meet with Teaching Office managers and nominated relevant academic colleagues. Recommendations would be produced for consideration by an oversight group. The desired outcome of the review was 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 to 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.

The review was to be supported by resource from Student Systems and the ESC team, and an oversight group would be formed to oversee and review the recommendations of this review. APRC would be updated on progress and asked to input into the review at various intervals over the remainder of the current academic year.

The Committee agreed that they were content to receive information about the Extensions and Special Circumstances Review at regular intervals at the remaining APRC meetings during this academic year, with a 'drip-feed' approach, to allow Committee members to fully advise at key stages of the review.

5. CSE: Joint Institute between University of Edinburgh and Huazhong University of Science and Technology, China: early Notification to APRC (CLOSED – C)

Professor Ian Underwood presented this closed paper, and received advice and feedback from members regarding development of the collaboration.

6. Including Publications in Postgraduate Research Theses - Updated Guidance (APRC 21/22 2E)

Kirsty Woomble presented this item. The paper was approved, subject to an amendment with regards to guidance on copyright which was to be sought from the library.

ACTION: Kirsty Woomble and Susan Hunter to seek advice from the library about replacement wording regarding copyright.

7. Any Other Business

Student Support project- policy amendments

Dr Adam Bunni updated the Committee on the plans for policy and regulatory review following input from the student support project later in the academic year. Some items identified for review on the student support project list were not owned by APRC but by other Senate Committees, or were items that were not owned by any of the Senate Committees, or had fallen out of use. Some of the documents identified (e.g. the Degree and Assessment Regulations), came to the Committee at specific times each year, so a request had been made to the student support project team to incorporate suggested changes to these items at the relevant times, to tie in with the annual review cycle. Dr Bunni anticipated that batches of policy documents would come to the next three ARPC Committee meetings in January 2021, March 2021 and May 2021, for review.

Industrial action

Dr Adam Bunni noted that the Committee was not being asked to consider any concessions by the Academic Contingency Group (ACG) at the present time in relation to the forthcoming UCU industrial action, based on the nature of the scheduled industrial action. However, this may change, if the nature of the action changed. Guidance for staff had recently been issued by ACG via a dedicated SharePoint site; Committee members reflected on some of the content of this guidance in relation to replacement examiners for Doctoral and MPhil oral examinations (which was unchanged from previous guidance regarding industrial action, but had the potential to cause some practical challenges). It was recognised by the Committee that the timescales were such that this would not impact on the latest round of industrial action, given how the guidance was worded in relation to timescales ("It would be necessary to allow a replacement External Examiner a minimum of two weeks to read the thesis and prepare for the oral examination"), and

the fact that the forthcoming strike action was to take place within a two week period. However, it was noted that colleagues on APRC would be welcome to feed any reflections or comments back to ACG for any future iterations of the guidance beyond this semester.

CMVM: External Examiners for PhD examination

Professor Hadoke updated the Committee on a change in practice to the requirement for two External Examiners in CMVM for PhD students, which was caused by a change in landscape for some of their PhD students. This would not require any change to regulations. CMVM had traditionally required two External Examiners for members of staff. However, there were some clear instances where flexibility was appropriate (for example; with Marie Curie Fellows where the funder required the student to be appointed as a member of staff, but they completed their research full-time). For many of these students, requiring two External Examiners appeared to be excessive. CMVM planned to introduce a system which allowed them to identify as early as possible whether a student would need one or two External Examiners (with review if circumstances changed). Where necessary, any lingering concerns about conflict of interest would be covered by appointing a Non-examining Chair (NEC).

Senate Committee membership

Dr Norris updated the Committee on recent discussions at Senate regarding Senate committee membership, and encouraged members to input into the longer-term review of this matter at the appropriate time.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

27 January 2022

Centre for Open Learning – International Foundation Programme

Description of paper

(Should also explain how any proposals will contribute to one of more of the Strategy 2030 outcomes)

1. This paper proposes that University Taught Assessment regulation TAR 27.4 (*Students are not allowed to resit a course or components of a course that they have passed, unless the relevant Board of Examiners has permitted this under Special Circumstances by granting a null sit for the attempt that the student has passed*) be applied flexibly to the Foundation English for Academic Purposes (FEAP) courses on the International Foundation Programme (IFP) run by the Centre for Open Learning. This would allow IFP students without Special Circumstances to resit Academic English courses which they have not failed, but where they have not met English Language requirements for Progression to Undergraduate Studies. The change would contribute to Strategy 2030 outcome vi, contributing to the creation of a coherent and supportive transition experience for students from across the world into their Edinburgh degree.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The paper recommends that the Committee approve this proposal, granting flexibility in relation to TAR 27.4 for IFP students who score above the Pass Mark of 40 on Foundation English for Academic Purposes 1 and/or 2 but less than the 60 score needed for progression to Undergraduate studies, allowing the Board of Examiners to recommend a resit. It is recommended that the resit score is used for progression purposes only and does not therefore replace the original mark which contributes to students' overall mark on the IFP degree Programme.

Background and context

3. The FEAP courses are central to the IFP and focus on developing academic language and literacies (ALL) for successful participation in UG programmes as well as supporting and promoting ALL development in the other IFP courses.
4. FEAP Entry is for students who have not yet met English language requirements for entry to undergraduate (UG) study. It aims to improve academic English language and literacies for effective participation in UG study. FEAP Plus is for students who have already met the English language requirements and therefore aims to further enhance skills to the point where students can participate beyond expectation in their first year UG courses. FEAP 2 builds on FEAP 1.

5. The current position is anomalous as students can pass the FEAP components of the IFP with the 40 pass mark but still be unable to progress to UG study, as they have not met progression requirements. Their only option is to re-take IELTS or an equivalent English assessment in order to fulfil their programme requirements.

Discussion

6. Although this proposal would result in inconsistency of resit procedures across the IFP courses, this can be mitigated through clear communication of the process and rationale with staff and students. If students are not able to resit FEAP, their only remaining pathway into UG studies is through re-taking IELTS or equivalent. This has destabilising effects on the student experience – potentially distracting students from participation in Term 3 IFP courses and encouraging a “test roulette” mentality. Re- focusing on IELTS can also result in a learning deficit as students need to relearn arguably poor writing practices for IELTS test-taking which they may then carry over into UG study. Pedagogically, this undermines the FEAP 1 and 2 courses and assessments. The need to prepare to re-take a test last taken at least a year before, also has a possible detrimental effect on group cohesion and inclusivity, with some students potentially feeling singled out, as they need to pay for and re-take an external test. Allowing for FEAP 1 and 2 resits for progression purposes ensures a continuing focus on beneficial learning practices.
7. This proposal has been discussed with CAHSS UG Admissions, and has their support. It also has the support of the Centre for Learning Board of Studies and the English Language Education External Examiner, Dr Alison Standing, London School of Economics.

Resource implications

8. None outwith current budgets.

Risk management

9. Not approving this change may result in continuing risk to the student experience through an uneven focus on beneficial learning practices. There is also the possibility that students will potentially choose to apply to another institution, who may accept them with below 60 in FEAP, rather than re-taking IELTS.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

10. The change contributes to SDG4 by ensuring “inclusive and equitable education”.

Equality & diversity

11. The proposed change would result in improved impact on equality and inclusivity, as discussed above. It is also worth noting that the current position, where students are left with no option other than to re-take IELTS or equivalent is likely to particularly impact students from less privileged backgrounds who may be more sensitive to the cost of re-taking IELTS.

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

12. If the proposal is accepted, it will be implemented by the IFP team and Professional Services within the Centre for Open Learning. Clear communications to students will be drafted and included on the IFP web pages.

Author

Name: Jill Northcott, Head of English Language for Arts, Humanities and Social Science, and Hannah Jones, Director of English Language Education at the Centre for Open Learning
Date: 6/12/21

Presenter

Name: Hannah Jones, Director of English Language Education at the Centre for Open Learning

Freedom of Information: Open

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

27 January 2022

Proposal to offer alternative structures to the third year of the MSc Clinical Education, increase student choice and achieve parity across the suite of Masters programmes in MVM.

Description of paper

This paper requests that APRC considers that the MSc Clinical Education is allowed to offer alternatives to the current 60-credit dissertation offered to students in their third year of study. We plan to still offer a 60-credit dissertation, but also to offer an entirely taught third year (3X 20-credit courses) or a 20+40-credit quality improvement project (consisting of a 20 credit Critical Literature course + a 40 credit Quality Improvement course). The 3X20 credit option will use existing elective courses, while the 20+40 option involves new courses which are included as part of this proposal. Our proposal aligns with the University's mission to provide the highest-quality teaching and learning, and the strategic objective of Leadership in Learning. Our programme serves both a local and a global population, and we already know from feedback that learning on our programme influences clinical practice. This proposal allows students to obtain academic credit for work that is of direct professional benefit. Thus enabling our students to address challenges in their own professional context.

Action requested / recommendation

We are seeking approval to allow MSc Clinical Education students to have three options available to them in their third year of study and to choose whether or not they wish to undertake an MSc with a 60-credit dissertation in their final year.

Students will be offered the choice of:

- 1) 60-credit dissertation (the existing model)
- 2) 40+20-credit mode (using new courses with the descriptors of these courses available in appendices 1 and 2).
- 3) A combination of 3X20-credit existing elective courses

Background and context

The MSc Clinical Education (ClinEd) is a successful, large and well-established online Masters programme offered by Edinburgh Medical School. The programme has grown rapidly (48% increase in students 20/21, with projections for this year set to exceed these numbers). This is a total of 256 students over the three years of the programme with 51 currently enrolled in the third year. The programme enjoys outstanding student satisfaction metrics, with most applicants coming to us on the recommendation of existing students. The programme team are increasingly known for their scholarly approach to online postgraduate education, their research outputs and the criticality employed in their teaching has inevitably enhanced the reputation of the programme. The academic team are experienced in online education, academic supervision and educational research. We also have a strong ethos of

student support and hospitality which underpins all aspects of the programme. A recent IPR (2021) report noted:

“The ClinEd programme is widely recognised to be world leading within the growing proliferation of such programmes worldwide. The programme team are increasingly recognised for their scholarship in the under-explored area of online postgraduate education. The ClinEd programme should be commended on delivering quality provision with high levels of student satisfaction and international external recognition.”

Our students are a diverse group, but all working in some health-related area and with an involvement in teaching. As such, we are delivering content relating to clinical education but also role-modelling how to teach and how to run and develop an academic programme. We have regular conversations with our students about the structure of the programme, indeed such conversations are a core part of our teaching. Consulting on, and debating proposed developments to the programme is not confined to SSLC, but runs through the entire programme. For several years now there has been increasing frustration from the programme team and the student body about the inflexibility of regulations relating to taught programmes delivered online to working professionals.

We requested approval from the, then CSPC, in 2019 to introduce a 40 +20 credit quality improvement project as an alternative third year format to replace the existing 60-credit dissertation. This request was rejected, primarily because it was felt that the third year should comprise of a single piece of work, despite other online programmes already offering entirely taught third years (i.e., 3 X 20 credit courses).

Discussion

Pedagogy

The proposal in this paper relates to student choice. We are not suggesting that there is no place for the traditional 60-credit dissertation format for online PGT programmes, rather that it is not always the best option for this diverse student group. We have had some outstanding Masters dissertations over the years, many of which have been published, enhancing the reputation of both the programme and our graduates. We plan to continue this scholarship and building the educational research skills of the clinical leaders of the future. At the same time, we recognise this is not the most appropriate route for many of our students. The 60-credit dissertation will still be offered, with alternatives of an entirely taught third year or a 40+20 quality improvement project.

The ClinEd programme currently offers third year students the option of undertaking empirical research or a desk-based study. However, the option of undertaking empirical research has become increasingly challenging both for the supervisory team and some students. Literature based dissertations are increasingly common (over one quarter of this year's students opting for this approach) as students choose to avoid the difficulties of obtaining ethical approval or recruiting participants within

the time frame of the dissertation. These problems have been compounded by the current pandemic as ethics committees in medical schools prioritised Covid-19 related studies.

Most graduates of the programme do not go on to become educational researchers, nor do they go onto to undertake doctoral study. Indeed, many of our students already have higher degrees before commencing their studies with us. Our students are primarily clinicians who teach, or lead academic programmes, and our programme needs to provide the content and preparation for the wider career choices to which they aspire. Their needs are better addressed by a more flexible approach to study than current regulations allow. This links to the QAA Master's degree characteristics statement: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/master's-degree-characteristics-statement.pdf?sfvrsn=86c5ca81_18

This clearly emphasises different types of Masters degrees (including professional masters) and emphasises that a dissertation is not essential:

“Assessment methods are also diverse and vary significantly depending upon the overall aims of a particular course. Most Master's degrees include a research project, leading to the production of a dissertation or other output, but this is not the case in all Master's. Courses assess not only academic skills but also other skills and attributes, including, where relevant, the requirements of any professional body that recognises or accredits the award. The descriptors in the Qualifications Frameworks set out the broad level of skills and competencies that Master's students are expected to achieve.” p8

This proposal would allow for a more flexible third year with students better able to tailor their studies to their own particular career aspirations with increased relevance to their clinical careers.

We argue that this proposal addresses current university guidance on the format of the third year of taught Master's degrees. Senate Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC) expects that any Master's programme which does not include a dissertation or research project will nonetheless require students to “show proficiency in research and/or analytical skills relevant to advanced work in the discipline”.

In allowing our students to choose either to show proficiency in research (the 60-credit option), analytical skills (the 3X20 credit option) or both (the 20+40 option). All students are required to undertake a 20-credit research methods course in their second year of study, so are encouraged to develop a critical approach to the academic literature and educational research. Those undertaking the 60-credit route have the option of undertaking empirical research (within the constraints of a 12-month timeframe). Those undertaking the 20+40 option will have the further opportunity to obtain in-depth literature handling and critiquing skills in the 20-credit Critical Literature course, followed by the practical application of these skills in the 40-credit course. Students choosing the 3X20 credit option can choose any of the elective options (which includes the new 20 credit Critical Literature course). Existing

courses include Policy, Leadership and Management, Personal and Professional Development, Digital Cultures, Current Issues in Clinical Education and Simulation Methodology. The assessment of each of our courses is carefully designed to allow students to directly link their academic studies with their professional work which takes a high degree of analytical skills required for Master's level study.

Each of the three options will require the same notional effort (i.e. 600 hours of study), at the same level (SCQF level 11) the difference between them being that students can choose to spend their entire third year on one subject, or a combination of topics. This choice will allow the student to best determine the content of the third year to best suit their individual career aspirations.

Equity

There is also the issue of equity between academic programmes and consistency of decision making. Other programmes within the College were established with a taught third year and have exemption from this regulation. As with some other postgraduate programmes, we have made unsuccessful representation to the then Curriculum and Student Progression committee for a more flexible interpretation to this regulation. More recently the Senate Education Committee agreed with the need for more flexibility in considering a full taught third year but this still has to be agreed by the Academic and Policy Regulations Committee. The wider issue relates to the purpose of postgraduate study, which can no longer be seen solely as a research pipeline producing future PhD candidates. Online teaching has opened the possibilities of further study to those previously unable to engage in it, such as the working professionals in this case. Students are increasingly seeking more flexibility in their studies that can currently be offered.

The three routes through the third year will be assessed equitably, with all award making decisions made in the same way. All exit awards will show MSc Clinical Education, with either a pass, merit or distinction. Degree classifications will decisions will be made on the whole 180 credits. All courses in taught Master's programmes are offered at SCQF level 11 and there is no internal progression within programmes. We propose to discount the current progression hurdle between years 2 and 3 so all three options are treated in the same way, although we would welcome the thoughts of the APRC members on this.

Those choosing to undertake the 3X20 credit or 20+40 options will be subject to the current regulations concerning the award of credit on aggregate for failed courses in the third year (to the maximum of 40-credits across the entire programme). While those undertaking the 60-credit dissertation would be allowed the credit on aggregate in years 1 and 2, this does not apply to a 60-credit course. These students do have the option of re-submitting their dissertation (if their work is of a sufficient standard). These various permutations will be laid out clearly in programme documentation to allow students to make informed decisions about the route they wish to adopt.

The main difference between the three options is the length of time spent on each piece of work. Students will be offered the choice between depth or breadth of content. Some will require a broad grounding in clinical education while others will choose to specialise in a particular area.

Workload

The team has done what it can to recruit additional supervisors (including recent graduates) but the supervisory burden has become unsustainable. This, alongside the pedagogical rationale above, has driven our ongoing lobbying for more flexibility in the Masters year of study. Masters level dissertation supervision is undertaken by the core ClinEd team. New supervisors are commonly paired with more experienced staff members until they are confident to supervise independently. The pressure this puts on senior member of the ClinEd staff is intense. Not only do all staff take an equal supervisory burden but senior staff also support more junior colleagues, become involved in more problematic cases and take on a disproportionate amount of moderation and marking. It is also relevant that the dissertation course runs over the academic year, so just as the taught courses are coming to an end the dissertation supervision and marking starts to ramp up, effectively using up time over the Summer which could be used for planning and updating resources, or indeed annual leave. This year-round pressure effectively means there are limited opportunities for taking leave in the summer and limited planning time for the new academic year.

There is also currently significant additional workload generated by COVID-related dissertation extensions, resulting in over 50% of students not submitting on time and rolling over onto the following year's supervision load.

Tables 1 and 2, shows the impact of increasing numbers of extension requests (primarily relating to the workload issues currently experienced by clinicians). Highlighting the inflexibility of the current third year format and the impact on both students and staff.

Table 1 ClinEd Year 3 dissertation students – 2019/20

	2019/20 Dissertation Students	Submitted on time in 2019/20	No. requesting extension to 2020/21
New Year 3 students	29	12	17
No. with extensions from previous year	13	2	11
TOTAL	42	14	28

Table 2: ClinEd Year 3 dissertation students – 2020/21

	2020/21 Dissertation Students	Submitted so far in 2020/21	Still to submit in 2020/21
New Year 3 students	42	15	27

Summary

A recent IPR of the postgraduate provision within Edinburgh Medical School recommended:

The review panel **recommends** that urgent attention be given by the University's Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) to enable greater flexibility in the 3rd year of the MSc Clinical Education programme in relation to considering the approval of alternatives to the final 60-credit project. Consideration of this should be in line with relevant Learning Outcomes and relevant benchmarking, as well as precedents in other programmes across the institution.

The current DRPS states *that a dissertation of a maximum of 15,000 words will be required. This will be an original piece of work that demonstrates the ability to undertake an investigation into an issue relating to Clinical Education. The dissertation can also take the form of a paper for publication, in addition to a supporting commentary document.*

Current LO's for the 60-credit dissertation

1. Define and carry out an appropriate literature search and critically appraise relevant literature, which successfully contextualised their proposed study.
2. Choose appropriate research methods for collecting and analysing data and apply ethical principles and analysis to research, seeking appropriate ethical approval and obtain and record informed consent for participation in research.
3. Undertake work in accordance with appropriate regulations such as the Data Protection Act.
4. Analyse research data, synthesise findings and draw appropriate conclusions, propose next steps in the research project.
5. Disseminate research findings, and where possible write a scientific paper suitable for publication.

These LO's will remain for the dissertation course. The course descriptors for the two new courses are attached as appendices to this document. The elective course descriptors remain unchanged.

We request approval to alter the programme year 3 information on the DRPS to the following:

The third year of study is designed to offer flexibility and choice, best suited to be of direct benefit to your clinical role. You can undertake one large, 60-credit dissertation

which can take the form of empirical research or a paper-based study. Alternatively, you can undertake a quality improvement project in a healthcare setting. This route requires you to undertake a 20-credit Critical Literature course followed by a 40-credit Quality Improvement course. The final option is to pursue a taught third year where you can take 3X 20 credit courses (which must include Research Methods in Clinical Education).

Current programme LO's are:

By the end of the MSc programme graduates will be able to:

1. Plan, deliver and evaluate teaching in their own context based on educational principles and theory
2. Design and critique formative and summative assessments
3. Critically evaluate their own teaching practice and appraise others
4. Access and critically evaluate the educational literature
5. Plan and conduct a research project in clinical education

We propose to alter LO 5 to read:

5. Plan and design a relevant clinical education project.

This will cover the 60-credit route (by the completion of a dissertation-literature or empirical research), the 20+40 (by the completion of the 40-credit assignment) and the 3X20 credit route (by the core course in research methods undertaken in year 2, in addition to other potential choices).

This will bring the programme into closer alignment with other programmes within the institution. Similarly, we know from the three senior members of academic staff experience as External Examiners elsewhere this is an increasingly popular direction of travel for postgraduate education within the health professions. In the University of Edinburgh is serious about the aspirations espoused in the Strategy 2030 document (specifically relating to flexible postgraduate pathways) then taught postgraduate regulations will need to be reviewed to support this.

Resource implications

Discussion with existing students, previous graduates and potential applicants indicate this is a welcome initiative. Experience from a similar programme indicates this approach will improve retention of students into the final year (Online MSc in Internal Medicine – retention increased from 40% to 90% with fully taught option). We do not envision a similar increase as we already have a progression rate between years 2 and 3 of around 80%. We do however have a lower progression rate between years 1 and 2 and additional choice may prove attractive to those leaving with a Postgraduate Certificate. Exit interviews of this group suggest that undertaking an educational research project whilst working is an unappealing prospect. Currently we recruit in the region of 150 first year students each year, with around 50% choosing to leave with a Postgraduate Certificate.

Dissertation supervision is challenging and time consuming and recruiting suitable supervisors is difficult. This proposal will allow us to increase progression without adding a further supervisory burden to an already stretched programme team.

Risk management

We do not envisage any risk to University reputation, compliance, or financial risk. We believe the Education and Student experience will be enhanced by this initiative, offering flexibility and choice. We believe this proposal will make a third year of study more attractive to students, and demonstrates the responsiveness of the programme to market demands.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

N/A online programme

Equality & diversity

Students on the programme are from diverse clinical healthcare environments including resource poor and emerging nations. For some, a research project is very challenging to perform in their local professional environment, due to lack of support and resources. This proposal increases choice options and opportunities.

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

We wish to make the Courses available for **2022/2023**.

This strategy and these courses have been approved by Deanery of Clinical Sciences Board of Studies.

We wish to inform students in the second year of the programme (Diploma Year) as soon as possible once approval has been granted. We would also include the information on the University Website for prospective applicants to the programme.

Author

*Name Gill Aitken
Date 3rd Dec 2021*

Presenter

Gill Aitken

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

Open

Appendix 1 – Course Descriptor for the 40-credit Quality Improvement course

Course Descriptor

The programme will consist of individual courses; each course will require a Course Proposal Form. Once approved, the initiating school will be responsible for adding the new course into EUCLID CCAM. Further information on course creation and approval can be found at:

http://www.euclid.ed.ac.uk/staff/Support/User_Guides/CCAM/Course_Creation_and_Approval_Menu.html

You will be expected to have the content and assessment of the first course of your programme written by validation.

The list appears in the same order as it would when proposing a new course in EUCLID.

Fields with an asterisk * are required fields

Have you confirmed that the appropriate resources are in place (finance, teaching staff, IT) *?	Yes
Have you confirmed that the appropriate support services are in place (library, computing services) *?	Yes

1. Owing School

Proposer*	Brian Carlin
Owning School*	Edinburgh Medical School: Medical Education

1. Course descriptor

Course name*	Adopting quality improvement methodology approaches to clinical education
Summary description* Provide an informative short description of the course	<p>Quality improvement is increasingly a core component of many undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. Numerous healthcare organisations, professional regulators, and policy makers recognise the benefits of training clinicians in quality improvement.</p> <p>In order to thrive in an increasingly challenging healthcare environment, the ability of clinicians to undertake work-based quality improvement projects is more important than ever for healthcare systems' continued survival. This course offers students the opportunity to critically study and systematically examine the methods and factors that best work to facilitate quality improvement approaches.</p> <p>Students will develop a QI project proposal to manage change in the most effective way within their own healthcare setting.</p>

	<p>The underlying research around QI principles, cultures, approaches, and methods are explored to help students to consider how best to improve quality of educational practice in their setting.</p> <p>Flexible learning will be offered using the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and a facilitated discussion board and resources to support students learning will also be available.</p>
<p>Course description* Provide an academic description, an outline of the content covered by the course and a description of the learning experience students can expect to get.</p>	<p>The course aims to provide students the opportunity to study the methods and processes that could be used to critique, analyse, and improve educational quality within healthcare. At the end of the course, individuals will have the knowledge and skills to design, develop and lead on improvement projects, generate support for change and provide credible support and advice</p> <p>A culture of enthusiasm, optimism, curiosity, and critical thinking is encouraged throughout the course. Students will be encouraged to share the development of their plan and learn with, and from, each other.</p> <p>The course will also support the students to focus on the practical application of what they learn from the course into their professional practice. Exploring the role and impact of clinical education and the management and leadership requirements to support Quality Improvement will form a key elements of the course content</p> <p>The course is delivered online using live conversations, discussion boards, reflective tasks and online resources. It also draws on self-directed and peer learning. A workbook will be provided for students to work through as the course progresses, this will enable those with poor access to the Internet to download the workbook and study at times of poor connectivity.</p> <p>Core themes will be discussed throughout the course and built upon through a progressive learning approach that will require the learners to use and develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.</p> <p>Themes that are covered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining quality and understanding core improvement concepts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The planning and application of improvement projects • Utilising improvement science tools and frameworks • Measuring improvement • Leadership & governance • Using and learning from data (clinical audits) • Teaching & supporting individuals/teams in QI approaches <p>Assessment methods of formative task(s) and a final summative assignment will be used.</p>
Course level*	Postgraduate SCQF Level 11
Keywords Enter keywords that describe the course separated by commas (maximum 100 characters across all tags)	Quality, Improvement, enhancement, assurance, educational project management, leadership, change, healthcare, planning

2. Teaching, learning and assessment

<p>Total contact teaching hours* Record the total contact teaching hours for the course, this will be the sum of all lectures, tutorials, and labs to be attended. Note this is the total for the duration of the course and not the weekly contact hours</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 400 hours for 40-credits <table> <tr> <td>Directed Learning and Independent Learning Hours</td> <td>360 hours</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Guided VLE learning</td> <td>20 hours</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Live online conversations</td> <td>20 hours</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Feedback/Feedforward</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Directed Learning and Independent Learning Hours	360 hours	Guided VLE learning	20 hours	Live online conversations	20 hours	Feedback/Feedforward	
Directed Learning and Independent Learning Hours	360 hours								
Guided VLE learning	20 hours								
Live online conversations	20 hours								
Feedback/Feedforward									
<p>Graduate attributes, personal and professional skills Provide details of the Graduate Attributes and Skills provided by the course</p>	<p>Personal and intellectual autonomy: This course will further develop the mindset and skills of the students to practically apply their academic learning and new knowledge to their profession or institution. It will also promote personal independent learning and development</p> <p>Inquiry and lifelong learning: Academic staff and learners will work together to co-create an enquiry-based community that emphasises the student's active role in the learning process to make positive and on-going change.</p>								

	<p>Outlook and engagement: The establishment of a supportive learning environment will encourage students to engage with the themes and question assumptions around the current practice and consider how QI processes can best support enhancement. The course will allow students will develop their way of thinking around the topic of QI, be encouraged to pursue their ideas to improve service delivery within their setting using innovative approaches.</p> <p>Aspiration and personal development: Underpinning this approach will be a practice of curiosity, critical thinking and creativity that will allow the students to be effective and influential contributors in improvement processes within the workplace.</p> <p>Personal effectiveness: Students will be in a position to recognise the ideologies, coordinate strategies, and influence mechanisms of collective decision-making as part of healthcare service redesign that may have the potential to impact on service delivery and patient safety.</p> <p>Communication: Identifying change needs and considering how to plan and communicate the QI process along with measuring the impact and effect of this, will form part of the aims of this course.</p> <p>Research and enquiry: This will further develop the students' abilities to formulate, evaluate, adapt, and apply evidence-based solutions and arguments through the use of QI tools research and methods with a reasoned perspective.</p>
<p>Reading List/Learning Resources Provide details of course Reading List</p>	<p>Recommended Reading list Guides to improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1000 Lives Improvement (2014), The Quality Improvement Guide: The Improving Quality Together Edition Cardiff: 1000 Lives Improvement http://www.1000livesplus.wales.nhs.uk/document/179423 Ballat, J & Campling, P (2011) Intelligent Kindness: Reforming the Culture of Healthcare • Deming, W.E (2000) Out of the crisis • Tufte, E.R (2001) The Visual Display of Quantitative Information Hardcover – 31 Jan 2001 • NHS Improving Quality (2014) First Steps Towards Quality Improvement: A Simple Guide to Improving Services https://www.england.nhs.uk/improvement-hub/publication/first-steps-towards-quality-improvement-a-simple-guide-to-improving-services/ • NHS Improving Quality (2014) Seven ways to no delays - https://www.england.nhs.uk/improvement-

	<p>hub/wp-content/uploads/sites/44/2017/11/Seven-Ways-to-No-Delay.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Health Foundation (2013) Quality Improvement Made Simple: What everyone should know about health care quality improvement https://www.health.org.uk/publication/quality-improvement-made-simple • Understanding and Improving Demand and Capacity Demand And Capacity QIHC version.pdf Spread and sustainability • Hannah Burd, Michael Hallsworth, The Behavioural Insights Team (2016) Spreading change: A guide to enabling the spread of person- and community-centred approaches for health and wellbeing https://www.health.org.uk/publication/spreading-change • Healthcare Improvement Scotland (2013) Guide on Spread and Sustainability http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/about_us/what_we_do/knowledge_management/knowledge_management_resources/spread_and_sustainability.aspx • Lynne Maher, Professor David Gustafson, Alyson Evans (2017) Sustainability Model. NHS Improvement https://improvement.nhs.uk/resources/Sustainability-model-and-guide/ • Jeffcott, Dr Shelley (2014) The Spread and Sustainability of Quality Improvement in Healthcare. Healthcare Improvement Scotland http://www.qihub.scot.nhs.uk/media/835521/spread%20and%20sustainability%20study%20review%20(web).pdf <p>Innovation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leurs, B & Roberts, I (2018) Playbook for Innovation Learning https://www.nesta.org.uk/toolkit/playbook-for-innovation-learning/ <p>Measurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Davidge, Mike Holmes, Annabel Shaw, Susanna Shouls and Matt Tite (2015) Guide to Measurement for improvement. NHS Elect https://www.nhselect.nhs.uk/What-we-do/Quality-Improvement--Measurement/Measurement-for-Improvement • Care Data Guide: Learning From Data for Improvement
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Improvement and Leadership Development Board (2016) Developing People – Improving Care: A national framework for action on improvement and leadership development in NHS-funded services https://improvement.nhs.uk/resources/developing-people-improving-care/ <p>Improvement Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norman, Donald A (2013) The Design of Everyday Things (The MIT Press) Design of everyday things • Perlo J, Balik B, Swensen S, Kabacencell A, Landsman J, Feeley D. IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work. IHI White Paper. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Institute for Healthcare Improvement; 2017. (Available at ihi.org) • Syed, Matthew (2016) Black Box Thinking: Marginal Gains and the Secrets of High Performance • Tett, Gillian (2016) The Silo Effect: Why Every Organisation Needs to Disrupt Itself to Survive <p>Coaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Consultants International (2012) The GROW Model https://www.performanceconsultants.com/wp-content/uploads/GROW-Model-Guide.pdf <p>Chip Heath & Dan Heath (2011) Switch: How to change things when change is hard</p>
<p>Learning outcomes* You may enter a total of 5 maximum.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop critical awareness of quality improvement principles, approaches, and application to healthcare education 2. Identify and differentiate the most popular quality improvement approaches, frameworks, and methods along with the strengths and weakness of each 3. Critically review the relationship between theories and workplace practice 4. Appraise QI evaluation/measurement strategies applicable to healthcare settings 5. Plan an improvement project to apply learning into practice including evaluation strategies, performance measures and key steps to manage the QI project
<p>Components of Assessment* Provide details of the Components of Assessment used and their relative weights as percentages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Formative task <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students will be required to present their planned approach in week 10. Formative feedback will be provided by peers (each student required to provide feedback on at least 2 presentations) and the course tutor. • The Summative assignment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Part 1: Written presentation of an outline of a systematic approach to the students identified area of interest, focussing on the risks, barriers and gaps in the literature that may affect the final project and suggested practical solutions to address these issues. Template provided in the course workbook. Limit 2,000 words (30%) Due week 15 ○ Part 2: Design and develop a comprehensive plan for an improvement project that demonstrates it falls within a service improvement paradigm. This will include strategies for evaluating and measuring the effectiveness of their project, using both empirical evidence and critical analysis. Included in this is a reflective commentary that allows students to consider their learning from the course and how this will impact on their future professional career. Limit 5,000 words. (70%) Due week 20
Exam Information Provide details of Exam Diets and stationery requirements	n/a
Feedback Provide high level information on the feedback students will be given (not dates)	Feedback will form the basis on the student learning on the course and will be on-going from week1 to week 20. This dialogic and constructive approach to feedback will be adopted by all tutors on the course. Students will be encouraged to share their work on discussions boards and at live conversations to encourage peer feedback. Tutors will give detailed feedback to each student on the formative task, with explicit feedforward guidance to inform their production of the summative work.

6. Administrative information

Additional course information

Course availability* Identify if the course will be available to Visiting Students. Choose from: -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not available to Visiting Students
Normal year taken*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 3

Select the year in which the course is normally taken.	
SCQF Credit Volume* Select the SCQF Credit weighting of the course, for example, 20 credits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40-Credits
SCQF Credit Level* Select the SCQF Credit Level of the course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCQF Level 11
Home subject area* Select the Home Subject Area from the owning schools approved list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical education
Other subject area	
Organiser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian Carlin
Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debbie Spence

Classification

Course type*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Distance Learning
Default delivery period*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semester 2
Default course mode of study*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance Learning
Marking scheme*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common marking scheme

Course requirements

These can be enabled or left blank. If enabled text must be entered.

Pre-requisites	20 credit Critical approaches to literature
Co-requisites	None
Prohibited combinations	None
Visiting student pre-requisites	N/A
Any costs to be met by students	None

Collaboration

% Not taught by this institution Where there is collaboration with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0%
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another Institution, the percentage not taught by the University of Edinburgh should be recorded	
Collaboration information (School/Institution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• N/A
Additional information	
Taught in Gaelic (Gàidhlig)? *	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No
Study Abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• N/A
Special Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No
Fee Code if Invoiced at Course level	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If being invoiced at course level, enter a Fee Code

Appendix 2 – Course Descriptor for the 20-credit Critical Literature course

Course Descriptor

The programme will consist of individual courses; each course will require a Course Proposal Form. Once approved, the initiating school will be responsible for adding the new course into EUCLID CCAM. Further information on course creation and approval can be found at: http://www.euclid.ed.ac.uk/staff/Support/User_Guides/CCAM/Course_Creation_and_Approval_Menu.html

You will be expected to have the content and assessment of the first course of your programme written by validation.

The list appears in the same order as it would when proposing a new course in EUCLID.

Fields with an asterisk * are required fields

Have you confirmed that the appropriate resources are in place (finance, teaching staff, IT)*:	Yes
Have you confirmed that the appropriate support services are in place (library, computing services)*:	Yes

1. Owing School

Proposer*	Kirstin Stuart James and Ruth Jenkins
Owning School*	Edinburgh Medical School: Medical Education

3. Course descriptor

Course name*	Critical Literature Review
Summary description* Provide an informative short description of the course	<p>'Critical Literature Review' is a SCQF Level 11 (Postgraduate) 20 Credit course.</p> <p>This course affords students the opportunity to undertake and complete an in-depth critical review of literature pertaining to a 'problem' or chosen topic. Throughout the course, the critical literature review process is examined in order that students refine their research topic, while learning to systematically search for, collate, critically analyse, organise, and synthesise literature pertaining to it. To promote reflexivity, the assessment will also have a reflective component.</p> <p>Through this course, students further develop the knowledge and skills to locate, critically examine and critically interpret evidence. The course supports the development of skills needed to both articulate a knowledge gap and design a strategy to address the gap. Furthermore, flourishing in an increasingly complex health and social care environment, requires developing the knowledge and skills to inform practice continuously by applying best available evidence, as well as dealing with uncertainties.</p>

	<p>With a structure of synchronous and asynchronous learning activities, the course is offered using the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and a facilitated discussion board. Other resources to support students' learning are available.</p>
<p>Course description* Provide an academic description, an outline of the content covered by the course and a description of the learning experience students can expect to get.</p>	<p>The course provides students the opportunity to critically examine the methods and processes used to identify, search for, collate, critically analyse, and synthesise literature pertaining to an identified research topic. At the end of the course, students will have the knowledge and skills to design, develop, and report on a critical literature review and to critically reflect on their own learning.</p> <p>A culture of enthusiasm, optimism, curiosity, critical thinking and critical reflection is encouraged throughout the course. Students are encouraged to share the development of their critical literature review and learn with, and from, each other.</p> <p>The course also supports students to focus on the practical application of what they learn from the course into their professional practice. Exploring the role and impact of clinical education and the management and leadership requirements to support evidence informed practice forms elements of the course content</p> <p>The course is delivered online using live conversations, discussion boards, reflective tasks, online resources, and self-directed and peer learning. A downloadable workbook is provided for students to work through as the course progresses. This also enables those with internet access issues to study offline.</p> <p>Core themes will be discussed throughout the course and built upon through a progressive learning approach which requires participants to develop and apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills.</p> <p>Themes that are covered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining a research topic for investigation through critical literature review • Examining and identifying a methodological framework for critical literature review • Designing and implementing a systematic search strategy for retrieving relevant literature • Data management, including management of bibliographic records and of data extraction • Critically analysing and appraising retrieved research articles • Synthesising evidence in relation to the identified problem • Writing a structured critical literature review report • Critically reflecting on learning in relation to critical literature review
<p>Course level*</p>	<p>Postgraduate SCQF Level 11</p>

Keywords	<p>Enter keywords that describe the course separated by commas (maximum 100 characters across all tags)</p> <p>Literature review, critical appraisal, evidence synthesis, data management</p>
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4. Teaching, learning and assessment

<p>Total contact teaching hours* Record the total contact teaching hours for the course, this will be the sum of all lectures, tutorials and labs to be attended. Note this is the total for the duration of the course and not the weekly contact hours</p>	<p>200 hours for 20-credits</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="620 712 1347 918"> <tr> <td>Independent study</td> <td>110</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Guided VLE learning</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Live online conversations</td> <td>10</td> </tr> </table>	Independent study	110	Guided VLE learning	80	Live online conversations	10
Independent study	110						
Guided VLE learning	80						
Live online conversations	10						
<p>Graduate attributes, personal and professional skills</p> <p>Provide details of the Graduate Attributes and Skills provided by the course</p>	<p>As an overview, the course enhances learning for an already motivated student group of health and social care professionals who demonstrate the values required of a clinical educator. The incentive of improving care and safety through excellence in education is a key inspiration of the student(s) who enrol on the course.</p> <p>The content and format of the course further enhances these qualities by developing a culture that is supportive to allow learners to question assumptions around critical literature review that may be limiting their professional development.</p> <p>Creating a 'safe space' that encourages learners to find ways of overcoming challenges a reality through curiosity, critical thinking and creativity will underpin the course.</p> <p>Furthermore, graduate attributes can be found at the link below.</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/graduate-attributes/framework</p> <p>Specific to this course are the University of Edinburgh graduate attributes:</p> <p>Mindsets</p> <p>Enquiry and Lifelong Learning: Students will take the initiative to seek out ways to understand and enhance their attitude towards knowledge and learning.</p> <p>Aspiration and Personal Development: Students will seek out ways to understand and enhance their attitude towards their own goals and development, and grasp opportunities to develop themselves and grow.</p>						

	<p>Outlook and Engagement: Students will take the initiative to seek out ways to develop how they engage with the communities and world around them.</p> <p>Skills</p> <p>Research and Enquiry: Student key skill development will be: - problem solving, analytical thinking, critical thinking, knowledge integration and application, independent research, handling complexity and ambiguity, digital literacy and numeracy.</p> <p>Personal and Intellectual Autonomy, Personal Effectiveness and Communication: Students will reflect on what skills they have, what skills they need and how these can be developed and seek out relevant opportunities to strengthen and develop these skills.</p>
<p>Reading List/Learning Resources Provide details of course Reading List</p>	<p>Aromataris E, Munn Z (Editors). JBI Manual for Evidence Synthesis. JBI, (2020) Available from https://synthesismanual.jbi.global.</p> <p>Boland, A., Cherry, M. G., & Dickson, R. (2017). Doing a Systematic Review: A Student's Guide. London: SAGE Publications Ltd. UoE subscription access to ebook: https://discovered.ed.ac.uk/permalink/44UOE_INST/7g3mt6/alm_a9924461178502466</p> <p>Booth, A. (2015). EVIDENT Guidance for Reviewing the Evidence: a compendium of methodological literature and websites. Available from: https://edin.ac/38lglJu</p> <p>Sutton, A., Clowes, M., Preston, L. and Booth, A. (2019), Meeting the review family: exploring review types and associated information retrieval requirements. Health Info Libr J, 36: 202-222. https://doi.org/10.1111/hir.12276</p>
<p>Learning outcomes* You may enter a total of 5 maximum.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. investigate a problem through critical literature review 2. Design and implement a systematic search following a methodological framework 3. Organise and critically analyse retrieved research evidence 4. Synthesise research evidence from disparate sources 5. Critically reflect on learning in relation to critical literature review
<p>Components of Assessment* Provide details of the Components of Assessment used and their relative weights as percentages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Formative task Students are expected to submit a short assignment for feedback only (no marks), mid-course. The object of this formative assignment is to promote careful consideration of what data will be relevant to address the research topic, and how those data can best be located and analysed. • The Summative assignment (100%) A written, structured critical literature review of no more than 3000 words, including a reflective account of learning in relation to critical literature review.
<p>Exam Information</p>	<p>Written Exam 0 %, Coursework 100 %, Practical Exam 0 %</p>

Provide details of Exam Diets and stationery requirements	
Feedback Provide high level information on the feedback students will be given (not dates)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course team • Email • Online forums

6. Administrative information

Additional course information

Course availability*	Not available to Visiting Students
Normal year taken*	Year 3
SCQF Credit Volume*	20 credits.
SCQF Credit Level*	SCQF Level 11
Home subject area*	Medical education
Other subject area	
Organiser	Kirstin Stuart James Ruth Jenkins
Secretary	Debbie Spence

Classification

Course type*	Online Distance Learning
Default delivery period*	Semester 1
Default course mode of study*	Distance Learning
Marking scheme*	Common marking scheme

Course requirements

These can be enabled or left blank. If enabled text must be entered.

Pre-requisites	None
Co-requisites	None

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Prohibited combinations	None
Visiting student pre-requisites	N/A
Any costs to be met by students	None

Collaboration

% not taught by this institution	0%
Collaboration information (School/Institution)	No

Additional information

Taught in Gaelic (Gàidhlig)?*	No
Study Abroad	N/A
Special Arrangements	No
Fee Code if Invoiced at Course level	Fee Code

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

27 January 2022

Alternative route to Masters for the OL MSc programme in Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health

Description of paper

This paper presents a proposal for an alternative route to Masters for the online PG programme in [Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health](#). By providing a broader and more flexible programme of study alongside the more traditional year-long 60 credit dissertation-style project, we hope to meet the demands of the significant proportion of our cohort who are looking to develop their current professional practice rather than start a research career. The alternative route proposed will still offer our professional students the opportunity to engage in a focussed period of independent research, but with a greater emphasis on inter-disciplinarity and tangible outputs relevant to their professional practice. The modular nature of the alternative will also allow students to better plan their study around other work and family commitments, will help them spread the costs and will also make taking a break easier for those who have chronic physical or mental health problems, or unexpected caring responsibilities.

In summary, we propose the addition of an alternative route Masters in Biodiversity Wildlife and Ecosystem Health, in parallel with the existing 60-credit [Written Reflective Element](#). Students opting to take this route will engage in a 30:30 credit split between taught and compulsory research elements in the final year of study. The 30 'taught' credits will be taken in Semesters 1 and 2, selected from our [extensive elective course portfolio](#) as well as a **new 10-credit course** '*Planning Applied Interdisciplinary Research in Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health*' ([Appendix 1](#)). All students taking the alternative route will finish the year together in Semester 3 by completing the **new 20-credit capstone course** '*Applied Interdisciplinary Research in Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health*' ([Appendix 2](#)).

This option will be available for existing students who progress to the MSc phase of this part-time/intermittent programme and subsequent cohorts as they reach this point in their study, with this first offering of this alternative pathway in September 2022. We anticipate 60-70 students will be entering Year 3 at that point, with approximately half of those expected to take the alternative route.

This proposal aligns with the University of Edinburgh's current review of alternative models for programme delivery through the Edinburgh Futures Institute and the

Curriculum Transformation Programme. Taking into account both the increased flexibility plus the applied focus of the research component, it will contribute to the outcomes of Strategy 2030 through the following pathways:

- i) **Multidisciplinary postgraduate education pathways will support flexible whole-life learning.**

Plus:

- ii) We will be leading Scotland's commitment to **widening participation**.
- iii) We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and **amplify our impacts**.

Action requested / recommendation

For discussion and approval.

Background and context

The PG programmes in Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health have been running since 2010 and have grown year on year to a total student number in 2021/22 of approximately 180 spread over three years and multiple modes of study (PCCert/PGDip/MSc/PPD, Part-time and Intermittent). Based on student numbers currently on programme, we expect around 60-70 students to progress to Masters year in 2022/23 and 2023/24 a number likely to be sustained over time with continued levels of recruitment. Discussions with students over the previous two years suggest that up to a half of those aiming to complete the Masters would be likely to choose the proposed alternative route.

From the outset, it has been clear to the programme team that those who chose to study with us are demographically different to those likely to study on campus and full-time - they tend to be older, more experienced in the workplace and have ambitions to apply their learning in a meaningful way to have impact both personally and professionally. Many are already engaged in professional roles, often at senior levels, in education, public engagement, business and leadership in local communities or government, and are very well placed to put their learning on this programme into practice. A research dissertation is more restrictive to them when compared to an opportunity to develop their evidence-based practice with academic support, hence the proposal presented here.

It is also the case that our student cohort is exceptionally diverse, deliberately so to foster cross-disciplinary learning and collaboration. Although students have the opportunity to demonstrate these skills within a research dissertation, the alternative route proposed here really puts this at the centre of the learning experience. The core issues that define our programme 'content' are, by their very nature, both complex and highly emotive. As such, successful interventions rely very much on being able to listen to others to plan approaches that take into account multiple perspectives, and to communicate effectively to different stakeholder groups. The new courses proposed here further develop these key competencies in a way that should enhance our ability as a programme and a University to have real impact in the real world through our students.

Discussion

The drivers behind this proposed change are:

- **Student-led**

This online PGT programme attracts many established professionals and practitioners from a wide range of disciplines, as well as many prospective career-changers. The goal for these students is often to **learn across disciplines**, and to **put learning into practice** rather than to develop the skills specifically related to pursuing a research career. For these students the option to take nine (rather than six) elective courses and to focus their research component on an evidence-based, tangible output to support their professional practice is far more appropriate to achieving their goals than a single dissertation-style project.

Another benefit to students of this alternative option would be added **flexibility** to study/pay over more than one academic year, as most are working full—time alongside other life/family/caring commitments, thus potentially **widening participation**. It is anticipated, based on discussions with current students, that up to half would choose this option over the full-year dissertation for reasons outlined above. For some, this would make the difference between staying on to complete the MSc and graduating with the PG Diploma.

- **Strategic**

Having students' focus on more **applied research outcomes** will allow them to have greater impact in their work and personal lives. **Evidence-based practice** in conservation is absolutely key to an effective global response to climate change, loss of biodiversity, and other major environmental issues, and many of

our students are in positions of authority in conservation organisations, business, government or their local community where their input can have real, significant impacts. Offering them a supported academic space to develop appropriate **evidence-based solutions** to local problems, and presenting them to a range of audiences, will contribute to **University of Edinburgh-led impact** in the real world.

Consultation for this proposal:

Paul Rees from the University of Salford was our External Examiner when this idea was initially proposed. He was consulted early on and was very supportive of the option being made available, recognising the unique characteristics of this cohort, and also the value in allowing students to develop evidence-based solutions to problems they encounter in their working lives.

Our current External Examiner Jim Vafidis from the University of the West of England provided the following feedback on the proposal:

“I have reviewed the proposal and it is sensible – I agree with the rationale that the students enrolled on this course represent a unique demography and represent a range of experience that would benefit from the choice of the more substantial research project module or a more focussed module that gives them the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to follow the project process in a more focussed way. It is good to identify ways that also reduce supervisory pressure also.”

There is also broad support for this proposal at both Deanery and College level, as well as more widely within the University, including from the Director of PGT in BMS, Kim Picozzi, the Dean of BMS, Mike Shipston and the Director of PGT in MVM, Sarah Henderson. Initial ideas were developed during an ELDeR on 17th and 18th January 2020, approval was gained in principle through the Deanery of Biomedical Sciences LTC (20th April 2020) and Board of Studies (13th May 2020) and the Major Change request was granted by BMS LTC (18th November 2021) and College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine L&TC (9th December 2021). Details of the formal opportunities for colleagues to feed into and comment on the proposal are listed in **Appendix 3**.

Academic equivalency of the proposed alternative route to Masters:

We recognised that this alternative would be a significant move away from the ‘traditional’ model for MSc, and that employers for example might have an expectation of what an MSc graduate will have experienced as part of their study. This was a

concern expressed by a minority of those consulted through the development on this proposal, and our response is that the proposed alternative option still includes a significant research component, still meets the aims of the programme, and develops the same Graduate Attributes as the existing option. Students will retain the choice to follow the 'traditional' route if that is more suited to their goals, while we can offer an alternative that might be more attractive to employers who value someone's ability to problem-solve across disciplines and create tangible outputs rather than produce an academic research-based publication.

The Learning Outcomes for the alternative courses are appropriately pitched at SCQF Level 11, the Graduate Attributes are equivalent to those for the existing 60-credit dissertation option, and we have the same expectation of academic rigour through this alternative route.

Taught Assessment Regulations

Progression and award for the alternative route is covered in full by the existing [Taught Assessment Regulations](#) (56, 57, 59 and 60). In summary:

- there will be a progression point after 120 credits, as for the existing dissertation option (Reg 56)
- the Masters degree will be awarded on the basis of credits gained across all three years of study (Reg 57, part (b) where there is no dissertation or project element)*
- the award of Merit and Distinction will be determined on the basis of the average weighted course mark across the full 180 taught credits (Regs 59 and 60).

**Extract from Reg 57 in relation to the award of Masters is as follows, with option applicable to alternative taught year in bold (as per Master of Public Health/CMVM Handbook 2022/23):*

<p>Taught Assessment Regulation 57 Postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate award</p> <p>In order to be awarded a masters degree students must either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. attain an additional 60 credits, by achieving a mark of at least 50% for the dissertation; andb. satisfy any other specific requirements for the masters degree programme that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. pass at least 120 credits with a mark of at least 50%, of which 40 of the final 60 credits must be passed; and

	<p>b. attain an average of at least 50% for the 180 credits of study examined for the masters; and</p> <p>c. satisfy any other specific requirements for the masters degree programme that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.</p> <p>When all the marks for the first 120 credits or diploma are available, if the student has achieved a mark of at least 40% 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, up to a maximum of 40 credits. For a certificate, a maximum of 20 credits may be awarded on aggregate.</p>
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Resource implications

There are no anticipated negative implications of this change. Rather, the supervision requirement of this option, compared to that of the full-year dissertation, will enable us to support the elevated numbers of students who now complete the MSc year with our current programme team.

Risk management

Failure to approve this alternative route to Masters is unlikely to impact recruitment into the programme, but it is very likely to result in fewer students completing the full MSc through lack of flexibility and/or the dissertation not being of value to them. This represents not only lost income through fees, but also a missed opportunity to listen to our students and respond to their specific needs. Word of mouth is a powerful tool for recruitment, and many of our students apply on the basis of personal recommendation, and by demonstrating our willingness to adapt to the student voice, we are likely to widen even further our pool of high quality students.

Similarly, failure to adopt this more applied approach to research won't necessarily negate our quality as a programme of academic study, but it will miss the opportunity to really support our students in addressing genuine real-world problems of relevance to them in an interdisciplinary and evidence-based way.

There are no consumer protection implications relating to this change as students will still have the option to follow the existing route to Masters, as published on our Degree Finder page and website this year and in previous years. This change provides an additional option, rather than replacing what already exists.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

The subject content of this MSc means it is very much embedded in many of the SDGs, regardless of whether students engage in a dissertation-style project or the alternative route proposed here. Taking into account the wide range of courses offered, including twenty-five [10-credit electives](#) drawn from our own portfolio plus those of other OL MSc programmes, we align with the following SDGs very strongly:

- 6 (clean water and sanitation)
- 7 (affordable and clean energy)
- 11 (sustainable cities and communities)
- 12 (responsible consumption and production)
- 13 (climate action)
- 14 (life below water)
- 15 (life on land)
- 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions)

The alternative route to Masters proposed here, with its increased flexibility and links to evidence-based practice, can be associated with these additional SDGs:

- 3 (**good health and wellbeing**, by giving people more time and flexibility to complete their studies, minimising impact on health, and especially for those with chronic physical and/or mental health conditions)
- 4 (**quality education**, made more accessible to a wider range of people)
- 5 (**gender equality**, by improving flexibility for women who bear the major burden of caring and family responsibilities)
- 10 (**reduced inequalities**, for those with barriers to intensive full-year study)
- 17 (**partnerships for the goals**, with students partnering with organisations/groups to create tangible outputs and resources related to global biodiversity crisis, climate emergency and other environmental issues).

Equality & diversity

The MSc in Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health takes an inter-disciplinary approach and attracts students from very diverse academic disciplines. It is a dynamic space in which students can discuss the environmental challenges we face, and look to science as the foundation on which to develop solutions. The online delivery of the programme means that our students can study from their current location, and being part-time they can combine study with their other life commitments. Offering a more flexible approach to study in Year 3 will further enhance the opportunities for those with chronic health conditions, caring responsibilities and/or or financial pressures to complete the MSc programme, and in a more supported way, thus widening participation in high quality Higher Education.

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

We propose to offer this alternative route to our students from September 2022. Following widespread consultation our current cohort is aware that this change is currently under discussion, and if supported we anticipate that around half of those going into Year 3 will choose this option (n=30-35).

Final planning and implementation will be overseen by the Programme Director, Dr Sharron Ogle, with support of the Biomedical Teaching Organisation and the programme teaching team (Mr Rob Thomas, Dr Ellie Devenish-Nelson, Dr Sarah Greenwood, Dr Harriet Thatcher and Dr Louise Beveridge). As a team we have a very diverse range of academic and professional experience and as such are well prepared to support students to explore real-world potential problems, to help them find possible solutions and to use appropriate modes of communication to target key stakeholders.

Evaluation will take place at both a programme and Deanery level through our monthly and annual review structure, incorporating staff reflection on student engagement and achievement and targeted student feedback. After an initial 3 year period, should this alternative route prove to be unpopular, we will look to revise the proposal and consider of how else to modify our programme to meet the expectations of our students.

Author

Name: Dr Sharron Ogle

Date: 10th January 2022

Presenter

Name: Dr Sharron Ogle

Freedom of Information

The paper is open.

Appendix 1 – Course Descriptor for ‘Planning Applied Interdisciplinary Research in Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health’

Have you confirmed that the appropriate resources are in place (finance, teaching staff, IT)*:	Yes
Have you confirmed that the appropriate support services are in place (library, computing services)*:	Yes

1. Owing School

Proposer*	Dr Sharron Ogle
Owning School*	Deanery of Biomedical Sciences

2. Course descriptor

Course name*	Planning Applied Interdisciplinary Research in Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health
Summary description*	The purpose of this course is for you to collate and synthesise your postgraduate learning to make and share a plan for an independent applied interdisciplinary research project. Using a problem-based approach you will identify a current real-world issue within the general themes of the Masters programme and generate ideas for how you might approach this problem from an interdisciplinary perspective. You will be expected to draw on your learning in the first two years of study to look in an innovative way at your chosen issue.
Course description*	<p>Interdisciplinarity, that is embracing ‘holism’ over ‘reductionism’, is considered a crucial factor in the development of successful solutions to current and significant real-world problems related to environmental resilience and sustainability. It is vital that good quality research findings from across academic disciplines are used to support evidence-based actions, to ensure they are both appropriate and impactful.</p> <p>This course will guide you to apply your accrued postgraduate interdisciplinary learning to identify and suggest a solution to a current real-world problem in keeping with the themes of the Masters programme, such as species decline, ecosystem health/resilience or impacts of environmental decline on people. Once identified, you will explore this problem in detail, analysing it in the context of your learning across disciplines and will plan an extended research project to come up with an evidence-based solution.</p>

	You will be supported by a designated Academic Tutor throughout the course but you are encouraged to also seek feedback from other members of the programme team, your professional colleagues or personal contacts, and also your programme peers.
Course level*	Postgraduate
Keywords	Interdisciplinary, ecosystem, environment, sustainability, conservation, application, problem-based, solutions, real-world, impact

3. Teaching, learning and assessment

Total contact teaching hours*	Total Hours: 100 (Seminar/Tutorial Hours 5, Online Activities 10, Feedback/Feedforward hours 2, Programme Level Learning and Teaching Hours 2, Directed Learning and Independent Learning Hours 81)
Graduate attributes, personal and professional skills	<p>You will further develop your skills in research and enquiry by identifying and creatively tackling a real-world problem, drawing from your prior learning and seeking new resources to support your ideas.</p> <p>You will develop personal and intellectual autonomy by choosing your own problem to investigate, one that is of relevance to you in a personal or professional capacity.</p> <p>You will develop your personal effectiveness by setting your own goals and managing your time to make best use of the learning opportunities available to you.</p>
Reading List/Learning Resources	You will plan to conduct independent research based on your specific interests and prior learning, and will thus generate your own, highly individual list of relevant source materials.
Learning outcomes*	<p>By the end of this course you should be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independently research and synthesise accrued knowledge to identify and analyse a current, real-world problem. 2. Critically apply your interdisciplinary knowledge and skills to propose a creative response to this problem. 3. Effectively communicate the problem to an appropriate audience.
Components of Assessment*	<p>Coursework 100 %, made up of the following components:</p> <p>Written Concept Note 80%</p> <p>Online Presentation 20%</p>

Exam Information	n/a
Feedback	Formative feedback will be provided to students on all pieces of assessed work, collectively through the use of open online discussion fora (where students can seek general guidance on each assignment) and 1:1 in discussion with the designated Academic Tutor. Summative Feedback will be provided electronically on all pieces of assessed work within 15 working days of submission.

4. Administrative information

Additional course information

Course availability*	Not available to Visiting Students
Normal year taken*	Postgraduate
SCQF Credit Volume*	10 credits
SCQF Credit Level*	SCQF Level 11
Home subject area*	BIME
Other subject area	
Course Organiser	Dr Sharron Ogle
Course Administrator	Mr Andrew LeTissier
Convenor	Dr Elizabeth Stevenson
External Examiner	Dr Jim Vafidis

Classification

Course type*	Online Distance Learning
Default delivery period*	Flexible
Default course mode of study*	Distance Learning
Marking scheme*	APT PG Mark/Grade

Course requirements

Pre-requisites	
Co-requisites	'Applied Interdisciplinary Research in Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health'.
Prohibited combinations	
Visiting student pre-requisites	
Any costs to be met by students	

Collaboration

% not taught by this institution	n/a
-----------------------------------------	-----

Collaboration information (School/Institution)	n/a
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Additional information

Taught in Gaelic (Gàidhlig)?*	No
Study Abroad	No
Special Arrangements	No
Fee Code if Invoiced at Course level	

Approval

Committee/Board	Committee/Board Name	Date
Programme/ Course team final version		
School/Deanery L&T Committee	BMS LTC	13 th April 2020
School/Deanery Board of Studies	BMS Board of Studies	13 th May 2020
College L&T Committee		

Appendix 2 – Course Descriptor for ‘Applied Interdisciplinary Research in Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health’

<u>Have you confirmed that the appropriate resources are in place (finance, teaching staff, IT)*:</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Have you confirmed that the appropriate support services are in place (library, computing services)*:</u>	<u>Yes</u>

1. Owing School

Proposer*	Dr Sharron Ogle
Owning School*	Deanery of Biomedical Sciences

5. Course descriptor

Course name*	Applied Interdisciplinary Research in Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health
Summary description*	<p>The purpose of this course is to put into action the plan set out in your Concept Note submitted in the 10 credit course ‘Planning Applied Interdisciplinary Research’.</p> <p>You are expected to continue to collate and synthesise your postgraduate learning and demonstrate competence in applying it to your real-world problem, going on to propose an interdisciplinary, evidence-based solution. You will then communicate your proposed solution to a specific audience using appropriate media, demonstrating critical reflection and justification of your findings.</p>
Course description*	<p>Following on from your preparations made during the ‘Planning Applied Interdisciplinary Research’ course, you will research and produce a ‘resource’ that communicates your problem and proposed solution to an appropriate audience.</p> <p>There is a lot of scope for creativity here and your ‘resource’ should take a form that best suits your intended audience, while still being grounded in best practice as identified from the literature. For example, you may choose to develop one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business plan Policy document Literature review Popular science article Teaching materials Campaign strategy Science communication event

	<p>Citizen science project plan Management plan App Film/documentary Public engagement resource, e.g. an art installation/event Toolkit Wiki Podcast Economic tool Action plan</p> <p>You will then reflect on the value of an interdisciplinary approach to problem solving in this context.</p> <p>You will be supported by a designated Academic Tutor throughout the course but you are encouraged to also seek feedback from other members of the programme team, your professional colleagues or personal contacts, and also your programme peers.</p>
Course level*	Postgraduate
Keywords	Interdisciplinary, ecosystem, environment, sustainability, conservation, application, problem-based, solutions, real-world, impact

6. Teaching, learning and assessment

Total contact teaching hours*	Total Hours: 200 (Project Supervision Hours 10, Seminar/Tutorial Hours 10, Online Activities 20, Feedback/Feedforward hours 2, Programme Level Learning and Teaching Hours 4, Directed Learning and Independent Learning Hours 154)
Graduate attributes, personal and professional skills	<p>You will further develop your skills in research and enquiry by creatively tackling a real-world problem, drawing from your prior learning and seeking new resources to support your ideas.</p> <p>You will develop personal and intellectual autonomy by using the published literature to suggest an evidence-based solution to your real-world problem. You will critically evaluate and provide sound reasoning in support of your ideas.</p> <p>You will develop your personal effectiveness by setting your own goals and managing your time to make best use of the learning opportunities available to you. The output of your research will be developed in a way that it may have genuine impact.</p>

Reading List/Learning Resources	You will conduct independent research based on your specific interests and prior learning, and will thus generate your own, highly individual list of relevant source materials.
Learning outcomes*	By the end of this course you should be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effectively communicate a real-world problem and proposed evidence-based response to an appropriate audience. 2. Design and produce an applied resource reflecting your critical understanding and response to this problem as seen through an interdisciplinary lens. 3. Critically evaluate and reflect on the value of an interdisciplinary approach to problem-solving in a real-world setting.
Components of Assessment*	Coursework 100 %, made up of the following components: Written Resource 80% Online Reflection 20%
Exam Information	n/a
Feedback	Formative feedback will be provided to students on all pieces of assessed work, collectively through the use of open online discussion fora (where students can seek general guidance on each assignment) and 1:1 in discussion with the designated Academic Tutor. Summative Feedback will be provided electronically on all pieces of assessed work within 15 working days of submission.

7. Administrative information

Additional course information

Course availability*	Not available to Visiting Students
Normal year taken*	Postgraduate
SCQF Credit Volume*	20 credits
SCQF Credit Level*	SCQF Level 11
Home subject area*	BIME
Other subject area	
Course Organiser	Dr Sharron Ogle
Course Administrator	Mr Andrew LeTissier
Convenor	Dr Elizabeth Stevenson
External Examiner	Dr Jim Vafidis

Classification

Course type*	Online Distance Learning
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Default delivery period*	Flexible
Default course mode of study*	Distance Learning
Marking scheme*	APT PG Mark/Grade

Course requirements

Pre-requisites	'Planning Applied Interdisciplinary Research in Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health'.
Co-requisites	
Prohibited combinations	
Visiting student pre-requisites	
Any costs to be met by students	

Collaboration

% not taught by this institution	n/a
Collaboration information (School/Institution)	n/a

Additional information

Taught in Gaelic (Gàidhlig)?*	No
Study Abroad	No
Special Arrangements	No
Fee Code if Invoiced at Course level	

Approval

Committee/Board	Committee/Board Name	Date
Programme/ Course team final version		
School/Deanery L&T Committee	BMS LTC	13 th April 2020
School/Deanery Board of Studies	BMS Board of Studies	13 th May 2020
College L&T Committee		

Appendix 3: specific consultation and approval points for proposal

1. A general paper was presented to the **BMS LTC in March 2019** for discussion on whether an alternative route to Masters was acceptable in principle, using BWEH as a case study. Feedback from committee members was on the whole very positive, other than a couple of comments with regards whether a shorter research component can allow students to fully demonstrate their competency at Masters level, and that employers and academic institutions will have an expectation that a full research project will have been undertaken as part of an MSc programme. Both of these points are discussed further below.
2. The teaching team conducted an **ELDeR on 17th & 18th January 2020** with the support of two external moderators: Tracey Madden, Educational Design and Enhancement; and Neil Lent, Institute for Academic Development. The output of this process, after further discussion and feedback from senior academic colleagues, is the alternative Masters year option presented here with 30 taught credits and 30 research-based credits.
3. The final version of the proposal was presented to, and approved by **BMS LTC on 20th April 2020** and subsequently by the **BMS Board of Studies on 13th May 2020**.
4. The **Major Change** proposal was accepted by the BMS Board of Studies on **18th November 2021** and by the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine on **9th December 2021**.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

27 January 2022

Request for non standard credit weightings for courses on Professional Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine programme, Royal (Dick) School Veterinary Studies (R(D)SVS), College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM).

Description of paper

1. This paper proposes changes to the current credit weighting of a number of non-standard courses within the Professional Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine programme effective from the 2022/23 academic year.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is asked to approve the change in credit weightings for a number of courses on the Professional Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine programme starting 2022/23 academic year to non-standard weightings. (see Appendix for current and proposed credit weightings).

Background and context

3. The Professional Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine (DVetMed) is a 4 year postgraduate 720 credit programme. Students undertake 180 credits a year. Courses are a mixture of discipline related courses, veterinary academic practice, specialist clinical skills and a structured research project that is developed over the four years resulting in a dissertation.

The Specialist Clinical Skills courses are associated with the clinical work that students are undertaking in the service/clinical discipline they are studying. The assessments for these courses are then mapped, via learning outcomes, to this clinical work.

The programme is now in its fourth year and as part of the programme review process, it was felt that the current credit weightings for a number of courses did not accurately reflect the amount of time, effort, assessment and learning that the students obtain and as a result, credit weightings for the following courses have been reviewed:

- Specialist Clinical Skills 1, 2, 3 & 4 (Years 1-4)
- Research Proposal (Year 1)
- Research Project Part 1, 2 & 3 (Years 2-4)

Discussion

4. The current credit weightings of clinical skills and the research project across the four years are not matching investment of time, skills and knowledge acquisition in terms of student input and assessment. Detailed discussions with the programme team, clinical teams, students' supervisors and students themselves, have led to the proposed change in credit weightings from the original validated weightings (see Appendix).

This is specifically related to the courses below:

a) Specialist Clinical Skills 1, 2, 3 & 4 (Years 1-4)

The credits attached to the Specialist Clinical Skills 1, 2 & 3 over-recognise the time, effort and knowledge in comparison to Specialist Clinical Skills 4. In contrast, Specialist Clinical Skills 4 requires considerable time, effort and the acquisition of substantial clinical knowledge that is not being fully recognised within the current credit weightings.

b) Research Proposal (Year 1) & Research Project Part 1, 2 & 3 (Years 2-4)

Students are required to work on a research project, by first developing a research proposal (including any ethical approvals), then carrying out their research project during Years 2 and 3 before writing a dissertation. A conclusion from the programme review is that not enough credit is being placed on Research Project 1 and 2 compared to Research Project 3. It is proposed that the credits for these courses are adjusted accordingly (See Appendix).

Since programme approval and inception, the nature of the DVetMed, with the 180 credits per year, has meant that the standard 10, 20, 40 and 60 credit structure does not fit with the professional requirements of the programme. The current DVetMed currently contains a number of non-standard credit weightings (i.e. the Case report at 30 credits). The proposed 'new' course weighting would also fall outwith the standard course credit structures.

All courses for which a change in credit weightings are being requested will have updated assessments to accommodate this change and ensure that that credits are appropriately apportioned.

Although the proposed change may affect the yearly 180 credit calculated percentage based on the course credit weighting, the proposed changes are intended to start in 2022/2023 with a new cohort of students. Students on the new proposed credit weightings will be more fairly assessed over the totality of the programme based on evidence of student input. The changes will be brought in with the start of a new cohort so all students in the cohort will be assessed using the same assessment criteria. The proposed changes will not change policy or regulation in relation to progression hurdles.

Students already on programme will continue with the existing credit weightings and no student will have their assessment credit weightings changed part way through their programme of study.

APRC is requested to approve the updated, non-standard credit weightings for 2022/23 (see Appendix for current and proposed credit weightings)

Resource implications

4. None

Risk management

5. The Learning Outcomes for the courses impacted have been re-evaluated and approved by CMVM PG L&T Committee.

The changes will result in an improved assessment process for students, with updated assessments and credit weightings now matching input from students.

Equality & diversity

6. Permitting the proposed credit weightings for DVetMed will have positive implications for all students, as students will achieve appropriate volume of credit as it relates to the hours of student learning undertaken.

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

7. If APRC approves the updated credit weighting, the R(D)SVS Director of PGT will communicate with the DVetMed programme team. This will be disseminated to applicants. Additionally the DPRS and DPTs for the affected courses will be updated for 2022/23 intakes onwards

Author(s)

Dr Darren Shaw,
Director of PGT, R(D)SVS,
CMVM

Presenter

Philippa Burrell,
Head of Academic Administration,
CMVM

Supported by:

CMVM PG Learning and Teaching Committee – 02/11/2021

Freedom of Information

Open

Appendix – Credit weighting

Programme Name: Professional Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine (PTDVMVETMD1F)					
Degree Type : Postgraduate Taught Professional Doctorate					
Year	Course Name	Compulsory or Elective	Current Credits (180/year)	Proposed change	SCQF Credit level
One	Specialist clinical skills 1	Compulsory	100	90	12
	Veterinary academic practice 1	Compulsory	10		12
	Research proposal	Compulsory	40	50	12
	Study design and methods of research	Compulsory	10		11
	Ethics ^A	Compulsory*	10		11
	Related discipline training ^B	Elective	10-20		12
	Online MSc level (SCQF 11) Courses ^C	Elective	10-20		11
Two	Specialist clinical skills 2	Compulsory	100	90	12
	Veterinary academic practice 2	Compulsory	10		12
	Research project part 1	Compulsory	40	50	12
	Ethics (if not taken in year 1)	Compulsory*	10		11
	Related discipline training	Elective	10-20		12
	Online MSc level (SCQF 11) Courses	Elective	10-20		11
Three	Specialist clinical skills 3	Compulsory	100	90	12
	Veterinary academic practice 3	Compulsory	10		12
	Research project part 2	Compulsory	40	50	12
	Case reports ^D	Compulsory*	30		12
	Related discipline training	Elective	10-20		12
	Online MSc level (SCQF 11) Courses	Elective	10-20		11
Four	Specialist clinical skills 4	Compulsory	40	70	12
	Veterinary academic practice 4	Compulsory	10		12
	Research project part 3	Compulsory	100	70	12
	Case reports ^D	Compulsory*	30		12
	Related discipline training	Elective	10-20		12
	Online MSc level (SCQF 11) Courses	Elective	10-20		11
Notes: ^{A,D,*} – These courses are compulsory but can be taken in either year offered. ^B – 6 “Related discipline training” courses (10 credits each) are available, up to 3 can be taken per year. ^C – Students will be allowed to enrol on appropriate online MSc course modules at the discretion of their direct supervisor					

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

27 January 2022

Proposed Regulation Changes related to Implementation of Student Support Model

Description of paper

Submitting draft proposed Student Support Project related changes for APRC **review and feedback** on:

- Undergraduate degree regulations
- Postgraduate degree regulations
- Support for Study Policy (to be considered by APRC separately as Paper F)
- Taught Assessment Regulations

Action requested / recommendation

1. Review draft (see Appendices) minor changes to the 4 regulation/policy documents, and feedback on tracked changes within those. Advise if any further input to the proposed changes required, before planned submission for approval at March 2022 APRC.

Background and context

2. The proposed Student Support model, which has been approved for implementation by the University Executive, is due to be partially implemented in time for start Academic Year 2022/23 and fully implemented by start Academic Year 2023/24. Accordingly, the proposed drafts are worded to cover a transition period where the current Personal Tutor system operates in parallel with the new model of student support, as well as the final implemented model.
3. Where necessary, policies and regulations will be reviewed again once the new model is fully implemented to remove any references to the Personal Tutor system, which will be obsolete at that point.

Discussion

4. The four regulation/policy documents contain limited tracked changes to broaden scope of the roles affected, to allow for professional services staff providing student support to be included, as well as the current Personal Tutor roles.

Resource implications

5. N/A - While implementation of the model requires resources, the regulation changes do not in themselves add any further resource requirements

Risk management

6. Provides regulatory framework for Schools/Deaneries to base processes and ways of working, in line with the implementation of the new model of student support. Responsibility for implementation of the regulations will lie within the Colleges and Schools/Deaneries.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

7. N/A

Equality & diversity

8. N/A - The proposed changes do not affect EDI considerations

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

9. Communication of the regulatory change (once approved) will be managed by project team, via College Implementation Groups. Academic Services will also include these changes in their annual updates on regulations, and related newsletter.
10. Responsibility for implementation of the regulations will lie within the College and Schools/Deaneries. An evaluation plan for the model overall itself is being developed, and evaluation of the impact of the proposed regulation changes will be included in that.

Author

Rosie Edwards (Senior Design Lead)

Presenter

Rosie Edwards

20 January 2022

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

- **Appendix A – UG Regulation:** Tracked changes at sections 2, 24, 26, 43, 45, 113
- **Appendix B – PG Regulation:** Tracked changes at sections 4, 24, 30
- **Appendix C – Taught Assessment Regulation:** Tracked changes at 4.3, 17.2, 19.1, 25.2.

Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study

Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations

2022/23



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

A General Undergraduate Degree Regulations

Compliance

2. Where the Head of College has the authority to grant permissions and concessions, this authority may be delegated to appropriate nominees in the College or Schools. Students must consult their Personal Tutor or [Student Support Team](#) or [Student Adviser](#) as to the appropriate point of contact, and must not approach the Head of College directly.

Attendance and Participation

24. Students must attend and participate as required in all aspects of their programme of study. This includes being available for teaching sessions, assessment, examination and meeting [with](#) Personal Tutors or [allocated Student Adviser](#) face to face and electronically. The Degree Programme Table and programme handbook sets out programme requirements for engagement. Certain students' visa requirements may require the University to monitor attendance and engagement in specific ways.

26. Leave of absence is required for compulsory and optional activities related to the programme of study that are not undertaken on campus in Edinburgh. Students must have the formal approval of the College for any leave of absence to study away from Edinburgh that is 30 calendar days' duration or longer. Study location changes of less than 30 calendar days must be agreed with the [Supervisor](#) or Personal Tutor or [Student Adviser](#). Where the activity is a compulsory part of the programme of study and is organised by the School or College, permission may be given by the College for a cohort of students without individual applications being made. Colleges and Schools must maintain records of all leaves of absence. This regulation does not apply to students on a recognised distance learning programme.

43. In pre-Honours years, a student may be allowed to take up to 40 credits of additional Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF, www.scqf.org.uk/) level 7 and 8 courses (in addition to the normal 120 credits), subject to the approval of the student's Personal Tutor or [Student Adviser](#).

45. Students may attend courses on a class-only basis (i.e. not for credit), with the agreement of the Course Organiser and the approval of the Personal Tutor or [Student Adviser](#). Decisions will be based on the overall load (credit and non-credit bearing) on the student, which must not exceed 160 credits.

Bachelor of Science

Honours Degree

113. Limitation on Courses Taken in Honours Years: Students in all Honours years may take Honours curriculum courses to a maximum value of 120 credit points, all of which count in the final Honours assessment. Students may attend additional Honours courses on a

Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study

Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations

2022/23



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

class-only basis (i.e. not for credit), with the agreement of the Programme Organiser and the approval of the Personal Tutor [or Student Adviser](#).

Where a student takes level 9 courses in year 2, such courses should be regarded as part of the non-Honours curriculum and, if failed, may be repeated as a resit in Junior Honours. These courses will not be included in the degree classification.

Students intending to graduate with an Ordinary degree may resit a failed level 9 course for the purposes of gaining the required number of credits, as specified in the Undergraduate Assessment Regulations.

Students in Junior Honours are permitted also to take up to 40 credit points of level 7/8 courses, which do not count towards the Honours assessment, as specified in the Undergraduate Assessment Regulations.

Students in Junior Honours must take 60 credit points of level 9/10 courses in semester 1 and 60 credit points of level 9/10 courses in semester 2.

Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study

Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations

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Authority Delegated to Colleges

4. Where the Head of College has the authority to grant permissions and concessions, this authority may be delegated to appropriate nominees in the College or Schools. Students must consult their Personal Tutor, Student Support Team, Supervisor, [Student Adviser](#) or School as to the appropriate point of contact, and must not approach the College directly. Where the College does not have authority to award a particular concession then the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee may award the concession.

Attendance and Participation

24. Students must attend and participate as required in all aspects of their programme of study. This includes being available for teaching sessions, assessment, examination and meeting, Personal Tutors [or Student Adviser\(s\)](#), Programme Directors or supervisors face-to-face and/or electronically. The Degree Programme Table and programme handbook sets out programme requirements for attendance and participation. Certain students' visa conditions may require the University to monitor attendance and participation in specific ways.

Leave of Absence

30. Leave of absence is required for compulsory and optional activities related to the programme of study that are not undertaken on campus in Edinburgh. Students must have the formal approval of the College for any leave of absence to study away from Edinburgh that is 30 calendar days' duration or longer. Study location changes of less than 30 calendar days must be agreed with the Supervisor or Personal Tutor [or Student Adviser](#). Where the activity is a compulsory part of the programme of study and is organised by the School or College, permission may be given by the College for a cohort of students without individual applications being made. Colleges and Schools must maintain records of all leaves of absence. This regulation does not apply to students on a recognised distance learning programme.



Taught Assessment Regulations

Academic Year 2022/23

Regulation 4 Convener of the Board of Examiners: appointment

The Head of School that owns the programme or course has responsibility for appointing the Convener of the Board of Examiners, the Convener of the Progression Board and the Convener of the Special Circumstances Committee.

Application of the regulation

- 4.1 The Head of School informs the College Office about the appointment of the Convener by the beginning of the relevant Semester for the Board of Examiners responsible for courses assessed in each Semester, and by the beginning of Semester 2 for the Board responsible for programme decisions for each programme.
- 4.2 For combined (formerly joint) degrees the “owning” Head of School liaises with other relevant Heads of School. In the case of any disagreement on the appointment of a Convener of a combined Board of Examiners, the Convener is nominated by the relevant Heads of College or their nominee.
- 4.3 Programme Directors, Cohort Leads and Course Organisers are not the Convener of the Board of Examiners for their programmes or courses. This is to ensure appropriate separation of roles. If the Convener is also a Course Organiser, formal chairing of the Board of Examiners is delegated to another member of the Board for discussion of that course.
- 4.4 Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy and Special Circumstances Policy:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ug_progression_boards.pdf
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf

Regulation 17 Assessment deadlines: student responsibilities

It is a student’s responsibility to ascertain and meet their assessment deadlines, including examination times and locations.

Application of the regulation

- 17.1 The examination timetable is based on students’ course choices. To avoid examination timetabling clashes, it is students’ responsibility to ensure that their record of courses is accurate by the end of week 3 of each semester.
- 17.2 Students who have a clash in their examination timetable need to contact the Examination Office, Student Administration, through their Personal Tutor [or Student Adviser](#) or Student



Taught Assessment Regulations

Academic Year 2022/23

Support Team, as soon as possible to allow alternative arrangements to be put in place.

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration/exams/overview

- 17.3 As examinations may be scheduled at any time during the semester, it is students' responsibility to be available throughout the semester, including the whole of the revision period, examination diet and the resit diet, if the student has scheduled examinations. Examinations will not be scheduled during winter or spring vacations. Occasionally assessments may need to be rescheduled with very little notice. If special circumstances mean that a student is unavailable for the rescheduled assessment, Boards of Examiners may consider using an alternative method to assess the relevant learning outcomes.

Regulation 19 Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments will be made to assessments for disabled students.

Application of the regulation

- 19.1 Reasonable adjustments must be determined in advance by the Student Disability Service (SDS). They are recorded in the student's Schedule of Adjustments by the SDS, which communicates the Schedule of Adjustments to the student, the student's Personal Tutor [or Student Adviser](#), the School's Co-ordinator of Adjustments, Student Administration (if examination adjustments are recommended) and other relevant areas.
- 19.2 The School's Co-ordinator of Adjustments (CoA) has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Schedule of Adjustments. The Co-ordinator of Adjustments will liaise with academic colleagues who are responsible for putting the adjustments in place in the School.
- 19.3 The Co-ordinator of Adjustments will liaise with the SDS should any adjustments require further discussion, clarification or alteration. If there are any amendments to the Schedule of Adjustments the SDS will communicate these and ensure that the student is informed.
- 19.4 The SDS provides examples of reasonable adjustments, deadlines and support: www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service/students/support-we-provide
- 19.5 Reasonable adjustments can be made for a variety of assessment methods, depending on the needs identified and recorded in the student's Schedule of Adjustments, e.g. assessed coursework, take-home examinations, online examinations, invigilated examinations. The SDS supports students in the preparation and review of their Schedule of Adjustments. It is a student's responsibility to ensure that their Schedule of Adjustments covers all types of



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assessment methods relevant to their courses. For example, if a student discovers that an aspect of their course is likely to have an impact on their support needs, they should contact the SDS as soon as possible in case any amendment is required to be made to their Schedule of Adjustments.

- 19.6 Arrangements can be made via the SDS for students with temporary injuries or impairments, e.g. broken arm or leg, on the submission of relevant medical information. Students should contact the SDS as soon as possible to allow the SDS to determine any relevant adjustments and support.

Regulation 25 Examination timetable

Students are only permitted to sit examinations at the times and in the venues that are detailed on the relevant examination timetable.

Application of the regulation

- 25.1 Examinations may be scheduled outside normal University teaching hours.
- 25.2 Students who believe that religious reasons or participation in elite-level sport prevent them from sitting an examination at the scheduled time or venue should contact their Personal Tutor [or Student Adviser](#) and Student Support Team. Their case is considered by the relevant Dean and Student Administration in consultation with the Convener of the Board of Examiners. Further information regarding flexibility which may be offered to students taking part in elite-level sport is provided in the Performance Sport Policy:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/performance_sport_policy.pdf
- 25.3 A student who is permitted to appear for examination at a time other than that prescribed may have to sit a specially prepared examination paper or alternative method of assessment.
- 25.4 If examinations are disrupted, for example due to adverse weather conditions, then Boards of Examiners may decide to use an alternative assessment method, rather than rescheduled examinations, to assess the learning outcomes.
- 25.5 Other than online assessment and assessment opportunities offered via Student Administration, students are not allowed to sit examinations away from Edinburgh.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

27 January 2022

Support for Study Policy

Description of paper

This paper is to submit draft changes to Support for Study Policy in relation to local working practice since the policy was implemented in 2019. This contributes to the Strategy 2030 outcomes: “We will have more user-friendly processes and efficient systems to support our work” and “We will encourage and take care of one another. We will provide support in times of difficulty and celebrate every success. We will build relationships that are mutually beneficial, long lasting and constructive.”

Action requested / recommendation

1. To review, comment and approve changes to policy.

Background and context

2. The Support for Study policy was first implemented in 2016, and adoption of the policy has grown organically with working practices in the three different Colleges. This revision of the policy is to reflect practical working procedure, and mitigate against negative student and staff experiences when applying the policy.

Discussion

3. The majority of changes in the policy are to reflect changing job titles, removal of the word ‘hearing’ to make more student friendly and the removal of reference to occupational health involvement. The other main changes are a response to those working with the policy to allow for:
 - a shorter given time to students on notice of case meetings in order to respond to urgent situations
 - edited guidance at the stage 3 and students detained under the mental health act cases to allow for fluid interruptions in order to focus on student wellbeing and returning to study as soon as they are able to.

Resource implications

4. N/A

Risk management

5. The University has received a student complaint related to the implementation of the policy in its previous form. If the policy is not revised, it leaves the University open to further complaints on a negative student experience.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

6. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
7. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Equality & diversity

8. N/A- the proposed changes do not effect EDI considerations.

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

9. Communication of the approved policy change will be managed by Policy & Projects Officer, Student Experience in collaboration with the three Colleges, including hosting discussion events. Academic Services will also include these changes in their annual updates on regulations, and related newsletter later in 2022.
10. Responsibility for implementation of the regulations will lie within the Colleges, Schools and Deaneries. Feedback to be gathered at the end of the academic year and reported to APRC at the beginning of the 2022/23 year.

Author

*Rebecca Shade
18 January 2022*

Presenter

*Rebecca Shade
Policy & Projects Officer, Student
Experience*

Freedom of Information *Open*



Support for Study Policy

Purpose of Policy

The Support for Study Policy outlines the University's approach to supporting students who may be struggling with their studies due to health issues.

Overview

The University of Edinburgh welcomes a diverse student body and aims to support all students throughout their studies. This includes students who have temporary or long-term physical or mental health conditions which may have an adverse impact on their ability to study.

The University takes seriously its duty of care to all members of the University community. This policy and procedures are to be followed by staff where the behaviour of a student is giving cause for concern, and where it is believed this may be caused by a mental health problem. The Support for Study Policy applies to all students and to all aspects of University life.

Occasionally, physical or mental ill-health and/or a disability may lead to a student behaving in a way which has an adverse impact on others. This policy is intended to provide an effective framework to support students in cases where such circumstances are having an adverse impact on the health, safety, wellbeing or academic progress of others.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

The policy applies to all students of the University and is used by staff to handle cases where students need additional support due to health issues. Specific roles are outlined for Support for Study panels in each College.

Contact Officer

Gavin Douglas
Rebecca Shade

Deputy Secretary, Student Experience Policy & Projects Officer, Student Experience

gavin.douglas@ed.ac.uk

Document control

Dates	Approved: 30.5.19	Starts:	Equality impact assessment: 5.6.19	Amendments: <u>January 2022</u>	Next Review: 2023/24
Approving authority	Senatus <u>Curriculum and Student Academic Progression Regulations</u> Committee				
Consultation undertaken	The policy was developed on behalf of the Mental Health Strategy Group and had widespread consultation within the University and Edinburgh University Students' Association, including Student Disability and Student Counselling Services.				
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Deputy Secretary, <u>Students Experience</u>				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	Code of Student Conduct: <u>http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline</u>				
UK Quality Code	n/a				
Policies superseded by this policy	n/a				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email <u>Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk</u> or telephone 0131 650 2138.				



Support for Study Policy

1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 The University of Edinburgh welcomes a diverse student body and aims to support all students (regardless of level of study) throughout their studies in line with its commitments under the Equality Act (2010) and in its own Equality and Diversity Strategy to developing a positive culture, where all staff and students are able to develop to their full potential.
- 1.2 Occasionally, physical or mental ill-health (including a disability) may lead to a student behaving in a way which has an adverse impact on the health, wellbeing or safety of other members of the University community. This may include behaviour that poses a direct risk to health and safety, or making unreasonable support demands of other members of the University community. This policy is intended to provide an effective framework to support the student in question, other students and members of staff in these circumstances, where other means of providing student support, or student disciplinary or fitness to practice processes, are not the more appropriate way forward. The policy applies to all students and to all aspects of their University life.

2 UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 Students are responsible for the management of their own health and wellbeing. Staff are expected to support students who are struggling with health or wellbeing with their choices in a person-centred, respectful manner. In all situations, and at all stages of this policy, every effort should be made to address concerns with the full and informed agreement of the student (for example the student may agree to take a voluntary interruption of studies). However, where a student is unable or unwilling to cooperate in the management of their health and wellbeing, this policy makes provision for proceeding without the consent of the student.
- 2.2 Staff with responsibility for implementing the policy at any stage should do so in a manner that emphasises the aim of supporting students to succeed in their studies, and which takes into consideration and seeks to minimise the stress and anxiety that engagement in any formal process may cause students.

3 OVERVIEW OF THE POLICY

- 3.1 There are three stages to the policy. Under normal circumstances, staff should work sequentially through Stages 1 to 3, only going on to the next stage where the previous stages have not satisfactorily addressed the issues of concern. However, where the issues and their adverse impact are particularly severe, and the University has reasonable grounds to believe that earlier stages of the policy would not be effective in addressing these issues, the University can proceed to a later stage of the policy without working sequentially through earlier stages.
- 3.2 The University may use this policy in circumstances where a member of the University community raises concerns about the student's behaviour and its adverse impact on the health, safety or wellbeing of other members of the University community (students or



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staff), and there are grounds for believing that this behaviour relates to the student's physical or mental health.

4. INTERACTION WITH OTHER POLICIES

- 4.1 The University has a duty to ensure that members of the University community are not subjected to unacceptable behaviour and therefore has the right to investigate any allegations of inappropriate behaviour under the Code of Student Conduct (www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline) even when there are grounds for believing that this behaviour relates to issues regarding the student's health.
- 4.2 The Support for Study policy however offers an alternative to the University's Code of Student Conduct when there are grounds for believing that a student's behaviour may relate to the student's physical or mental health. The circumstances in which the University may choose to follow the Support for Study Policy rather than the Code of Student Conduct include the following:
- The student's behaviour, while causing an adverse impact on other members of the University community, is unlikely to constitute an offence under the Code of Student Conduct; or
 - Were the student found to have committed an offence under the Code, the most likely penalties that a Student Discipline Officer or Student Discipline Committee would apply would be unlikely to offer the most appropriate way to resolve the student's behaviour and / or any underlying health issues.
- 4.3 A student under consideration through this policy nonetheless has the right to request that their case is considered under the Code of Student Conduct instead, for example if they feel that their behaviour is not caused by physical or mental ill health.
- 4.4 Where a student's degree programme is subject to a professional body's Fitness to Practise requirements, the relevant College may follow its Fitness to Practice regulations or procedures when a student's behaviour raises issues regarding their fitness to practice. The College can follow these regulations or procedures at the same time as the Support for Study policy.

5. EMERGENCIES

- 5.1 Where a student's behaviour presents an immediate risk to themselves or others, the Emergency Services should be contacted by dialling 999. For matters arising on University premises, University Security should also be alerted by dialling [0131 650 22572222](tel:013165022572222).
- 5.2 There is no provision under this policy for students whose behaviour is a cause for concern to be immediately suspended from the University. If a member of staff thinks that it may be appropriate to immediately suspend a student for their or others' safety and wellbeing, they should contact the University Secretary or one of the Deputy Secretaries, who may be able to take action (in conjunction with a designated Vice-Principal) under the Code of Student Conduct. See: [https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline)
- 5.3 Further information on handling emergencies is available online:



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- <https://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/supporting-students/student-mental-health/helping-distressed-student>
- <http://www.health-service.ed.ac.uk/out-of-hours-58661-htm>
- www.ed.ac.uk/chaplaincy/support/emergencies
- [Out-of-hours student support | The University of Edinburgh](#)
- For guidance on contacting emergency contacts see: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/supporting-students/student-mental-health/guidance-communicating-student-emergency-contacts>

6 SUPPORT FOR STUDY STAGE 1 – INITIAL OR MODERATE CONCERNS

- 6.1 When initial or moderate concerns arise about a student's health and its adverse impact on other members of the University community, these should be dealt with locally by the appropriate member of staff. This may be the student's Personal Tutor/Supervisor/Student Support Team, or a more senior member of staff in the student's School such as the Senior Tutor. If concerns arise in the University's residential accommodation, the relevant member of staff (e.g. warden, Residence Life team or others as appropriate) should address them, where necessary discussing the issue with the student's School.
- 6.2 The appropriate member of staff should discuss their concerns with the student in an informal and supportive manner, and give the student the opportunity to explain their perception of the matter. Possible outcomes from such a discussion might include:
- No follow-up action necessary;
 - Supporting referral to appropriate support service – e.g. Health Service, Student Counselling, Student Disability Service, [Student Fees or Finance](#), etc;
 - Supporting the student to apply in the normal way for an appropriate change to their programme status – e.g. interruption of studies or a transfer to part-time study - with due consideration (taking advice as needed) as to how any interruption of studies or change in status might impact on the student (e.g. for immigration or financial reasons);
 - The student's agreement about changes to behaviour, with a review period agreed, and a review undertaken by the student's Personal Tutor/Supervisor/Student Support Team or relevant residential accommodation member of staff.
- 6.3 The staff member responsible for handling the case at Support for Study Stage 1 is responsible for maintaining a secure record of the discussions and actions agreed, in line with defined retention periods.

7 SUPPORT FOR STUDY STAGE 2 – CONTINUING OR MORE SERIOUS CONCERNS

- 7.1 If the student is unable or unwilling to discuss the concerns at Stage 1, or there are continuing and / or more serious emerging concerns despite any actions agreed during Stage 1, the case may be referred to the College Dean of Students (or nominee) for consideration under stage 2 of the policy. Any such referral must be made by either:
- Head of School (or nominee [e.g. Senior Tutor, Head of Graduate School, Head of Student Services](#));
 - (for cases arising in University accommodation) the ~~Director~~Head of Residence Life.



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When referring the case to the Dean of Students, the School ~~or Residence Life~~ representative ~~or Head of Residence Life~~ should set out their concerns regarding the student's health and / or behaviour, and the steps that staff have taken to date to support the student, including any reasonable adjustments made to date, and providing any supporting documentation that they consider relevant.

7.2 If the Dean of Students (or nominee) is not satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to resolve concerns regarding the student's behaviour, they will refer the case back to the School/Residence Life and may meet with the representative School to discuss further support and adjustments that could be implemented.

7.3 If, however, the Dean of Students (or nominee) is satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to resolve concerns regarding the student's behaviour, that the conditions set out in 7.1 are met, and that no alternate process (for example student discipline or fitness to practice) would be more appropriate, they will arrange a stage 2 student case conference. The purpose of the case conference will be to assess what further solutions, plans and intervention can be put in place to support the student in relation to any health issues and to address any adverse impact that their behaviour is having on other members of the University community.

7.4 In advance of the stage 2 student case conference, the Dean of Students (or nominee) will write to the student:

- summarising their reasons for holding the case conference;
- ~~Inviting the student to attend an appointment with a doctor within the Occupational Health Unit of the University, with the understanding that the doctor will (subject to the student's agreement) provide the case conference with a summary of any medical conditions that may be affecting the student;~~
- inviting the student either to attend the case conference or make any written representations they wish the case conference to consider-
- making clear reference to the relevant section of this policy with regards to the case.

The invitation should ideally be sent at least 540 working days, or giving as much notice as possible in advance of the case conference in order that the student can seek support and prepare for the meeting. However, in urgent situations it may be necessary for the Dean of Students to act sooner.

7.5 The Dean of Students (or nominee) will inform the student that they can submit any written representations at least one working day before the case conference, ~~and that they should only submit personal information about third parties (e.g. other students) where this is relevant to the student's written statement.~~ The Dean of Students (or nominee) can proceed with the case conference even if the student does not wish to attend and does not make any written representations.

7.6 Where a student wishes to take part in the case conference, the Dean of Students (or nominee) will inform them of the time and venue for the case conference as soon as possible at least five working days in advance of the case conference. The case conference can be held online. The Dean will inform the student that they have the right to



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be accompanied by a supporter from within the University community, including a member of the Students' Association staff. They will inform the student that their supporter cannot represent the student at the case conference, and cannot attend if the student is not present ~~in person~~. They will also inform the student that:

- they can request to be accompanied by a specialist provider of health or wellbeing support;
- they can approach the Student's Association Advice Place for free and impartial advice on and support with their situation.

7.7 The Dean of Students (or nominee) will chair the case conference and conduct it in the manner they determine appropriate to the circumstances subject to the following:

- The following will always be required for a student case conference: a representative from the student's School (for example the School Senior Tutor or Head of the Student Support Team); and a head of student support services (for example the Director of the Student Counselling Service or the Student Disability Service or their nominee). Where appropriate, the Dean of Students (or nominee) may also invite a representative of an appropriate student support service, Residence Life, ~~Academic Services~~, or any other University service.
- The Dean of Students (or nominee) will provide all those attending the case conference with a copy of any written representations submitted by the student, along with all other documentation that the Dean of Students (or nominee) considers relevant, ~~including any report from an Occupational Health professional (if available)~~.
- Attendees at the case conference should treat all documentation and all matters discussed at the conference as confidential, and should only share any information with other staff ~~where whether~~ there is a legitimate reason to do so and where this is consistent with the University's data protection policies and guidance (see <https://www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/policy/data-protection>)

7.8 ~~As a result of t~~The case conference, the Dean of Students (or nominee) will either decide that no follow-up action is necessary or will agree a time-bound action plan. Possible elements of a plan might include:

- Requiring the School / Residence Life team to introduce further adjustments to support the student (defining who is responsible for reviewing progress and on what timescales);
- Supporting the student to apply in the normal way for an appropriate change to their programme status – e.g. interruption of studies or a transfer to part-time study - with due consideration (taking advice as needed) as to how any interruption of studies or change in status process might impact on the student (e.g. for immigration or financial reasons);
- A plan for the student to address specified aspects of their behaviour (defining who is responsible for reviewing progress and on what timescales), including assistance in accessing relevant services which may support the student in making these changes.

7.9 The Dean of Students (or nominee) will write to the student within five working days of the conclusion of the student case conference, confirming the actions and/or further support that the case conference proposes, together with details of how these proposals will be



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taken forward, by whom and by when. The Dean will also remind the student that if the concerns persist, their case may be escalated to Stage 3 of the policy.

- 7.10 The Dean of Students (or nominee) is responsible for maintaining a record of the student case conference (including all supporting documentation), in line with defined retention periods.
- 7.11 The Support for Study Policy does not apply to staff. However, where the case under consideration involves a student who is also a member of staff, the Dean of Students (or nominee) should ensure that the relevant line manager is made aware of the concerns and actions being taken under the Support for Study policy.

8 SUPPORT FOR STUDY STAGE 3 – PERSISTENT AND SERIOUS CONCERNS

- 8.1 If concerns persist following the end of any time-bound action plan agreed at stage 2, or if the student does not engage with the recommendations arising from the case conference, or if more serious concerns emerge, the relevant Dean of Students can refer the case to the Deputy Secretary (Students Experience). They should summarise the student's case and their reasons for seeking escalation to Stage 3, providing any supporting documentation that they consider relevant. In a minority of cases, students may also be referred directly to stage 3 where there is a significant risk of concern for the student or concern about their impact on others. When this happens, the Deputy Secretary (Students) should be given a detailed description of the situation, along with all relevant correspondence with the student.
- 8.2 The Deputy Secretary (Students Experience) or ~~another~~ Deputy Secretary (Legal & Governance) will review the information in the referral, including evidence of actions taken to date if any. If the Deputy Secretary is not satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to resolve concerns regarding the student's behaviour, they will refer the case back to the College and may meet with the College to discuss further support and adjustments that could be implemented.
- 8.3 However, if the Deputy Secretary is satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to resolve concerns regarding the student's behaviour or that the concerns are significant enough to warrant escalation to stage 3, they will ask the Director of Student Wellbeing (or nominated deputy) to prepare a formal risk assessment regarding the student and the wider University community. The student should be informed of indicative timescales for this.
- 8.4 Following receipt of the risk assessment, if the Deputy Secretary concludes that the risks of adverse impact on the wider University community can be adequately managed or mitigated without further formal action, they will conclude the formal process under this policy, and they will refer the case to the Director of Student Wellbeing and ask them to consider whether the student's School/College or relevant support services should take any further, informal steps.
- 8.5 If the Deputy Secretary concludes that the risk assessment and other information provide evidence that the student's behaviour is causing significant risks to the wider University community, they will convene a Stage 3 Panel meeting hearing to consider the student's case. The Deputy Secretary (Students Experience), or ~~another~~ Deputy Secretary (Legal & Governance) is responsible for arranging a date, time and venue for the panel hearing meeting, and for inviting panel members and other attendees to the



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~~hearing~~meeting. The Panel may hold physical or virtual ~~hearings-meetings~~ including conducting by electronic business.

~~8.6~~ ~~8-6~~ In advance of the ~~meeting~~ ~~panel~~, the Deputy Secretary will ask a delegate to gather further evidence (~~including, if required, meeting with the student~~). This will include gathering the following information from the student's School:

- ~~the student's academic progression to date;~~
- ~~advice from a relevant academics~~ in the School (e.g. the Programme Director) regarding whether it is likely that the student will progress to the next year of the programme;
- and a summary of any academic and regulatory aspects of the student's programme of studies which may constrain the range options for addressing the issues regarding the student's health and / or behaviour (including the academic consequences of an interruption of studies at this stage in the academic session).

8.7 The Deputy Secretary will write to the student ~~at least ten working days~~ soon as possible in advance of the panel hearing, covering the following points:

- Summarising their reasons for holding the ~~panel~~ ~~meeting~~ ~~hearing~~ and enclosing all documentation that the panel will consider (including the risk assessment, and a summary of any other information gathered by the delegate in advance of the meeting);
- ~~(if not already done at an earlier stage) Inviting the student to attend an appointment with a doctor within the Occupational Health Unit of the University, with the understanding that the doctor will (subject to the student's agreement) provide the panel with a summary of any medical conditions that may be affecting the student;~~
- Inviting the student to attend the ~~meeting~~ ~~panel~~ or to make any written representations they wish the ~~attendees~~ ~~panel~~ to consider. The Deputy Secretary will inform the student that they can submit any written representations at least two working days before the panel ~~meeting~~ ~~hearing~~, ~~and that they should only submit personal information about third parties (e.g. other students) where this is relevant to the student's written statement.~~
- Informing the student that they have the right to be accompanied by a supporter from within the University community, including a member of the Students' Association staff. They will inform the student that their supporter cannot represent the student at the ~~meeting~~ ~~hearing~~, and cannot attend if the student is not present in person. They will also inform the student that they can request in addition to be accompanied by a specialist provider of health or wellbeing support.
- Reminding the student that they can approach the Student's Association Advice Place for free and impartial advice on and support with their situation.
- Making clear reference to the relevant section of this policy with regards to the case.
-

8.8 The Deputy Secretary can proceed with the ~~meeting~~ ~~panel~~ ~~hearing~~ even if the student does not make any written representations, or if the student is unable or unwilling to attend the panel ~~hearing~~ ~~meeting~~.



Support for Study Policy

- 8.9 The Membership of the Support for Study Panel meeting is as follows:
- Convened by the University Secretary, Deputy Secretary (Students Experience) or another Deputy Secretary (Legal & Governance);
 - A Dean of Students (or delegate) (not from the student's College);
 - A Vice- or Assistant- Principal with responsibilities in relation to student or learning and teaching matters' *or* in the case of PhD / research students, a Vice- or Assistant Principal with responsibilities in relation to research student matters;
 - One student (from a list of student representatives agreed on an annual basis by the Senate Curriculum and Student Progression Committee) Academic Progression and Regulations Committee.
- 8.10 While the Convener is responsible for inviting the full membership to attend, the meeting hearing will be quorate as long as a minimum of three of its members are present.
- 8.11 In addition to the formal members, a representative from Student Experience Services Academic Services will attend and act as the secretary to the meeting panel, and the Convener will also invite the Director of Student Wellbeing to attend.
- 8.12 The Convener will provide all those attending the meeting hearing with a copy of:
- The original referral from the Dean of Students, together with any background information;
 - The information gathered in stage 8.3 (risk assessment) and 8.6 (additional information) above;
 - ~~The letter from the doctor within the Occupational Health Unit (if available);~~
 - Any written representations from the student.
- 8.13 In the first part of the hearing meeting, the Convener will summarise the evidence in relation to the case, with particular reference to the main points from the risk assessment. Those present will be able to ask to clarify any of this evidence.
- 8.14 The panel will then provide the student (if attending) with an opportunity to present any further information regarding the student's situation. If the student has asked that a relevant professional who is involved in supporting the student attend the meeting, the panel will provide them with an opportunity to present any further information regarding the student's situation. The panel members will be able to ask the student and relevant professional to clarify any of the points they make.
- 8.15 The student / their representative and the Director of Student Wellbeing will then withdraw from the meeting hearing while the panel discusses the case and makes a decision on how to proceed. In doing so, the Panel must give careful consideration to:
- The extent to which support has been offered / taken up to date;
 - Whether any reasonable adjustments might support the student's ability to continue with their studies;
 - Relevant legislation and in particular the University's duties under the Equality Act;



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- Medical and other evidence about the student's current health plus any advice about prognosis;
- Any evidence presented by the student, including any new medical evidence;
- The student's academic progress to date and likelihood of progressing to the next year of the programme;
- The impact of the student's behaviour on other members of the University community.
- The academic consequences of an interruption of studies at this stage in the academic session;
- The impact of an interruption of studies on the student, including careful consideration of their personal circumstances (including [financial and](#) immigration status).

8.16 The Panel will either decide that no follow-up action is necessary or will agree one or more of the following:

- Requiring the School / the Residence Life team to introduce further adjustments to support the student (defining who is responsible for reviewing progress and on what timescales);
- Supporting the student to apply in the normal way for an appropriate change to their programme status – e.g. interruption of studies or a transfer to part-time study;
- A plan for the student to address specified aspects of their behaviour (defining who is responsible [in the School/Residence Life](#) for reviewing progress and on what timescales), including assistance in accessing relevant services which may support the student in making these changes;
- A requirement that the student interrupt studies for a specified period that does not exceed 12 months, with a requirement to subsequently demonstrate that they are fit to return to their studies.

8.17 The Panel will where possible make its decision on a consensual and unanimous basis. However, where the Panel is not able to reach agreement, the Convener will have a casting vote.

8.18 If the student has attended the [hearing meeting](#), the Convener will invite the student and their representative (if relevant) [along with the Director of Student Wellbeing](#) to return to the [hearing meeting](#) to hear the decision of the Panel. The Convener will also write to the student within [2 two](#) working days of the meeting, setting out the Panel's decision and a summary of its reasons, and highlighting any further support that may be relevant to the student at this point. The Convener will copy this communication to relevant contacts in the School including Head of School and a Student Support lead contact, and the Head of College.

8.19 Where the Panel agrees to require the student to interrupt their studies, the Director of Student Wellbeing will develop and send to the student a plan to support and advise the student during their period of interruption. This should be done if at all possible in collaboration with the student concerned.



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While the University's Policy on Authorised Interruption of Studies sets out the services that students can access while they interrupt their studies, this plan may include additional elements of support. The plan will address the following:

- Offering the student access to advice on and support with relevant welfare matters, on an ongoing basis during the interruption and prior to return to study, including but not limited to:
 - finances, considering the different fee regimes at the University and the different financial impacts that may arise from a period of interruption;
 - accommodation;
 - immigration matters (for international students);
 - access to support;
- a case management approach, co-ordinated by the Director of Student Wellbeing (or nominee) while the student is on interruption to ensure:
 - continuity;
 - ongoing [proactive](#) support;
 - periodic reviews of progress;
 - planning and support for re-entry into studies;
 - Continued support post re-entry to studies.

8.20 A student who wishes to appeal the decision of the Panel should follow the process set out in the University's Student Appeal Regulations. The decision of the Appeal Committee is final and there is no further opportunity for appeal against that decision within the University. If an appeal is upheld then the Appeal Committee will refer the student case to the Support for Study Panel to review its decision. Any decisions made by the Support for Study Panel remain in force while an appeal is underway and until the outcome of any review of the decision.

8.21 [Academic Services Student Experience Services](#) are responsible for maintaining a record of Panel [hearings-meetings](#) (including all supporting documentation) and of relevant follow-up activities (including return to studies actions), in line with defined retention periods.

8.22 The Support for Study Policy does not apply to staff. However, where the case under consideration involves a student who is also a member of staff, the Dean of Students (or nominee) should ensure that the relevant line manager is made aware of the concerns and actions being taken under the Support for Study policy.

9 STUDENTS DETAINED UNDER THE MENTAL HEALTH ACT

9.1 For any student who is detained ('sectioned') under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 and who is therefore unable to interact with the University in the management of their wellbeing, the student's College will put an appropriate interruption of studies in place.

9.2 The interruption in the first instance will normally be for a minimum of four weeks but may be for a shorter or longer period of time depending on the student's situation and expected length of detention. It is important to note that periods of detention can range from very

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~~short to very long and so any initial interruption (e.g. of four weeks) should be reviewed regularly and shortened / extended as needed. The student will not be expected to engage with studies during this interruption and a plan will need to be put in place to manage their return to studies once they have been discharged from hospital. The student's ability to return to their studies at a particular time will be assessed depending on the amount of study and assessment they have missed. The interruption in the first instance will normally be for a minimum of four weeks but may be for a shorter or longer period of time depending on the student's situation and expected length of detainment. The student will not be expected to engage with studies during this interruption and a plan will need to be put in place to manage their return to studies once they have been discharged from hospital. The student's ability to return to their studies at a particular time will be assessed depending on the amount of study and assessment they have missed.~~

9.32 The University may be informed of this by the student, a relative/ friend or by the NHS or other health professionals. When a staff member is informed, they should call a case conference with their School and College relevant staff and the Director of Student Wellbeing (or nominees such as Directors of Counselling or Disability Services or the Student Mental Health Coordinator) in order for the University to support the student.

~~9.43~~ Prior to the student's return to study, and in order to ensure appropriate support is in place, the case will be considered under Support for Study Stage 2, where further evidence may be sought regarding the student's fitness to return to study. The student should be notified of this as in stage two policy section above.

9.54 Information about student emergency contact is available here.

9.6 It should be established by the member of staff responsible for dealing with the actions of the case conference if they student would like ongoing engagement with the University while in hospital.

~~Prior to the student's return to study, and in order to ensure appropriate support is in place, the case will be considered under Support for Study Stage 2, where further evidence may be sought regarding the student's fitness to return to study.~~

10 RETURN TO STUDY

10.1 Where the [Stage 3](#) Support for Study Panel requires a student to interrupt their studies for medical reasons, the Panel will require the student to demonstrate their fitness to return to study. The Panel will **either**:

~~a~~Ask the student to provide [Student Experience Services](#)~~Academic Services~~ with documentary evidence in the form of a letter in English (or with a certified translation into English) from a qualified medical doctor, specifically addressing the behavioural issues identified by the Support for Study panel, and confirming that in the view of the doctor, the student is:



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- fit to return to study because these issues are in their opinion sufficiently under control, or;
- is likely to be fit to return to study as long as certain other adjustments are in place on their return to study.

The letter must be provided by a specified date in advance of the planned return to their studies (which will be variable based on the length of the interruption and the students' situation); ~~or,~~

- ~~Refer the student to be assessed by Occupational Health professionals at a specified date in advance of the planned return to their studies (typically three months in advance).~~

- 10.2 The Deputy Secretary (Students Experience) or ~~another~~ Deputy Secretary, (Legal & Governance) is responsible for assessing this evidence and deciding whether the student is fit to return to their studies, taking advice from the Director of Student Wellbeing or other relevant University staff as needed. If the Deputy Secretary decides that the evidence does not demonstrate that the student is fit to return to their studies, they will constitute a Support for Study Panel (based on the membership set out in 8.9 above) and ask them to decide whether to require the student to interrupt their studies for a further period. The student has the right to appeal any further decision of the Support for Study panel as set out in 8.20 above.
- 10.3 The Deputy Secretary will aim to inform the student whether they can return to their studies normally no later than two months prior to the date that the student plans to return to their studies. The Deputy Secretary will copy this communication to the student's relevant contacts in the School including the Head of School and a Student Support lead contact, and the Head of College. The Director of Student Wellbeing (or nominee) will work with the School to ensure that a plan is put in place by the School to support the student back into studies and post-entry with their studies.

11 REPORTING AND RECORDING

- 11.1 The Deputy Secretary (Students Experience) is responsible for ensuring that an annual report is provided to Senatus Academic and Student Progression Policy and Curriculum and Student Progression Regulations Committee summarising the number of cases referred for consideration at Support for Study stages ~~2 and 3~~, together with data on:
- the number of students required to interrupt studies;
 - the number of appeals against decisions of the Panel; and
 - the outcome of these appeals.

12 DATA PROTECTION

- 12.1 University staff are governed by the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which defines all data relating to a person's physical or mental health as special category data. Staff involved in the administration of the Support for Study Policy must recognise that they may receive special category data of a confidential nature in respect of the student, at any stage of this policy,



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and they must therefore ensure that all such data is handled, processed and stored in accordance with the requirements set out in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Student members of any panel at stage 3 of the policy will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to being appointed to a panel or receiving any information with regards to a Support for Study case.

January 2022

Support for Study Guidance: Using Support for Study in the Context of Other Policies and Procedures: **DRAFT WORK IN PROGRESS**

Contents

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1. Purpose of Document

Across the University, we are increasingly seeing complex, nuanced student situations and it is sometimes challenging to determine which policies/ procedures should be used to manage student cases. This document aims to highlight how the [Support for Study Policy](#) fits with other available policies and procedures, to help colleagues navigate between them when considering student cases. It has been written by colleagues in the Colleges and the Wellbeing Team based on experience of the Support for Study process.

The Support for Study Policy contains important contextual information about the policy and associated processes, so please ensure you read this guidance in conjunction with the Policy.

If you are unsure as to how best to direct a case, please contact your College Office who will be happy to give advice and help identify next steps.

2. Aim of the Support for Study Process

The ultimate aim of the Support for Study process is to enable students to achieve academic success, providing them with specific support while reinforcing the limits to the support the University can provide, and emphasising the necessary boundaries that students must operate within.

As this is designed to be a supportive policy, the most severe action that can be taken – at Stage 3 – is a requirement that the student interrupt their studies for a specified period of time (and no more than 12 months).

In cases where a student being supported via this policy continues to disengage and/or fail courses, or to demonstrate behaviour which needs to be addressed via other processes regardless of any

health issue. Schools/ Deaneries should manage such cases concurrently through associated University processes such as Progression, student engagement and attendance monitoring (SEAM) and the Code of Student Conduct, and can be excluded through these mechanisms where appropriate.

3. Scope of the Policy

The scope of the Support for Study Policy is strictly defined and intended for use in a small number of cases. The Policy is not meant to be used as a catch-all process for all challenging or complex student cases. There are two categories of student situation that can be handled under this Policy:

Health-related behavioural issues impacting on the University community:

Occasionally, physical or mental ill-health and/or a disability may lead to a student behaving in a way which has an adverse impact on others (including other students and members of staff whether in a School/ Deanery or elsewhere). This may include those that pose a direct risk to health and safety, or where a student makes unreasonable support demands of other members of the University community. Where this occurs, is it not necessarily appropriate to deal with the matter via the Code of Student Conduct or another method of student support.

In a referral related to behaviour we would look to establish:

- a. **why** the student's behaviour is causing concern,
- b. **how** it is adversely impacting members of the University community (other than the student themselves), and
- c. the factors which mean this is the preferred route for dealing with the case rather than the Code of Student Conduct or another route (e.g. a known or diagnosed mental or physical health issue or disability).

Detainment under the Mental Health Act:

If a student is detained ('sectioned') under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003¹, they are unable to interact with the University in the management of their wellbeing. Furthermore, the involvement of external support services in these situations means that it is appropriate for Wellbeing Services to be involved.

In a referral where a student has been detained under the Mental Health Act, the College will look for confirmation from a relevant source that the student has been formally detained (as opposed to a voluntary referral) including clarification as to which section of the Mental Health Act they have been detained under. The Support for Study policy will **not** be used in cases where the student has voluntarily admitted themselves to hospital (e.g. have not been detained) **unless** the student is also exhibiting behaviour that is adversely impacting members of the University community. If the Support for Study policy is deemed to be inappropriate then Schools/Deaneries will be supported to manage the case within the bounds of [other relevant policies, procedures and guidance](#).

The case studies below may help you to decide whether a case should be handled via Support for Study. If you are unsure, please contact your College Office to discuss options.

¹ Referred to from this point as 'Mental Health Act'

4. Referral Process

Stage 1 Referrals

Stage 1 is dealt with locally in Schools, led by an appropriate member of staff such as a Senior Tutor, and consists of an informal discussion with the student concerned. One or more members of staff might be involved in the meeting but are not formally convened as a panel.

It is likely that the Personal Tutor or Student Support Team colleague will already have met with the student. When commencing the Support for Study process it is recommended that the student is made aware that it is a Stage 1 Support for Study discussion. It is helpful for a list of actions to be agreed during the Stage 1 discussion, so that the student can be advised that if these are not engaged with, or these issues continue, the case may be escalated to Stage 2.

In some circumstances, it may be more appropriate for previous meetings to be considered as Stage 1 of the Support for Study process and we recommend you discuss the situation with the relevant College if this is the case.

Stage 2 Referrals

Referrals at Stage 2 are managed by the relevant College, with proceedings led by the Dean of Students or a relevant nominee. Referrals can be made on three grounds:

1. There are continuing and / or more serious emerging concerns despite any actions agreed during Stage 1
2. The student is unable or unwilling to engage with a Stage 1 discussion
3. The situation is serious enough immediate escalation to Stage 2. For example, the student has demonstrated destructive or aggressive behaviour (e.g. has caused damage to University property due to an aggressive outburst), which would normally result in a referral under the Code of Student Conduct but it is not appropriate to handle the case in this way due to a mental health condition.

Stage 3 Referrals

Stage 3 referrals are overseen by the Deputy Secretary (Student Experience) and it is rare for cases either to start directly at stage 3, or to reach this stage at all. Stage 3 should only be used for extreme and urgent cases and will be made by the College on behalf of the School/Deanery.

5. When to seek advice

Schools/ Deaneries can seek advice at any stage of the process from their relevant College. We suggest that if you feel a case may need to be handled under the Support for Study Process then you let the College know at an early stage to access appropriate advice and guidance, particularly if the case is serious and it is anticipated that a referral to Stage 2 may be required.

There is a close relationship between the Support for Study process and the [process for contacting a student's emergency contacts](#), as it is often the case that a student has not been responding to contact and these concerns lead to the Support for Study referral. Where the School/ Deanery has such concerns and is making contact with Emergency Contacts, please try to let the College know about the case as soon as possible, as this will allow us to act in a timely way should a Panel be

required. Please also bear in mind that it is often difficult to progress cases on a Friday due to limited support over the weekend, so early notice in the week is helpful where concerns arise.

It is important to be aware that Stage 2 referrals can take time to arrange, as they typically require the coordination of a panel of colleagues and the student should normally be given 5 working days' notice of the Support for Study meeting (although this can be shortened in serious situations).

6. Examples

The examples below outline some examples of 'unreasonable support demands', provide some detailed case studies, and explain some situations where cases would not be treated as a Support for Study case, despite being serious cases.

As each student case is individual and can be highly complex, it is not possible to cover every scenario that might arise, and Schools/Deaneries are encouraged to contact their relevant College offices to discuss real cases further.

a. Examples of Unreasonable Support Demands

The below are some examples of when a student's support demands might be considered unreasonable, but might not be considered a conduct matter because the student has a known physical or mental health issue and/or a disability which requires the case to be handled in a different way:

- The student is contacting one or more members of staff multiple times a week in an egregious or inappropriate manner
- The student is contacting members of staff out of hours and continues to expect a response across these times
- The student is rude or abusive
- The student is repeatedly disclosing upsetting or serious concerns (i.e., expressing suicidal thoughts or communicating in a way that is incoherent or suggests they are highly anxious or distressed) despite being referred to more appropriate sources of support

Colleagues are also advised to make the boundaries of support provision clear in their communications to student. It is appropriate to advise students to contact their GP/the NHS/the Police.

b. Case Studies

At the end of this document you will find an [annex](#) including case studies which provide examples of implementation of the Support for Study policy for different reasons/ at different levels.

Please note that although these case studies are drawn from experience, features have been changed and none of the case studies relate to a specific individual.

c. What is not considered to be a Support for Study case?

The main determining factor as to whether a case is considered under Support for Study is primarily behavioural. Below are some examples which do not explicitly fall under the Support for Study policy and would likely be managed via other processes or procedures.

- A student has disclosed they have a serious mental health disorder. The student is registered with SDS and has frequent engagement with their GP and/or other mental health professional. The student is struggling with their studies and is not progressing well. They are in regular contact with their SST/PT and ESC and they are frustrated by their lack of progression.

Advice: This is an example of a high-needs student who is nevertheless being appropriately supported by a range of colleagues. There are no specific behavioural concerns and the student is not a risk to themselves or others. The student's academic progression should be considered under normal progression processes. There will be instances where despite all support and intervention available, it is ultimately determined that an additional repeat year (for example) is not in the student's favour.

- A student has suffered a recent close bereavement and has become withdrawn. They have stopped engaging with their studies and have stopped responding to emails. The Emergency Contact Protocol is activated and the student's father is contacted. The father advises that they are in contact with the student and are not concerned but that they will let the student know that University is trying to contact them. The student continues to not engage and or respond to emails.

Advice: While an unfortunate situation, there are no serious/urgent concerns about this student's wellbeing, nor is their behaviour impacting on others. Depending on the time of year, this student can be handled via SEAM or progression.

7. What to do when a case doesn't meet the definition of 'Support for Study': Other relevant procedures, policies and practice

Where situations cause concern but they do not meet the definitions set out in the Support for Study Policy as above, the case may be better handled by referring to the procedures, policies and practice set out in the table below.

Many of the cases we deal with are multi-faceted, and there may be times when it is hard to identify how best to handle a case. Schools/Deaneries are encouraged in this situation to contact the relevant College Office at the earliest opportunity to discuss where further support or other action might be appropriate.

Other Relevant Procedures, Policies and Practice	
<p>Personal Tutor Meetings , 'Named Contact' Meetings, and School/Deanery Case Review Meetings</p> <p>Use where there are ongoing concerns about a student that require close monitoring but</p>	<p>A meeting with a Personal Tutor or student support role can be a useful informal means of exploring issues when initial concerns arise, and can be helpful at any time to check-in with a student about whom there are concerns (including when they are going through more formal processes such as Support for Study, or referral for Exclusion).</p> <p>School/Deanery Case Review Meetings can be used to discuss ongoing student case management issues and review new complex student cases, discussing potential actions, outcomes and implications. These may result in escalation to College/ central wellbeing services.</p> <p>Personal Tutor and School/Deanery Case Review meetings are a really important means of tracking and discussing students that need additional support but don't meet the definition of support for study.</p>

<p>don't meet the definition of Support for Study</p>	<p>Each College has produced guidance on Case Review Meetings: CAHSS Guidance >Insert Link< CSE Guidance >Insert Link< CMVM Guidance >Insert Link<</p>
<p>Informal Case Conferences (outwith Support for Study)</p>	<p>There will be instances where School/Deanery staff need advice and guidance from either College and/or central Wellbeing Services. A case conference to discuss a student situation – and the best way forward – can be convened at any point by the School/ Deanery. These do not need to be organised under a particular policy. Input into a student case and/or the management of their situation from colleagues across the University can occur outwith Support for Study.</p>
<p><u>Student Engagement and Attendance Monitoring for UKVI Sponsored Students</u></p> <p>Use to address engagement issues</p>	<p><u>International Student Engagement and Attendance Monitoring Policy and related guidance from the Student Immigration Service</u></p> <p>The Student Immigration Service publishes guidance on the monitoring and escalation of students sponsored by the University for the UKVI.</p> <p>This guidance provides a framework for Schools/Deaneries to identify and address cases where a sponsored (formerly Tier 4) student is not engaging with their studies. This is required from a compliance perspective and must be used when there are concerns about a sponsored student's engagement.</p> <p>Depending on the reasons for non-engagement, you may need to draw on other policies/ procedures depending on the reasons for poor engagement. Whilst it is essential that we meet our sponsor responsibilities, it is also important to provide relevant support and guidance in cases where there are concerns about a student's wellbeing.</p> <p>Additional attendance and engagement monitoring in CAHSS</p> <p>CAHSS Schools capture all small teaching events for all students, choosing not to differentiate between sponsored and non-sponsored. The primary purpose of this engagement monitoring is to provide the best possible academic and pastoral support for all students through intervention at an early stage when engagement drops below an expected threshold. Engagement monitoring is a key tool in schools' ability to identify and support students who are struggling academically or have health or other wellbeing issues that are impacting on their studies.</p>
<p><u>Withdrawal and Exclusion Policy</u></p> <p>Use where no further action can be taken at School/Deanery level to address non-attendance or non-</p>	<p>Exclusion Interviews</p> <p>Students must attend and participate as required in all aspects of the programme of study, as set out in the DPT and Programme Handbook.</p> <p>If a student is not meeting these requirements (whether sponsored by the UKVI or not), they can be referred to the College for non-attendance or non-engagement.</p> <p>Section C of the Withdrawal and Exclusion Policy sets out arrangements for Exclusion Interviews at College level. These interviews can result in exclusion,</p>

<p>engagement</p>	<p>but often result in the student being allowed to continue their studies under options permitted in the University regulations.</p> <p>Although an 'Exclusion Interview' may sound intimidating, these are always approached in a supportive way and will offer the student the opportunity to outline any mitigating factors. If you have attempted to encourage a student to attend/ engage and no further action can be taken at School level to encourage this, we recommend contacting your College Office/Deanery to discuss whether an exclusion interview would be appropriate.</p>
<p><u>Guidance for Staff on When to Contact Student Emergency Contacts</u></p>	<p>If you have exhausted attempts to contact a student or in an emergency where you think there is an urgent risk to the student's immediate health or safety, it may be appropriate on some occasions to contact the student's emergency contact.</p> <p>This guidance clearly sets out the steps you should take, and who you need to gain approval from, in order to reach out to a student's emergency contact, including a process flowchart and email templates.</p>
<p><u>Code of Student Conduct</u></p> <p>Use for behavioural issues where there is not a health issue or disability, or the issue is so serious it might warrant a penalty regardless.</p>	<p>A key feature of the Support for Study Policy is that it is used to address behavioural issues where there are grounds for believing that this behaviour relates to the student's physical or mental ill-health (including a disability) and the likely outcome would not result in a penalty under the Code of Student Conduct.</p> <p>If there are no known or suspected physical or mental ill-health factors, or a disability, then the matter should be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct.</p> <p>Equally, if the behavioural issues constitute a potentially severe breach of the Code, it may be appropriate to deal with this via the Code of Student Conduct regardless. If you are made aware of a serious behavioural issue and aren't sure whether this should be dealt with as Support for Study or under the Code of Student Conduct, please contact either the relevant College Office or Academic Services for further discussion.</p>
<p><u>Special Circumstances</u></p>	<p>As always, if a student advises the School/Deanery of illness, accident or other circumstances beyond their control which are having an adverse impact on their studies, it is advisable to make them aware of the Special Circumstances Policy and process.</p>

Annex: Case Studies

>Behavioural SfS example handled at level 1<

>Behavioural SfS example handled at level 2<

Stage 3 example

Student A is a first-year international student, who is commencing their studies remotely. In advance of the semester starting, the student submits medical evidence to SDS as part of a needs assessment, which includes information that the student wants to commit suicide. Separately, the student is in correspondence with their PT, who also raises serious concerns with SDS about the student's behaviour and the level of support required.

SDS staff call the student who provides an account of their mental state and wellbeing which indicates a high risk of suicide. Further investigation indicates the student had multiple previous suicide attempts and had been seeing a private counsellor.

Before a decision can be taken as to how to support the student in their remote studies, they decide to travel to Edinburgh.

Action taken at this point: SDS allocate a mental health mentor, and weekly meetings are arranged for the student to attend.

The student does not engage with meetings consistently, and does not respond to attempts to contact them. Staff are increasingly worried about their wellbeing.

Actions taken at this point:

1. The emergency contact procedure is initiated because the student does not respond to contact. The Police are also called. It is confirmed that the student is safe but the behaviour they exhibit indicates they are not coping well and are considered a high risk case, although they are not detained in hospital at this time.
2. An informal case conference is convened with representatives from the School, Student Wellbeing Services and the College to decide how best to approach the case. It is agreed that given the known high level of risk (based on the student's history, the behaviours they are exhibiting, and the detail they have described in relation to their plans) and ongoing lack of engagement with their academic studies and attempts to contact them, that the situation should be escalated immediately to Stage 3 of the Support for Study process. This is agreed by the Deputy Secretary (Student Experience) given the high and immediate level of risk.
3. In preparation for the Stage 3 Escalation Meeting, a risk assessment is carried out by the Director of Student Wellbeing, giving consideration to the student's history, accommodation, family, social support, and academic considerations. Medical evidence from a psychiatrist is also provided by the student.

4. The Support for Study Stage 3 Panel conduct an interview with the student to consider their case.

Outcome: The student is permitted to continue with their studies provided that they meet certain conditions (e.g. meeting fortnightly with a mental health mentor, meeting monthly with the Student Mental Health Coordinator). An expedited referral route is put in place in case further concerns are raised – this would result in immediate re-referral to the Stage 3 Panel.

Other case studies

Not SfS but close case management required

Not SfS but SEAM

Not SfS, but Emergency Contacts, then Exclusion

Fitness to practice

DRAFT

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

27 January 2022

ESC Review – Coursework Extension Update for Semester 1 21/22

Description of paper

1. This paper considers coursework extensions submissions to the ESC Service in semester 1 of 2021/22 detailing volume, trends within current policy. The committee requested regular updates as part of the ESC Review to reflect on service demand and review outcomes. The service is seeking review of the relevant taught assessment policies for 2022/23 to reflect the service demand, changes in student behaviour and need for study skill support.

Action requested

2. APRC ongoing discussion and engagement with the ESC Review in relation to coursework and special circumstances policies. No definitive outcome requested within the paper.

Background and context

3. The ESC Review was announced and detailed at the 25th November 2021 meeting. Lisa Dawson was asked to regularly report on service and review progress. This paper provides reflection on the coursework extension applications in detail, including volume, themes and challenges for semester 1 of 2021/22 under the current policy. Course Organisers and Schools decide if a coursework extension is allowed for each assessment and, if so, for up to a 7-day period.

4. Since launch of the service, applications for coursework extensions remain high. Covid mitigating policies in place for 2020/21 influenced the volume in the first year of service. There has been a shift in student behaviour with some courses receiving coursework extension applications from 40-60% of the class having a knock on effect for marking and feedback. There is a high volume of applications sighting mental health as a result of multiple competing deadlines. We have provided data, which outlines peak weeks of assessment aligning with increases in applications. The vast majority of applications are coming into the service in the last 24 hours before the deadline with Monday seeing the biggest demand.

5. The service has begun to work with IAD on creating resources for students to reflect on whether a coursework extension is the right solution. We are also creating communications to Personal Tutors and Directors of Teaching to support ongoing discussion with students.

Discussion

6. We are asking the committee to discuss the current coursework extension policy, which has over a dozen acceptable self-reporting reasons and to reflect on the student experience. In addition, the implications on staff involved in the

administration and marking of assessment. Is there further study skills we can enhance to support students across their courses. Or is the solution to reduce the acceptable reasons in the policy for 2022/23. This is not without impact on special circumstance applications, which are evidence-based.

Resource implications

7. Resourcing implications are detailed as part of ESC team resourcing.

Risk Management

8. The proposal does not present any significant risks.

Equality & Diversity

9. Equality and Diversity has been considered and the proposal does not carry likely impacts for student in any particular characteristic groups.

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

10. The discussion outcomes will be part of the ESC Review for consideration by the Board.

Author

Sarah McAllister
Head of Student Support Operations

Presenter

Sarah McAllister

Freedom of Information

This paper is open.

Extensions and Special Circumstances Service
Coursework Extension Update for Semester 1 21/22
January 2022

Background

In the 20/21 academic year, the Extensions and Special Circumstances service (ESC) received a total of 68,381 applications under the Covid mitigation policy. Since the 4th October* 2021 ESC has received 22,998 course work extensions, with 1,799 (10-12%) initially rejected. The initial rejection rate is reduced to 8% after further declaration by students. If this rate continues, the service may receive significantly more applications than the previous year.

Every application must be thoroughly reviewed in order to identify situations where there may be student welfare concerns, and it is not possible to automate this system at this point. As a result, the ESC team resource is fully committed to this process, which limits its ability to respond to other University priorities such as supporting marginalised student groups.

In addition, there are concerns that students may be applying for a course extension/special circumstances in order to cope with workload; additional learning needs; personal circumstances; or caring responsibilities when other support routes would be more appropriate.

Initial analysis of the submission data indicates there are a 4-5 Schools, which have high levels of applications to the ESC Service totally 53% of applications compared to their overall student numbers. This may be due to strong communication systems within those Schools, which means students are more aware of the option to request an extension, or it may be that bunching of assessments in some courses is causing issues. IAD have agreed that Dr Neil Lent, a specialist in university assessment and feedback, is able to talk to these Schools if they wish to discuss their assessment practises. Longer-term support from IAD would have to be negotiated based on IAD's commitments to other projects.

APRC is asked to consider the policy, and whether it is meeting student and staff needs. It is clear students are struggling with multiple competing deadlines through the 'bunching' of assessment. Staff involved in marking are having to adjust their marking time particularly for courses where up to 60% of the class cohort have coursework extensions.

* 4th October 2021 is used to avoid cross over with resit and postgraduate taught assessment form the previous academic year.

Application rates

Coursework extensions can be broken down into the policy's acceptable reasons with mental and physical health representing the vast majority of submissions.

Acceptable Reason	Volume of applications
Mental Illness	7,880
Physical ill-health	7,463
Other (eg. accommodation issues, group work issues, issues not covered by other categories)	1,779

Illness of someone close	992
Death	768
Exceptional and significant change in employment responsibilities	532
Physical injury	455
Long term relationship breakdown	397
Job or internship interview at short notice that requires significant time	376
Exceptional caring responsibilities	286
Prolonged exposure to difficult/challenging home environment	283
Catastrophic technical failure preventing submission of an online assessment by the relevant deadline	274
Sporting Commitments at International or National Championship level	96
Victim or witness of a crime	94
Severe financial difficulties	80
Lack of access to library resources where there are no viable options	65
Experience of sexual harassment or sexual assault	64
Extreme weather conditions	48
Experience of other forms of harassment or bullying	23
Military conflict	13
Natural disaster	8

Reasons for rejection of application:

There are three main reasons for an application being rejected:

- **Incomplete forms** - use of broad statements without any details on impact or applications without enough information to make a judgement against the policy. For example, '*I have a cold.*' These applications are followed up and generally are approved based on appropriate details being provided.
- **Time management** – not an acceptable reason and often rejections are followed up by citing mental health and further details resulting in approval.
- **Technical issues** – not backing up work, which is not catastrophic, our focus is on time-limited situations such as online examinations. The vast majority of failure to back up work is relevant to first year students who may not be receiving instruction on how to back of their work as standard practice.

Timing of applications to ESC Service:

We have identified volume of assessment across weeks through the Assessment and Progression Tool as a way to manage and resource peak weeks where we are seeing students with multiple deadlines and struggling to cope. For semester one we can see there is continual growth in assessment peaking in revision week right before examinations . Whereas, semester two has a long and continuous tail.

Peak periods of ESC submissions show a strong relation to weeks with high volumes of assessment across the University.

Themes

We have identified what we are calling 'cohort applications', for example, across a large course, the same reasons being used to seek a coursework extension by students. There is not a direct copy and paste of statements; however, the similarities in symptoms are identifiable, including a combination of:

- Hair loss
- Lack of sleep
- Heart palpitations
- Eating too little or too much

Communication

All ESC Service communications and our website remind students to seek local student support prior to submission of an application; however, we are aware students are making applications prior to the start of teaching and without full consideration of impact on remaining assessments and revision. The service is working with IAD to enable students to identify web resource to help them consider in detail if a coursework extension is the best approach. We also plan to engage with the Director of Teaching Network and Personal Tutors as, at times, information shared with Schools is not being disseminated. <https://www.edweb.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/extensions-special-circumstances/staff>

Benchmarking

A benchmarking exercise undertaken in January 2021 of 10 comparator universities showed very little use of self-reporting and coursework extensions across the sector. Instead, evidenced based extenuating or special circumstance policies are utilised to support students. Benchmarking of study support would be beneficial in relation to time management; managing with additional needs such as dyslexia and ADHD, managing longer-term conditions, caring responsibilities and paid work commitments.

Escalation

In 21/22 an enhanced approach to [escalated cases](#) was launched. The service was asked to record volume and ensure evidence of cases where acknowledged by the relevant school to take forward supporting the student or signposting to support services. Each school has appointed representatives and we consider each situation rather than individual student to ensure any increase in severity is considered. The process also supports schools to identify and prioritise student support. The ESC escalation process was to be supported by a University escalation policy, which we are advised is forthcoming. In addition to escalated cases, we introduced flagged cases:

- Escalated - where the service identifies threat to life or others, disclosure of sexual or domestic violence

- Flagged- where the service identifies significant mental health issues, difficult home situation, eating disorders that may worsen or could benefit from school support or signposting

As the semester has progressed the volume of flagged cases has increased. A total of 241 cases have been escalated with 383 flagged to schools in semester 1.

Resourcing

The ESC service initially was staffed based on business case numbers of less than 5,000 application submissions. In 20/21, the core team of 3.6 FTE expanded to 13.6 FTE by utilising temporary staff across the academic session. In 21/22, the core team has expanded to 8.6 FTE by the addition of five one-year fix term contracts while policy considerations are made. A further three temporary staff also supporting the team for a total of 11.6 FTE. Currently, the majority of the team FTE is focused on coursework extensions for approximately 46 weeks of the year to remain within the two-day turnaround period. The focus then shifts to peak periods of special circumstance submissions for the remaining weeks. Policy changes to reduce the breadth of the coursework extension reason available would reduce the reliance on temporary staff for extended periods. However, we must acknowledge that there is potential for special circumstances applications increasing.

Policy

Currently, the policy is incredibly broad to cover the acceptable reasons detailed above that may affect attendance and submission of assessment. It is via self-reporting and no evidence is required.

APRC is asked to consider:

- Are the breath of valid reasons within the current policy creating a higher workload for all involved in the administration and marking of assessment?
- Are we are supporting our students appropriately?
- How do create an environment of a coursework extension being exceptional rather than common practice?
- How do we support time management and other study skills?
- How do we avoid 'bunching' of assessment by looking beyond course by course?
- Aligning with the Assessment Working Group outcomes and Student Support Review.
- Longer-term consideration of assessment in curriculum transformation.

Appendix 1: Course Extensions and Special Circumstances per School

College / School	Total CE	Total SC	Taught Student Numbers	% of CE total	% of SC total	CE / School Student number	SC / School Student number
CAHSS							
Business	1338	267	2110	5.82	5.01	0.63	0.13
COL	18	29	1635	0.07	0.54	0.01	0.02
ECA	2134	426	3095	9.28	8.00	0.69	0.14
Moray House	1007	237	3080	4.38	4.45	0.33	0.08
Divinity	288	103	350	1.25	1.94	0.82	0.29
Economics	125	198	1140	0.54	3.72	0.11	0.17
Health in Social Science	589	106	1115	2.56	1.99	0.53	0.10
HCA	2015	430	1890	8.76	8.08	1.07	0.23
LAW	407	164	1730	1.77	3.08	0.24	0.09
LLC	2260	407	2485	9.83	7.65	0.91	0.16
PPLS	2485	421	2100	10.81	7.91	1.18	0.20
SPS	3457	673	2700	15.03	12.65	1.28	0.25
Total	16123	3461		70.11	65.02		
CSE							
Biological Sciences	805	221	970	3.50	4.15	0.83	0.23
Chemistry	196	95	720	0.85	1.79	0.27	0.13
Engineering	943	280	2125	4.10	5.26	0.44	0.13
GeoSciences	1091	147	1530	4.74	2.76	0.71	0.10
Informatics	1403	196	1650	6.10	6.44	0.85	0.12
Maths	526	225	1150	2.28	4.23	0.46	0.20
Physics and Astronomy	333	144	840	1.45	2.71	0.40	0.17
Total	5297	1308		23.02	27.34		
CMVM							
Biomedical Sciences	1081	226	1870	4.70	4.25	0.58	0.12
Clinical Sciences	159	95	1125	0.69	1.79	0.14	0.08
Medical School	50	41	1200	0.22	0.77	0.04	0.03
Molecular, Genetic, and Population Health Sciences	152	53	390	0.66	1.00	0.40	0.14
Vet School	136	138	1675	0.59	2.59	0.08	0.08
Total	1578	553		6.86	10.40		
Total	22998	5322					

Appendix 2: Assessment by weeks (excluding PGT dissertation)

Semester	Week	Week Commencing	Number of Assessments Due
1	1	20/09/2021	42
1	2	27/09/2021	77
1	3	04/10/2021	125
1	4	11/10/2021	201
1	5	18/10/2021	306
1	6	25/10/2021	425
1	7	01/11/2021	399
1	8	08/11/2021	289
1	9	15/11/2021	333
1	10	22/11/2021	310
1	11	29/11/2021	516
1	Revision	06/12/2021	704
1	Exams	13/12/2021	457
1	Exams	20/12/2021	35
	Xmas Closure	27/12/2021	9
		03/01/2022	53
		10/01/2022	26
2	1	17/01/2022	47
2	2	24/01/2022	80
2	3	31/01/2022	84
2	4	07/02/2022	127
2	5	14/02/2022	212
2	FLW	21/02/2022	112
2	6	28/02/2022	299
2	7	07/03/2022	187
2	8	14/03/2022	193
2	9	21/03/2022	230
2	10	28/03/2022	261
2	11	04/04/2022	326
2	Spring Vacation	11/04/2022	172
2	Spring Vacation	18/04/2022	169
2	Revision	25/04/2022	319
2	Exams	02/05/2022	254
2	Exams	09/05/2022	84
2	Exams	16/05/2022	46
2	Exams	23/05/2022	16

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

27 January 2022

Deadlines for Submission of Special Circumstances

Description of paper

1. The paper proposes an amendment to the deadline for late submission of Special Circumstances applications, and to the wording of the Special Circumstances Policy regarding the standard deadline for applications.

Action requested / recommendation

2. APRC is asked to discuss the paper and consider the proposals in sections 7 and 11.

Background and context

3. Section 3.1 of the Special Circumstances Policy states the following regarding deadlines for Special Circumstances applications:

“3.1 It is the responsibility of students to submit their application for consideration of special circumstances to the Extensions and Special Circumstances service using the online system as soon as possible and not more than a week after the student’s final assessment for the semester. The ESC service will only consider accepting submissions after this deadline where students provide evidence of exceptional reasons for having been unable to submit on time. No late applications will be considered after the deadline for the entry of ratified marks into the Student Record, as set out in the University Key Dates.”

4. In Semester 1, 2021/22, the University pushed back the ratification dates for UG and PGT results, in recognition of the additional pressures being experienced by Schools. In November 2021, APRC agreed that the deadline for submission of late Special Circumstances applications would remain in line with the original deadline for ratification, rather than the amended deadline. However, APRC agreed at that time that a further discussion about the potential to decouple the deadline for late Special Circumstances submissions from the deadline for ratification of results was warranted.
5. Through discussion with Colleges and ESC, it has become clear that each School has been routinely setting an initial deadline for receipt of Special Circumstances applications. These deadlines are published on the ESC web pages.

Discussion

Standard deadline for Special Circumstances applications

6. The current practice within Schools and the ESC service of publishing individual deadlines for each School is not consistent with the existing wording in the policy,

which sets the deadline at “not more than a week after the student’s final assessment for the Semester”. However, it appears that this discrepancy between policy and practice has not led to concerns among students. The approach being taken at present has some significant advantages over the approach set out in the policy, since it:

- a. Allows Schools to communicate a clear deadline to students, which does not vary from student to student;
 - b. Simplifies for the ESC service the process of deciding whether an application is late;
 - c. Allows Schools to set deadlines which accommodate the scheduling of their Board of Examiners meetings.
7. On this basis, we would propose to amend the wording in the policy to reflect the current practice within Schools, as follows:

“It is the responsibility of students to submit their application for consideration of special circumstances to the Extensions and Special Circumstances service using the online system as soon as possible following the affected assessment, and no later than the deadline for the relevant School published on the ESC website for each Semester”.

APRC is asked to approve this proposed amendment to section 3.1 of the Special Circumstances Policy.

Deadline for late applications

8. The University has traditionally offered a window for submission of late Special Circumstances requests, in recognition of the fact that some students may miss the original deadline by a short period due to the impact of their circumstances. Where students come forward with Special Circumstances long after the deadline for applications and have a good reason for the delay, they can still submit an application to the Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) service, but this will only be considered in the event that the relevant Board of Examiners is willing to receive the case. This is in line with the Board of Examiners power under Taught Assessment Regulation 64.1:

“A Board of Examiners may, at the request of any of its members or member of the Special Circumstances Committee, review a decision if significant information relevant to that decision, which was unavailable at the time the decision was made, comes to light...”

In any case, however, students who come forward late with Special Circumstances, where they have a good reason for the delay in applying, also have the right to submit an academic appeal.

9. Before the 2021/22 academic session, there was no central deadline for late submission of Special Circumstances applications, with Schools having discretion to accept valid late applications by whatever deadline they determined. With the introduction of the ESC service, the University introduced the deadline currently

set out in section 3.1 of the Policy, above. Some Schools have raised concerns about the fact that the existing deadline is linked to the ratification deadline for final results, most frequently referencing the following issues:

- a) The deadline coming so long after initial Special Circumstances Committees have been held requires Schools to reconvene and often revisit decisions on multiple occasions, which is administratively burdensome;
- b) It can be difficult or impossible to finalise decisions regarding late applications before the publication of final results to students, which can lead to uncertainty for students.

In addition to this, it should also be noted that:

- c) Students are unlikely to be familiar with the University's Key Dates, or specifically the dates for ratification of final results.

10. Based upon these concerns, Schools have requested an amendment to the Special Circumstances Policy, shortening the window for submission of late applications. Reducing the period of time offered for late submission of Special Circumstances applications should not be significantly detrimental to students since it does not present a "cliff edge" in terms of the University considering and responding to their circumstances. As stated above, where students come forward with qualifying circumstances after the deadline, these may still go through the ESC process at the discretion of the relevant Board of Examiners, and students also have the right to submit an academic appeal under the following ground within the Student Appeal Regulations:

"Ground A: Substantial information directly relevant to the quality of performance in the assessment which for good reason was not available to the examiners when their decision was taken."

Students submitting applications for Special Circumstances after the deadline for late applications are routinely advised by ESC of their right to submit an academic appeal and directed to guidance about the appeals process.

11. Based on discussions with Colleges and the ESC team, we propose that the Special Circumstances Policy should be amended to state that the deadline date for late submission of Special Circumstances applications will be published by ESC at the start of each Semester for courses due to be completed that Semester, and will be no later than:

- i. The end of the January welcome period, for courses completed in Semester 1;
- ii. One week after the end of the Semester 2 exam diet, for courses completed in Semester 2;
- iii. Two weeks after the end of the August resit diet, for assessments completed in the resit diet.

APRC is asked to discuss the proposed amended deadlines and approve these or propose alternatives.

12. The deadline could be published within the FAQs section of the ESC web pages. It would be important to avoid confusion with the main deadline for submission of Special Circumstances, since it is not desirable that students treat the deadline for late submission as the main deadline.
13. There is currently significant variation in the standard deadlines set by Schools for receipt of Special Circumstances applications following Semester 1, based predominantly on the fact that Boards of Examiners meetings in the College of Science of Engineering are generally held much earlier than those in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. This may mean that, for some Schools, the deadline for late applications will align precisely with the standard deadline for applications. For those PGT programmes (predominantly in CMVM) which involve teaching in Block 5 (i.e. after the end of Semester 2), a further deadline for late submission of Special Circumstances relating to courses taught in Block 5 will be agreed between ESC and relevant Deaneries/Schools annually, and published on the ESC web pages.

Resource implications

14. The shortening of the window for late submission of Special Circumstances applications could lead to an increase in academic appeal submissions. However, we expect any such increase to be small, and manageable within existing resources within Academic Services.

Risk management

15. The proposal does not present any significant risks.

Equality & diversity

16. The proposal does not carry specific impacts for students in protected characteristic groups. The impact of disabilities upon study are primarily addressed through Schedules of Adjustments, though students with disabilities may submit Special Circumstances applications in relation to unexpected or temporary flare-ups in their conditions. As above, however, students who miss the deadline for late applications for Special Circumstances may still be able to have their application considered, where their School is amenable to this, and will always have the right to submit an academic appeal.

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

17. If the proposal is approved, Academic Services will amend the Special Circumstances Policy with effect from the beginning of the 2022/23 academic session. The changes to the Policy will be highlighted in our annual email update to Schools and Colleges in the summer.

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

27 January 2022

Academic Year Dates 2023/24 and Provisional Academic Year Dates 2024/25 and 2025/26

Description of paper

1. This paper provides proposed academic year dates 2023/24 and provisional academic year dates 2024/25 and 2025/26 for Committee approval (see Section A). The academic year dates for 2022/23 have already been approved by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee and are available at:

www.ed.ac.uk/semester-dates/202223

This paper also lists the programmes with non-standard academic year dates for Committee approval (see Section B). This information is available on the website and College Committee representatives are asked to check if this information is still correct at the time of the meeting (January 2022).

www.ed.ac.uk/semester-dates/programmes-with-non-standard-academic-years

Action requested / recommendation

2. For approval

Background and context

3. Annual paper approving academic year dates

Discussion

4. See attached paper

Resource implications

5. No resource implications

Risk management

6. No key risks associated with this paper

Equality and diversity

7. Equality and diversity issues have been considered. No impact assessment is required

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

8. The information will be conveyed to Communications and Marketing who will re-format and formally publish at www.ed.ac.uk/semester-dates

Author

Ailsa Taylor, Academic Services, January 2022

Freedom of Information Open

A. Academic Year Dates 2023/24, and Provisional Academic Year Dates 2024/25 and 2025/26

Academic Year Dates 2023/24

1	11 September 2023	Induction
2	18 September 2023	T1
3	25 September 2023	T2
4	02 October 2023	T3
5	09 October 2023	T4
6	16 October 2023	T5
7	23 October 2023	T6
8	30 October 2023	T7
9	06 November 2023	T8
10	13 November 2023	T9
11	20 November 2023	T10
12	27 November 2023	T11
13	04 December 2023	Revision
14	11 December 2023	Exams
15	18 December 2023	Exams
16	25 December 2023	Winter vac 1
17	01 January 2024	Winter vac 2
18	08 January 2024	Winter vac 3
19	15 January 2024	T1
20	22 January 2024	T2
21	29 January 2024	T3
22	05 February 2024	T4
23	12 February 2024	T5
24	19 February 2024	Flexible Learning Week
25	26 February 2024	T6
26	04 March 2024	T7
27	11 March 2024	T8
28	18 March 2024	T9
29	25 March 2024	T10
30	01 April 2024	T11
31	08 April 2024	Spring vac 1
32	15 April 2024	Spring vac 2
33	22 April 2024	Revision
34	29 April 2024	Exams
35	06 May 2024	Exams
36	13 May 2024	Exams
37	20 May 2024	Exams
38	27 May 2024	Summer vac 1
39	03 June 2024	Summer vac 2
40	10 June 2024	Summer vac 3
41	17 June 2024	Summer vac 4
42	24 June 2024	Summer vac 5
43	01 July 2024	Summer vac 6
44	08 July 2024	Summer vac 7
45	15 July 2024	Summer vac 8
46	22 July 2024	Summer vac 9
47	29 July 2024	Summer vac 10
48	05 August 2024	Summer vac 11
49	12 August 2024	Summer vac 12
50	19 August 2024	Summer vac 13
51	26 August 2024	Summer vac 14
52	02 September 2024	Summer vac 15

Provisional Academic Year Dates 2024/25

1	9 September 2024	Induction
2	16 September 2024	T1
3	23 September 2024	T2
4	30 September 2024	T3
5	07 October 2024	T4
6	14 October 2024	T5
7	21 October 2024	T6
8	28 October 2024	T7
9	04 November 2024	T8
10	11 November 2024	T9
11	18 November 2024	T10
12	25 November 2024	T11
13	02 December 2024	Revision
14	9 December 2024	Exams
15	16 December 2024	Exams
16	23 December 2024	Winter vac 1
17	30 December 2024	Winter vac 2
18	06 January 2025	Winter vac 3
19	13 January 2025	T1
20	20 January 2025	T2
21	27 January 2025	T3
22	03 February 2025	T4
23	10 February 2025	T5
24	17 February 2025	Flexible Learning Week
25	24 February 2025	T6
26	03 March 2025	T7
27	10 March 2025	T8
28	17 March 2025	T9
29	24 March 2025	T10
30	31 March 2025	T11
31	07 April 2025	Spring vac 1
32	14 April 2025	Spring vac 2
33	21 April 2025	Revision
34	28 April 2025	Exams
35	05 May 2025	Exams
36	12 May 2025	Exams
37	19 May 2025	Exams
38	26 May 2025	Summer vac 1
39	02 June 2025	Summer vac 2
40	09 June 2025	Summer vac 3
41	16 June 2025	Summer vac 4
42	23 June 2025	Summer vac 5
43	30 June 2025	Summer vac 6
44	07 July 2025	Summer vac 7
45	14 July 2025	Summer vac 8
46	21 July 2025	Summer vac 9
47	28 July 2025	Summer vac 10
48	04 August 2025	Summer vac 11
49	11 August 2025	Summer vac 12
50	18 August 2025	Summer vac 13
51	25 August 2025	Summer vac 14
52	01 September 2025	Summer vac 15

Provisional Academic Year Dates 2025/26

1	8 September 2025	Induction
2	15 September 2025	T1
3	22 September 2025	T2
4	29 September 2025	T3
5	06 October 2025	T4
6	13 October 2025	T5
7	20 October 2025	T6
8	27 October 2025	T7
9	03 November 2025	T8
10	10 November 2025	T9
11	17 November 2025	T10
12	24 November 2025	T11
13	01 December 2025	Revision
14	8 December 2025	Exams
15	15 December 2025	Exams
16	22 December 2025	Winter vac 1
17	29 December 2025	Winter vac 2
18	05 January 2026	Winter vac 3
19	12 January 2026	T1
20	19 January 2026	T2
21	26 January 2026	T3
22	02 February 2026	T4
23	9 February 2026	T5
24	16 February 2026	Flexible Learning Week
25	23 February 2026	T6
26	02 March 2026	T7
27	9 March 2026	T8
28	16 March 2026	T9
29	23 March 2026	T10
30	30 March 2026	T11
31	06 April 2026	Spring vac 1
32	13 April 2026	Spring vac 2
33	20 April 2026	Revision
34	27 April 2026	Exams
35	04 May 2026	Exams
36	11 May 2026	Exams
37	18 May 2026	Exams
38	25 May 2026	Summer vac 1
39	01 June 2026	Summer vac 2
40	08 June 2026	Summer vac 3
41	15 June 2026	Summer vac 4
42	22 June 2026	Summer vac 5
43	29 June 2026	Summer vac 6
44	06 July 2026	Summer vac 7
45	13 July 2026	Summer vac 8
46	20 July 2026	Summer vac 9
47	27 July 2026	Summer vac 10
48	03 August 2026	Summer vac 11
49	10 August 2026	Summer vac 12
50	17 August 2026	Summer vac 13
51	24 August 2026	Summer vac 14
52	31 August 2026	Summer vac 15

B. Programmes with Non-Standard Academic Years

Committee members are asked to check that the following list of programmes with non-standard academic years is still correct at the time of the meeting (January 2022). This information is available on the University's website at:

www.ed.ac.uk/semester-dates/programmes-with-non-standard-academic-years

College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science

Business School

- Business Administration, Master of (MBA)(Full-time)
- Business Administration with International Exchange, Master of (MBA)(Full-time)
- Executive Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Centre for Open Learning

- Access Programme
- International Foundation Programme

School of Economics

Postgraduate

- Mathematical Economics and Econometrics (MSc)

Edinburgh College of Art

Postgraduate

- European Master's in Landscape Architecture (European Masters)
- Urban Strategies and Design (MSc)

The Moray House School of Education

Undergraduate

- Community Education (BA Hons) (Full-time)
- Primary Education with Gaelic (Fluent) MA (Hons)
- Primary Education with Gaelic (Learners) MA (Hons)
- Primary Education with Earth Sciences MA (Hons)
- Primary Education with History MA (Hons)
- Primary Education with Mathematics MA (Hons)
- Primary Education with Modern Languages (German) MA (Hons)
- Primary Education with Religious Studies MA (Hons)
- Primary Education with Scottish Studies MA (Hons)
- Physical Education MA (Hons)

Postgraduate

- Dance Science and Education (MSc)
- Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Primary) (PGDE)
- Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary) (PGDE)
- Outdoor Education (MSc)
- Outdoor Environmental Education (MSc)
- Transformative Learning and Teaching (MSc)

Online learning

- Digital Education (Online Learning) (MSc/PgDip/PgCert)
- Social Justice and Community Action (Online Learning) (MSc/PgDip/PgCert)

[School of Law](#)

Professional development

- Diploma in Professional Legal Practice

[School of Health in Social Science](#)

Undergraduate

- Nursing Studies BN (Hons)

Postgraduate

- Applied Psychology for Children and Young People (MSc)
- Clinical Psychology (DClinPsychol)
- Counselling Studies (PgCert)
- Counselling (PgDip)
- Interpersonal Dialogue (MCouns)
- Nursing (MN)
- Psychological Therapies (MSc)
- Psychotherapy and Counselling (DPsychotherapy)

[School of Social and Political Science](#)

Undergraduate

- Social Work (BSc Hons)

College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

[Edinburgh Medical School](#)

Undergraduate

- Oral Health Sciences (BSc)
- [MBChB Medicine \(6-year programme\)](#)

Postgraduate

- Endodontology (DClinDent)
- Oral Surgery (MClinDent & DClinDent)
- Orthodontics Dentistry (MClinDent & DClinDent)
- Paediatric Dentistry (MClinDent & DClinDent)
- Prosthodontics Dentistry (MClinDent & DClinDent)

Postgraduate online learning

- Anatomical Sciences (Online Learning) (PgDip)
- Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystem Health (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Clinical Education (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Clinical Management of Pain (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Clinical Ophthalmology (Online Learning) (ChM)
- Clinical Trials (Online Learning) (MSc)

- Critical Care (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Data Science, Health and Social Care (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Dental Sedation and Anxiety Management (Online Learning) (PgCert)
- Epidemiology (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Family Medicine (Online Learning) (MFM)
- General Surgery (Online Learning) (ChM)
- Global Health and Infectious Diseases (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Global Health Challenges (Online Learning) (PgCert)
- Global Health Studies (Online Learning) (PgCert)
- Imaging (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Integrated Global Health (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Internal Medicine (Online Learning) (MSc)
- International Animal Health (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Paediatric Emergency Medicine (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Patient Safety and Clinical Human Factors (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Primary Care Ophthalmology (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Public Health (Online Learning) (MPH) (Full-time)
- Public Health (Online Learning) (MPH) (Part-time)
- Science Communication and Public Engagement (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Stem Cells and Translational Neurology (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Surgical Sciences (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Trauma and Orthopaedics (Online Learning) (ChM)
- Restorative Dentistry (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Urology (Online Learning) (ChM)
- Vascular and Endovascular Surgery (Online Learning) (ChM)

[Royal \(Dick\) School of Veterinary Studies](#)

Undergraduate

- [BVM&S Veterinary Medicine \(5-year programme\)](#)
- [BVM&S Veterinary Medicine \(Graduate Entry Programme - 4-year programme\)](#)

Postgraduate online learning

- Advanced Clinical Practice (Online Learning) (MVetSci)
- Advanced Veterinary Practice (Online Learning) (RCVS Certificate)
- Applied Conservation Genetics and Wildlife Forensics (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Applied Poultry Science (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Clinical Animal Behaviour (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Conservation Medicine (Online Learning) (MVetSci)
- Equine Science (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Food Safety (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Global Food Security and Nutrition (Online Learning) (MSc)
- International Animal Welfare, Ethics and Law (Online Learning) (MSc)
- One Health (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Veterinary Anaesthesia and Analgesia (Online Learning) (MSc)
- Veterinary Epidemiology (Online Learning) (MSc)

College of Science and Engineering

[College of Science & Engineering](#)

Postgraduate online learning

- Data Science, Technology and Innovation (Online Learning) (MSc, PGDip, PgCert)