

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)
held at 2pm on Wednesday 24 May 2017
in Room 235, Joseph Black Building**

1. Attendance

Present:

Professor Sian Bayne	Director of Centre for Research in Digital Education (co-opted member)
Mr Patrick Garratt	Vice President (Academic Affairs), Edinburgh University Students' Association (ex officio)
Professor Judy Hardy	Director of Teaching, School of Physics and Astronomy, CSE
Professor Tina Harrison	Assistant Principal (Academic Standards and Quality Assurance)
Professor Peter Higgins	Representative of Social Responsibility and Sustainability
Ms Melissa Highton	Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division (ex officio)
Professor Charlie Jeffery (Convener)	Senior Vice-Principal
Ms Nichola Kett	Academic Governance Representative, Academic Services
Mr John Lowrey	Dean of Undergraduate Studies (CAHSS)
Ms Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka	Edinburgh University Students' Association, Academic Engagement Co-ordinator (ex officio)
Dr Antony Maciocia	Senior Lecturer, School of Mathematics, CSE (co-opted member)
Dr Velda McCune	Deputy Director, Institute for Academic Development (Director's nominee) (ex officio)
Professor Anna Meredith	Director for Postgraduate Taught, CMVM
Professor Neil Mulholland	Dean of Postgraduate Studies (CAHSS)
Professor Graeme Reid	Dean of Learning and Teaching, CSE
Professor Neil Turner	Director of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning, CMVM
Mrs Philippa Ward (Secretary)	Academic Services
Mr Tom Ward	University Secretary's Nominee, Director of Academic Services (ex officio)

Apologies:

Professor Sarah Cunningham-Burley	Assistant Principal (Research-Led Learning)
Ms Rebecca Gaukroger	Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions (ex officio)
Ms Shelagh Green	Director, Careers Service (co-opted member)
Dr Elaine Haycock-Stuart	Director of Learning and Teaching, School of Health in Social Science (co-opted member)

In attendance:

Professor Jeremy Bradshaw	Assistant Principal Researcher Development
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Ms Laura Cattell	Representing Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions
Professor Dragan Gasevic	Chair in Learning Analytics and Informatics
Dr Donna Murray	Institute for Academic Development
Professor Susan Rhind	Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2017 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Update on Feedback Quality Monitoring (Item 6)

The Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback reported that, despite no longer being required to report centrally on feedback turnaround times, Schools were generally continuing to monitor turnaround times and to take remedial action where necessary. The effectiveness of the new approach would be reviewed once the findings of Semester 2 Course Evaluation Questionnaires were available.

3.2 Reporting on Feedback Quality and Turnaround Times via the Programme Monitoring Form (Item 6)

The Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance reported that there would be no change to the Programme Monitoring Form this year in order to incorporate reporting on feedback quality and turnaround times as the Form had already been circulated. However, School Directors of Quality had been asked to note any information relating to feedback turnaround times, particularly areas of good practice or disparity, when reviewing Forms. From next year, feedback quality and turnaround times would be included as a separate heading in the Programme Monitoring Form.

3.3 Report of Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Recommendation Panel (Item 8)

Members noted that the delayed paper from the previous meeting had been approved by correspondence on 31 March 2017. As such, category of wider achievement 11 had been expanded to 'Edinburgh University Sports' Union and Students' Association Prizes and Awards'.

3.4 Learning and Teaching Strategy Implementation Plan

A formal plan would be brought to the September 2017 meeting of the Committee.

Actions:

Director of Academic Services to bring Learning and Teaching Strategy Implementation Plan to September meeting of LTC.

Convener's Communications

4. Committee Membership

Members were advised that Mr Garratt, Dr Haycock-Stuart, Professor Higgins, Mr Lowrey, and Dr Maciocia would be leaving the Committee's membership at the end of the academic year. The Convener thanked them for their very valuable contributions to the work of the Committee over a number of years.

For Discussion

5. Social Responsibility and Sustainability: Curricular and Co-Curricular Pathways

Members considered the paper which set out a vision for the further integration of issues related to social responsibility and sustainability (SRS) into the wider cross-University curriculum and co-curriculum. It proposed the introduction of 4 new SRS-themed pathways, similar to the existing 'Social Enterprise' pathway, which would bring together existing SRS-related curricular and co-curricular activities and courses and therefore allow students to adopt a developmental approach to their learning. The Director of Academic Service, introducing the paper in Professor McAra's absence, reported that Professor McAra is planning to review the terminology of 'pathways' and 'capstone projects'.

LTC was supportive of the proposals. It agreed that the new pathways should be piloted in 2017/18, and made the following observations:

- The proposals were in keeping with ongoing discussions around ensuring that Edinburgh's offer is distinctive and that the University derives maximum benefit from its four year degree structure.
- It would be necessary to develop an evaluation framework to allow the success of the pilot to be measured. The framework should include review of the balance of curricular and co-curricular activity within the pathways.
- Careful thought would need to be given to communications and the way in which the pathways were publicised. Confusion with the College of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences Programme Pathways Project would need to be avoided in particular.

6. Report on Ongoing and Planned Learning Technology Developments

The Director of the Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division of Information Services (IS) reported that the developments outlined in the paper aimed to align with the Learning and Teaching Strategy. Key developments for 2017/18 included Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) consolidation; providing a fit for purpose, centrally supported, lecture recording service; investment in AV and IT equipment in teaching spaces; providing digital skills development opportunities for staff and students; and continued investment in assessment and feedback tools.

Members welcomed the work that was being done to reduce the number of VLEs. The potential benefits of introducing a more uniform approach to use of the VLE and setting minimum expectations around use were discussed. It was agreed that the Director of the Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division would give this matter further consideration, and feed back to LTC in due course.

LTC was keen to see further development in the area of online assessment and feedback. Information about the range of packages available in this area would be circulated to members for consideration.

Actions:

Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division to:

- 1) consider ways in which a more uniform approach to use of the VLE might be introduced and report back to LTC in due course.
- 2) circulate to members information about the range of online assessment and feedback packages available.

Online Distance Learning (ODL), and the University's ambitious targets in this area were discussed. The vision for possible pedagogical approaches to delivering ODL at scale would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration.

Action:

Secretary to add ODL at scale to a future meeting agenda (to be taken forward by Assistant Principal Digital Education).

7. Report from the Postgraduate Taught Experience (PTES) Working Group

LTC welcomed the final report of the Working Group. The Group's overall conclusions – that PTES is a source of positive feedback which could be used to support confidence in academic standards and learning at Edinburgh, and that data obtained from PTES could be valuable for defining priorities for strategic planning at every level - were noted. The Committee supported the recommendations around planning and positive communications outlined in the report, and agreed that these should be taken forward with stakeholders.

Action:

Dr Murray to take forward the report's recommendations with stakeholders.

8. Review of Feedback Standards and Guiding Principles

It was noted that a subgroup of the LTC Assessment and Feedback Enhancement Group had reviewed the Feedback Standards and Guiding Principles policy and proposed that the document be replaced with a more practical guide linked to an interactive set of resources and case studies on the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) website. LTC was supportive of this proposal, and made the following suggestions in relation to the content of the guidance:

- There may be benefit in including more subject specific examples.
- The document should encourage colleagues to think about more innovative and experimental forms of assessment.
- The bulleted list relating to quality feedback should include the importance of linking back to assessment criteria.

Action:

Assistant Principal Assessment and Feedback to bring paper on course and programme design, including designing innovative assessment, to the September 2017 meeting of LTC.

It was agreed that there would be benefit in including this and related guidance in induction processes for new teaching staff and in CPD for existing staff, and that further work was needed in both of these areas. Members discussed:

- the benefits and disadvantages of compulsory induction and CPD.
- IAD work on School induction pilots. It was noted that it may be possible to incorporate guidance of the type being discussed in these pilots.
- the possibility of developing online CDP for existing staff around a theme. The provision could potentially be made College or subject specific to ensure that it was of relevance to all teaching staff.

For Information**9. Feedback from Flexible Learning Week 2016/17**

LTC welcomed the feedback on the Festival of Creative Learning and on Schools' use of Flexible Learning Week 2017, and was impressed by the quality of the activity described.

10. Updates and Reports**10.1 Knowledge Strategy Committee (KSC) Report (Meeting held on 24 March 2017)**

Members noted the report.

10.2 Report from Learning and Teaching Policy Group

The report was noted.

10.3 Task Group to Review the Code of Practice for Tutors and Demonstrators

The Committee was reminded that a Researcher Experience Committee (REC) Task Group had been reviewing the code and replacing it with a Policy. The Policy had been drafted and a view-seeking process undertaken. The draft had been largely very well received, but a small number of areas required further work, including:

- Consistency of terms of employment across Schools – it had been hoped that it would be possible to adopt a standard approach. However, it had been concluded that a degree of flexibility would need to be maintained. LTC agreed that it would welcome standardisation wherever possible.
- Cap on the maximum number of hours to be worked by postgraduate students

Final revisions to the draft in response to the outcomes of the view-seeking exercise would now be made, and the Policy signed off by REC and LTC by electronic business.

10.4 Student Recruitment Strategy: Update on Portfolio Development

It was reported that two meetings of the group discussing the Portfolio Development stream of the Student Recruitment Strategy had now taken place. The group was considering the way in which we understand the 'Edinburgh Experience', and methods of assessing the academic credentials of and business cases for new degree programmes.

A session at the Senate Committees' Away Day had resulted in very useful feedback on the Edinburgh Experience. It was apparent that there are multiple experiences, that the experience is fragmented and complex, and that, although we talk about breadth and flexibility, this is not always the reality within programmes. Notwithstanding this, there are many aspects of the Experience that are highly valued.

In relation to making flexibility and breadth more apparent, the Committee discussed the Hong Kong degree model. The model permits a maximum of 60% of a programme's total credit to be devoted to the core discipline. 22.5% of the credit is then devoted to compulsory courses – languages and a common core – ensuring that all students have a common experience. The remaining 17.5 to 30% of the credit is used for electives. These can be courses taken for interest or with a view to obtaining a joint degree. Students can also choose to undertake a restricted number of additional credits or co-curricular activity.

10.5 Update from Lecture Recording Policy Task Group

Roll-out of the new system would begin in August 2017. For the first year, Schools would continue to work to policy arrangements that were in already in place. A new, University-level policy would be introduced at the start of 2018/19 to coincide with the integration of the lecture recording and timetabling systems.

10.6 Development of a Policy on Learning Analytics

LTC was being invited to approve a set of Principles and Purposes to support the development of the University's Policy on Learning Analytics. A consultation process with Schools had shown that stakeholders were supportive of and interesting in Learning Analytics, but were uncertain about the way in which they would be used.

Members discussed some of the key themes arising from the consultation including:

- The implications for student learning of using Learning Analytics – it was noted that survey data suggested that students may have high expectations of the University acting on the basis of their data, and that staff may not share this expectation.
- The implications for learning design and review – it was noted that it would be possible to acquire course information in real time and therefore to avoid waiting until the end of a course to make changes. Transparency, data protection and consent – when securing student consent, it would be important

to be clear about the way in which the data would be used eg. for operational or research purposes.

The Committee was advised that once the Principles and Purposes had been approved by both LTC and KSC, a framework would be in place to guide the development of a Policy that would address issues such as consent. The framework would enable the University to run pilots to ensure that the individual needs of different Schools were addressed.

The Committee agreed to the following revisions:

- The use of the term 'ethically conducted' in Principle 5 could be ambiguous – the Committee suggested rewording it to 'conducted according to defined ethical principles'.
- Principle 7 should be reworded to read 'Data generated from learning analytics will not be used to monitor staff performance, unless specifically authorised following additional consultation'.

Members also made the following observations:

- Students' expectations that the University would act on the basis of their data was considered reasonable, and it was proposed that this should be incorporated within the Principles.
- Principle 2 could restrict Schools' ability to use Learning Analytics in a way that focusses solely on non-engaging students.
- The Students' Association welcomed the commitment within the Principles to issues of consent and to not applying a deficit model.

LTC approved the Principles and Purposes subject to the agreed revisions.

Actions:

Learning Analytics Policy Task Group to agree to revise Principles 5 and 7 of the Principles to take account of LTC's observations.

10.7 Near Future Teaching: Designing the Future of Digital Education at Edinburgh. Update for LTC

The convener of the Digital Education Task Group reported that the Group was undertaking a project to develop a vision for digital education that was driven by values and ideas, not technology. The Task Group had met twice, the first time to consider scope, and the second, project methodology and pilots. Pilot events had subsequently been undertaken and were now complete. Planning for upcoming activities was underway, and a supporting website would be launched shortly.

LTC welcomed the work of the Task Group, and particularly, the rich and diverse ways in which the Group was gathering student and staff input.

10.8 Update from Research-Led Learning and Teaching Task Group

The Committee noted the work of the Task Group.

10.9 Update from University-Wide Courses Task Group

LTC welcomed the update, and discussed the potential value of introducing a single course for all students that introduced them to the City, the Enlightenment and the University's research-led learning and teaching. Members expressed some support for a course of this type, and potentially for using it as a pre-arrival tool. It was also recognised that there may be some student resistance to a standard course and that benchmarking and further consultation would be necessary before proceeding.

The Committee noted that it would be important to draw together work relating to Portfolio Development, University-wide courses, research-led learning and teaching and other related initiatives.

Actions:

Director of Academic Services to consider ways in which related work streams around the 'Edinburgh Experience' might be brought together.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 2017/18 Meeting Dates

20 September 2017 at 2.00pm - ECA Main Building Board Room (L05)
15 November 2017 at 2.00pm - Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House
24 January 2018 at 2.00pm - Board Room, Chancellor's Building, Little France
14 March 2018 at 2.00pm - Raeburn Room, Old College
23 May 2018 at 2.00pm - Room 235, Joseph Black Building