

The University of Edinburgh
Internal Review

One Year response report on recommendation actions
June 2015

PPR of: **School of Education**

Recommendation	Timescale for Completion	Comment on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion	Completion Date
Urgent/short-term			
1.1.6. Consider whether the University target of 2.5 PGR students per staff member is achievable and consistent with the greater School mission.	Change over time to 2018 intake	The School has had a number of staff without PhDs and others who had not yet supervised to completion. Since the PPR, the number of people able to first supervise has increased and we continue to prioritise building the pool of first supervisors. New academic posts now require a PhD, so supervisor capacity will also increase over time. Post-REF, the School has nominated three professors as Institutes research leads, who are prioritising candidate match with School and staff research themes over target numbers. Alignment with REF themes ¹ is now prioritised. We anticipate this shift in emphasis may reduce ratios temporarily but then increase again over time.	October 2018

¹ Ref Themes are: Equality, Social Justice and Inclusion; Pedagogy, Learning and Curriculum; Language, Culture and Communication; Digital Education; Sport, Physical Education and Health Science.

		The school has created a new position (Depute Director of Post Graduate Research - DDPGR) who will be responsible for developing this area further.	
1.1.2 Examine the strategic aim of an increasing number of PGT programmes and courses and consider the possibility of having fewer, more flexible programmes with shared courses.	Ongoing till 2017-18	A sustainability/rationalisation process is ongoing. The School has been working to reduce and/or rationalise PGT programmes in consultation with all PDs. Viability has been assessed for all PGT programmes. Several new programmes have not been launched and other programmes are currently being reviewed with a view to having informal pathways rather than entire programmes. This will create more flexibility to ensure that programmes AND courses are viable. More flexibility in DPTs is a priority and prescriptive programmes are actively discouraged. Courses are increasingly shared between programmes which also contributes to building a sense of PGT community (e.g. MSc Education and ASL / Inclusive Education). New professional masters currently in development will prioritise flexibility. The PG Directorate are pushing conversations and actions throughout the school that align with strategic plans for the 'shape' of Graduate Education in the school particularly focusing on programmes, diversity of country of origin and School research strategy themes.	Immediate and ongoing. September 2018

1.3.2. The panel recommends the School explore the impact of large student numbers on staff resourcing, particularly in relation to Doctoral and Associate Tutors' contracts	Ongoing over 2 years	<p>The School raised the MSc Education IELTS requirement for 2014-15 and numbers fell from 110 to 65, reducing the need for AT supervisors. In 2015-16 it looks as if numbers are rising again. TESOL numbers remain the same, despite stopping applications in winter to reduce numbers and increase diversity. The School may consider e.g., raising the IELTS again to curb TESOL numbers and strengthen staff resourcing. The School has placed heavy reliance on MSc TESOL and MSc Education income but having a leaner range of PGT programmes will reduce that reliance.</p> <p>Diversification of students (country of origin and programmes of study) is a priority to address the overall spread of income and staff workload. The school plan to have a short life working group to consider admissions times and IELTS requirements across the school,</p> <p>Transparency for teaching opportunities for PGR students are in the process of being addressed following a short life working group.</p>	September 2016
1.8.3. The panel recommends the School consider ways to facilitate on-going support for supervisors, to enable them to accommodate the changing needs, context and expectations of the student body.	Ongoing over 2 years	<p>At PGT level, AT supervisors are provided with induction and ongoing support. At PGR level, as noted above, the School is developing a strategy for ensuring better fit with research themes and supervisors. This will be taken up and developed as priority by the above mentioned new DDPGR. A working group on internationalisation is</p>	March 2017

		examining changing staff and student needs and ways in which the School can build a greater cultural awareness and associated staff skills for effective teaching and learning. Research training for PGR will give firmer foundations (especially in the first year).	
1.1.3. The panel recommends that the School consider whether the current divide between undergraduate provision and taught postgraduate provision is optimal. One way of doing this may be for the School to consider offering more generic pathway programmes, with themed collections of courses, enabling students to specialise at a later stage, as these may appeal to a wider market and hence improve the sustainability.	Over 2 to 3 years	There has been much debate about this at PGT level. Most PGT Directors maintain that their students come for the specialist training on their MSc. Notwithstanding, the School is continuing to explore greater possibilities for integration of honours UG and PGT options. Most PGT programmes are viable. A programme validation for the ASL suite is in process and these courses will be much more integrated into the schools provision for PGT students.	September 2018
1.3.3. The panel recommends the School examine the risk of over-reliance of some of their larger PGT programmes on a single national market. A possible strategy is to conduct pro-active market research with the aim of increasing diversity and consider targeted scholarships and the accreditation of prior learning for target groups.	Ongoing over two years	The School has gone some way to address this by maintaining the yearly scholarships for home/EU students on MSc TESOL and MSc Education programs. In addition, TESOL staff have explored other international markets, e.g., in the Middle East and South America. This work will continue for the PGT and PGR provision. We have not yet looked at the possibility of accreditation of prior learning, but welcomed it as a useful suggestion from the PPR panel. The school has some specialist knowledge of this in relation to SCQF	September 2017

		which we intend to draw upon. The Graduate School remain committed to considering the shape of the Graduate School and reduce over reliance.	
1.2.4 The panel recommends the School examine the structure of their research training provision for PGR students and consider introducing research skills and methods training earlier in the academic year. To facilitate this, the School might consider alternative modes of delivery for research training, to ensure it is available when needed	Initial timescale, November 2015 with additional courses available from 2016	The School staff have held several discussions at different committees on this topic. It has been agreed in principle that the 2015-16 October PGR cohort will be strongly recommended to attend a course in Research Design at the start of the first year and to add other methods content as soon as possible. We hope to run face-to-face classes predominantly but have online resources for those who miss the in person sessions.	October 2016
1.2.4. The panel recommends the school look at the balance between generic and specialised research training for PGR students and consider running some generic courses across the School or in partnership with other Schools across the College and embed specialised research training into taught courses.	To start in October/ November 2015, then ongoing	The planned Research Design course will be generic, based on a current MSc course audited by a number of PhD students. The School welcomed the suggestion of a partnership with other Schools. Once the first course has been run in-house the School could explore partnerships with other Schools. The embedding of specialised research training into taught courses will follow the establishment of the first Research Design course. The school are also planning to review the EdD programme which may provide opportunities for additional provision for PhD students and also contribute to the development of the PGR community.	November 2017

<p>2.4.2.</p> <p>The panel recommends formalising a series of progression points, or key milestones, for PGR students, to monitor progression beyond the first year and improve completion rates.</p>	<p>By 2015-16</p>	<p>The School already has a progression board at the end of the First year, and another, less formal review at the end of the Second year. It may be valuable to hold one in the third year since so few students complete by then. The PPR external who proposed this was referring to first year milestones. An informal assessment at 4 months could really help identify students with weak language skills or research training early, and well before the progression board. We are considering the possibility of a 4 month progression point and the associated implications.</p>	<p>Established by start of 2016-17</p>
<p>3.1.1</p> <p>The panel recommends the School, with the help of the College, consider its fundamental aims and raison d'etre within the wider context of the College of Humanities and Social Science and the University of Edinburgh</p>	<p>No timescale. Ongoing</p>	<p>The School of Education has currently a core responsibility to provide a range of professional degree programmes e.g. for teacher education, childhood practice and career development at UG, PGT and Doctoral level. This is in line with a number of Schools with strong professional focus.</p> <p>This has some impact on PG admissions since most graduate teachers do not continue into post-graduate study. However the School's portfolio also includes areas which are expanding e.g. social justice and inclusion, digital education and learning analytics. In addition, Moray House does attract high numbers of overseas students, often funded by overseas governments. The cohort is therefore different from the University norm and the School seeks a balance in its academic and</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

		professional profiles. However, the School will reflect on this recommendation as it considers its shape into 2025.	

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